

#### CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION OR ADVICE

---

#### Program Background

The Vulnerable Adults and Seniors (VAS) program provides client home visits, consultations and referrals to adults and seniors (50 years and over) who live with various vulnerabilities. These vulnerabilities include social isolation, age-related frailties, complex health issues, mental health issues and poverty.

In 2020, the VAS program was suspended in order to reassign staff to the COVID-19 pandemic response. Over the course of the pandemic, the Toronto Public Health (TPH) Intake program handled all VAS program inquiries. In 2021, TPH received only 225 inquiries. This reflects the steady decline in requests for the service the program has been experiencing a number of years even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The most inquiries were about unsanitary and unsafe living conditions (including hoarding, pest control and bed bugs), mental health challenges, as well as homecare and practical assistance for seniors and people with disabilities. These inquiries were referred to appropriate community services in Toronto.

The VAS program duplicates existing community services in Toronto which provide home visiting, hoarding support and crisis intervention services to adults and seniors. The program also duplicates the services being provided under the Community Paramedic Home Visit Program which is part of Toronto Paramedic Services. Community Paramedics identify and address gaps in healthcare and social support for vulnerable residents with various socioeconomic and psychosocial challenges. This program goes beyond VAS program interventions and includes: individual health coaching, education and in-home vaccinations, medication and adherence reviews, assistance with hospital discharge planning, outreach to frequent 911 callers and clients who have recently returned from hospital, as well as collaboration with situation tables and patient care conferences.

In addition to the duplicative nature of the VAS program, it also is not a mandatory program in the Ontario Public Health Standards.

Pending approval of this change, the VAS program will transition to a service that provides referrals to community services and the Community Paramedic Home Visit Program through the TPH Intake program. In this capacity, Toronto Public Health will continue providing expertise and leadership in population health planning for vulnerable adults and seniors.

## **Staffing Implications**

Eleven (11) unionized City of Toronto staff represented by CUPE Local 79 ("the Union") will be impacted by this program efficiency. The Union will be informed of this program efficiency and anticipated timelines. Toronto Public Health will work with the Union to ensure unionized staff are treated in accordance with their applicable Collective Agreement. Toronto Public Health's intent is to prioritize retaining staff knowledge and expertise, and to this end will identify opportunities to reassign impacted staff to other health promotion programs focused on seniors and vulnerable adults, in areas such as sexual health promotion, mental health promotion, and chronic disease and injury prevention. Unionized staff who decline reassignment may be subject to the layoff provisions within their applicable Collective Agreement.

## **Financial Impact**

This program efficiency will net savings of \$1,582.1 thousand gross and \$1,582.1 thousand net and a reduction of 14.0 positions. The savings from this service efficiency is being used to partially offset the 2023 Inflationary and Cost of Living Adjustments.