

Auditor General Audit on Shelter Hotel Operations

June 2022

Audit Committee

SSHA Overview





Support for Audit Findings

SSHA welcomes the recommendations made by the Auditor General for the Hotel Operations audit.

Support for Audit Findings

Overall, the recommendations for the Hotel Operations audit:

- Align to the priorities and actions of **SSHA's Homelessness Solutions Service Plan**
- Align with initiatives being actioned to support client transitions into **stable housing**
- Support the City's efforts to maintain IPAC measures to **ensure safe shelter spaces**
- Reinforce the need to strengthen **contract management** processes
- Provide an opportunity to **strengthen working with other divisions** across the City

COVID-19 Emergency Response

SSHA moved quickly in 2020 to open 48 new temporary shelter sites to provide additional space for physical distancing, avert potential outbreaks in shelters, save lives and minimize the spread of COVID-19 in shelters and the community.

Specific actions included:

- Securing funding to rapidly increase capacity
- Introducing Recovery and Isolation sites for positive COVID-19 cases
- Mobilized 600+ redeployed staff from across City Divisions and activated our DOC
- Provided more than 8 million pieces of PPE to clients, staff and community partners, and continued to share changing guidance for shelter settings from Public Health

Leverage Data to get More Value

All hotel rooms are leased to support shelter operations and support of clients

- Rooms not available for sleeping are used to support clients in other ways, for example:
 - Health care delivery
 - Mental health care
 - Counselling and crisis support
 - Case management and housing work
 - Harm reduction and overdose prevention work
 - Safely storing client belongings
- Rooms can also be used for staff meetings and for monitoring other health and safety issues.
- Rooms may also be offline for repair or deep cleaning

Leverage Data to get More Value

Ramp up of hotel room use and need for isolation space

- Each hotel has a period of ramp up when opened
- Some shelter providers held rooms for client isolation if symptomatic for COVID-19
- During an outbreak, rooms were closed to new admissions
- At certain times, rooms were held back to support people sleeping outdoors at encampments
- Agree with the AG finding that our current IT system does not allow us to determine which rooms are offline for other support services, repair, storage or deep cleaning
- Work with Legal Services continues on vacant room charges

Build Confidence in the Safety of the Shelter System

IPAC practice improved over the pandemic

- Daily meetings with Public Health, weekly meetings with the Shelter Sector
- Since July 2021, third party provider supported 661 assessments at 110 shelter sites
- Over 2,500 staff were trained in person
- Quality assurance visits and reports have improved over time
- TPH reports the frequency, duration and number of people infected with COVID during each outbreak has diminished
- Agree with the AG finding that greater transparency will build confidence, and fully support publicly posting the results of assessments (e.g. at the location, on our website)

Strengthen Contract Management

SSHA Staff actively worked to reduce costs

- On Pg. 3 of the report, the AG acknowledges efforts made by SSHA to renegotiate existing contract terms, saving more than \$7M between April 2020 and August 2021
- Reduction in prices were the following:
 - Room cost lowered on average from \$124 to \$114 (-8%)
 - Meals lowered on average from \$42 to \$33 (-21%)
- CREM will take over the RFP, contract management, and invoice payment processes, and work with SSHA to ensure that rooms are available as required

Next Steps

- **Contract Management**

Further explore opportunities to **minimize costs**, where applicable, while still ensuring **effective delivery of shelter services** and related supports to clients

- **Opportunities to Recover Charges Not In Express Terms of the Contract**

Continue to working with Legal Services and Hotel Vendors

- **Transition Contract Oversight to CREM**

CREM will take over the RFP, contract management, and invoice payment processes, and work with SSHA to ensure that rooms are available as required, allowing SSHA to focus efforts on delivering **high quality service to clients**

- **Continue Enhanced IPAC Measures**

Maintain the **enhanced IPAC measures** in accordance with medical direction from the Province and from TPH; SSHA will report annually (as part of the SSHA Infrastructure Report) on IPAC areas that need improvement as well as enhancements to the IPAC program across the shelter system

Thank you

