



Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO: Chair and Members Emergency & Community Services Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: October 8, 2013	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: City of Hamilton Domiciliary Hostel Review (CS10036(c)) (City Wide)	
SUBMITTED BY: Vicki Woodcox Acting General Manager Community and Emergency Services Department	PREPARED BY: Candace Herod 905-546-2424 ext. 1782 Brian Kreps 905-546-2424 ext. 4329 Gillian Hendry 905-546-2424 ext. 4818
SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

Not Applicable

Information:

In 2011, a Program Review of Hamilton's Domiciliary Hostel Program was conducted by the Housing Services Division to respond to concerns raised by the Residential Care Facility operators, residents and community stakeholders. Findings from the review included 29 recommendations covering a range of topics. This Information Report provides an update on progress in implementing these recommendations and on recent provincial changes to the Domiciliary Hostel Program.

A Domiciliary Hostel Review Implementation Committee was formed in April 2012 to ensure that a broad range of input was considered during the implementation process. The Committee is comprised of:

- Residential Care Facility (RCF) Operators who deliver the Domiciliary Hostel Program
- RCF residents
- The Canadian Mental Health Association staff
- Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) staff
- The Housing Help Centre staff

OUR Vision: To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.

OUR Mission: WE provide quality public service that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Values: Accountability, Cost Consciousness, Equity, Excellence, Honesty, Innovation, Leadership, Respect and Teamwork.

- A community researcher from McMaster University; and,
- Housing Services Division staff.

The committee meets once a month to provide advice regarding the future direction of the Domiciliary Hostel Program based on the recommendations from the Program Review. In January 2013, a Project Manager was hired to lead the committee in the planning and implementation of the recommendations.

Some of the recommendations from the Program Review are within the control of the City such as communication with the RCF's and the coordination of the service among the City Departments that work with the program. There are some recommendations that continue to be a provincial responsibility such as the amount of the monthly Personal Needs Allowance paid through social assistance to the RCF residents. Nine of the twenty nine recommendations have been completed and work is continuing on the remaining 20. A consistent theme of feedback from stakeholders throughout the process is the challenge to balance the needs of residents and operators. There has also been feedback that larger steps should be taken to ensure case management and recreational supports are available to tenants and that per diem subsidy payment to RCF Operators should be increased more quickly.

Appendix A to Report CS10036(c) summarizes action taken for each of the recommendations in three categories - completed, in progress and not yet started.

Appendix B to Report CS10036(c) is the Mission and Policy Statements for the Domiciliary Hostel Program as outlined in recommendation #1 of the Program Review.

As of January 1, 2013, the Province of Ontario consolidated funding for the Domiciliary Hostel Program into the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) and transferred oversight from the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH). Under the new CHPI program guidelines, the City has greater discretion in shaping the program. Although the City now has the flexibility to change the funding formula for Domiciliary Hostels, other provincial requirements have been retained. For example, the City must continue to follow the service delivery standards established by the Province in 2006, such as ensuring policies are in place regarding tenant admission and maintaining tenant files. In Hamilton, compliance with the standards is achieved largely through the City's Business Licensing By-law 07-170, Schedule 20. Also, RCF residents must continue to contribute to the cost of their stay and will continue to receive a monthly Personal Needs Benefit (PNB) of \$136 as prescribed by the Province.

The Province has indicated that new provincial guidelines, which could potentially replace the service delivery standards, will be developed for housing programs such as the Domiciliary Hostel Program that are funded with CHPI funding. There has been no indication when the guidelines will be released.

Status of Recommendations from the City of Hamilton Domiciliary Hostel Program Review

COMPLETE

Consultant's Recommendation	Actions Taken
<p>1. That the City of Hamilton adopt a policy statement recognizing the important role that the Domiciliary Hostel Program provides in the City's housing continuum and that the City commit to working in partnership with the operators, residents and agencies to improve the effectiveness of the program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final Mission and Policy Statements are attached as Appendix B to Report CS10036(c). The policy will clarify the program's mandate and goals and the role of stakeholders. The Policy Statement is the result of consultation with operators, residents and community agencies. Coordination and collaboration are central to the model outlined in the policy statement.
<p>7. That a request is sent to the Ministry of Community and Social Services to extend the maximum absence period from 28 days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence days have been increased to 42 days in the Domiciliary Hostel Service Agreements that took effect July 1, 2013. • Practices of other municipalities were reviewed. Hamilton's policy of 28 days was low compared to other municipalities. • Notification of this program change was sent to all the Domiciliary Hostels using a new Communique format.
<p>10. That the City explore the possibility of Resident Support Workers who would offer a broad range of case management supports to every resident who is subsidized through the Domiciliary Hostel Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pilot project will be initiated in 2014 to provide case management support to a geographically focused group of RCF's. • Not all Domiciliary Hostel residents are able to access case management services through community agencies or chose to use the services. At present, City staff visit the Domiciliary Hostels to monitor compliance with the licensing by-law or to determine eligibility for social assistance benefits but do not provide case management services.
<p>14. That the City ensure that all of the operators and residents are provided with accurate information regarding the treatment of tenant earnings and the impact that the employment income may have on subsidy payments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Communique was issued in September 2013 to all Operators and the Coalition of Residential Care Facility Tenants regarding a change in provincial social assistance rules for the treatment of employment earnings. • It is important for Operators and residents to have accurate information about social assistance policies. Since most residents are in receipt of ODSP - coordination with the ODSP Program is critical.

