



## REPORT FOR ACTION

### **Proposed Change to the Toronto Urban Health Fund Review and Allocation Process due to COVID-19**

**Date:** May 5, 2020

**To:** Board of Health

**From:** Medical Officer of Health

**Wards:** All

#### **SUMMARY**

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This report outlines the impact of the City of Toronto's COVID-19 response on the Toronto Urban Health Fund funding allocation process for the 2020 funding cycle. Under normal circumstances, funding allocation decision-making is conducted by Toronto Urban Health Fund Review Panel and Toronto Urban Health Fund Indigenous Review Panel members at in-person Committee meetings. The extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 outbreak has led to the cancellation of regular City Council and Committee meetings until May 31, 2020, including the April and May meetings for the Toronto Urban Health Fund Review Panel and the Toronto Urban Health Fund Indigenous Review Panel.

This report recommends that the Board of Health approve a change to the review and funding allocation processes for the 2020 funding cycle for the Toronto Urban Health Fund Review Panel and the Toronto Urban Health Fund Indigenous Review Panel. In lieu of Review Panel members, Toronto Public Health staff conducted funding proposal reviews and made funding allocation recommendations for proposals that were submitted. This would prevent a lapse in funding to critical community-based HIV prevention and substance misuse programming.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. The Board of Health approve a change to the review and allocation process for funding proposals submitted to the Toronto Urban Health Fund for the 2020 funding cycle such that Toronto Public Health staff perform the review process, in lieu of Toronto Urban Health Fund Review Panel and Toronto Urban Health Fund Indigenous Review Panel members.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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There is no financial impact resulting from the adoption of the recommendation in this report.

## DECISION HISTORY

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On September 23, 2019, the Board of Health established the Toronto Urban Health Fund Indigenous Review Panel.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.HL9.4>

On July 8, 2019, the Board of Health approved the funding allocation recommendations made by the 2019 Toronto Urban Health Fund Review Panel.

(<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.HL8.2>)

On July 8, 2019, the Board of Health received a presentation on the launch of the Toronto Urban Health Fund Indigenous Funding Stream.

(<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.HL8.1>)

On February 25, 2019, the Board of Health appointed members to the 2019 Toronto Urban Health Fund Review Panel and approved a revised Terms of Reference for the Toronto Urban Health Fund Review Panel.

(<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.HL3.4>)

## COMMENTS

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Since 1987, Toronto Public Health (TPH) has used Review Panels to have citizens with relevant subject matter expertise participate in the allocation of funds for community-based HIV and substance misuse initiatives. These Review Panels work with TPH staff to review funding proposals and make funding allocation recommendations for these initiatives to the Board of Health (BOH).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all regular City Council and Committee meetings have been cancelled as of March 16, 2020. As a result, the appointment of members to the 2020 Toronto Urban Health Fund (TUHF) Review Panel and TUHF Indigenous Review Panel, and Review Panel meetings scheduled in April and May have been cancelled.

In order to prevent a lapse in funding to critical HIV prevention and harm reduction services in the community, TPH staff conducted funding proposal reviews in lieu of Review Panel members.

In addition, for the review and allocation of funding for proposals submitted to the TUHF Indigenous funding stream, TPH staff consulted with members of the Toronto Urban Health Fund Indigenous Advisory Circle (IAC). Members of the TUHF Indigenous Advisory Circle (IAC) provide support, mentorship and advice to members of the TUHF

Indigenous Review Panel.

Funding allocation recommendations will be presented by TPH staff to the BOH for approval at the next scheduled BOH meeting.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Medical Officer of Health