Consultant's Recommendation	Actions Taken
<p>20. That the City continue to strengthen cross-departmental communication and information sharing, including the development of shared objectives to avoid the adverse impacts of different mandates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Given that several City of Hamilton Departments interact with RCF's; improved communication is critical to develop strong relationships with the RCF Operators. Municipal By-Law Enforcement, Public Health and Community Services staff will meet every six weeks to address ongoing operational concerns and issues within the RCF's. ● A Domiciliary Hostel Working Group meets monthly that includes Operators and representatives from Housing Services, Public Health, Municipal By-law Enforcement and a Council member to share information and discuss emerging issues.
<p>26. That the City increase the per diem funding to \$55, with annual adjustments for inflation, to better reflect the cost of operating Domiciliary Hostels, and encourage the Ministry of Community and Social Services to increase the per diem funding levels it establishes for the Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The issue of adequate and appropriate funding for DH services is significant. A number of years have passed since the Province last raised the per diem rate. ● Since the Domiciliary Hostel program was consolidated into CHPI, the City now has the authority to set the per diem rate. This decision must be made within the context of the provincial CHPI funding. ● Details and recommendations regarding Domiciliary Hostel funding are provided in Report CS13017(a) Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative to be presented to the Emergency and Community Services Committee on November 25, 2013.
<p>27. That the City provide input to the Province on program funding consolidation to encourage flexibility in the use of Domiciliary Hostel program funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This recommendation no longer applies. The consolidation of Domiciliary Hostel funding into the CHPI Program now provides the City with increased flexibility to determine funding levels.
<p>28. That the City work collaboratively with operators and community partners to continue to advocate for changes to the ODSP system so that benefits are not provided at the end of the month for the preceding month</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A review of Social Assistance in Ontario commissioned by the Province was completed in 2012. ODSP's practice of paying retroactively has not changed. ● A change to this practice would require a policy change by the MCSS.

IN PROGRESS

Consultant's Recommendation	Progress	Next Steps
<p>2. That the housing options for individuals who require supports to daily living be expanded beyond the current Domiciliary Hostel Program Model to offer greater choice to meet the varying needs of residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important that a variety of options be available to people requiring housing with supports. • The City currently funds other types of supported housing to target specific populations. Transitions to Home (T2H) and Supporting Our Sisters (SOS) are funded to provide mobile supports in a Housing First approach to people who have previously been homeless. One-time funding has been provided by CHPI to the YWCA for case management to help with 24 hour service. The City of Hamilton also funded a portion of the capital costs for the Perkins Centre which is operated by Homestead Christian Care. The Perkins Centre provides affordable housing with residential supports to people living with a variety of mental health issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deliverables are being addressed through the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan. A report will be brought to the Emergency and Community Services Committee in December 9, 2013 on the plan. • Additionally, the federal government has committed to renewing its Homelessness Partnering Strategy and is making Housing First a cornerstone of the new program.
<p>3. That the City work with key stakeholders to implement a person-centred approach in the delivery of services within the Domiciliary Hostel Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The theme of person-centred service emerged in the workshops that were held with key stakeholders. It was determined that key components should include choice in where to live, setting personal goals and what supports are accessed to meet those goals. • Areas where person-centred service could be increased include the intake process to ensure that potential residents are aware of their options and support in exploring them. It is also recommended that residents have ongoing goal setting and reassessment of progress toward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case conferences have been used infrequently. Three case conferences are being planned to focus on clients where particular concerns have been identified. The goal of the case conferences is to develop unique, coordinated approaches to address their needs. • A case management pilot project is being explored with a potential start date of Q1 2014. The goal is to ensure that case management supports are available to all Domiciliary Hostel residents. The objective is to build on and strengthen resident connection to external services rather than replace

	<p>those goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This recommendation is connected with recommendation 16 which is about exploring centralized placement/intake and recommendation 10 regarding improving access to case management supports. 	<p>them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An important part of this will be a Resident Plan to be completed for each resident. The plan will focus on residents' recreational, medical and therapeutic needs and be updated regularly.
<p>4. That the Domiciliary Hostel Program be funded adequately to meet the needs of residents. The per diem funding, direct benefits for residents, and the funding of support services should be reviewed and adjusted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As mentioned under Recommendation 26, this issue will be addressed in the CHPI Report CS13017(a). • Work is continuing to address direct benefits for residents. Since the Program Review, the Province has implemented a cap on Discretionary Benefits. Housing Services has been working closely with the Ontario Works program to preserve these benefits. • Ongoing funding of \$138,000 was created in 2011 to support residents with their recreational needs. This funding has been allocated annually to support administrative costs for operators and recreation costs for residents. • The City of Hamilton does not generally fund support services for Domiciliary Hostel residents such as intensive case management and therapeutic services. Health care, mental health and developmental services are available in the community and are funded directly by the Province. • The new Policy Statement emphasizes the importance of working with operators and community partners to coordinate the delivery of support services for residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The per diem rate will be reviewed annually. • New approaches will be explored in the fall of 2013 for the utilization of reinvestment funding to improve uptake of recreation services.
<p>5. That the City explore ways to improve the quality of life of the residents through either the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given limited funding, it is critical to leverage existing programs in the community. The Recreation Division has increased the amount 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As mentioned in Recommendation 3, Housing Services is exploring a pilot project to increase coordination of support services.

<p>provision of additional direct service, purchase of service from community agencies or increased funding to the operators</p>	<p>and type of low and no cost programming. Many of these opportunities are appropriate for Domiciliary Hostel residents. Information has been provided through a Communique to operators regarding these programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational funding on a per resident basis has been distributed to operators in the past three years to help support recreational activities for the residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As mentioned in Recommendation 5, the recreational funding is being re-evaluated to determine how it will most effectively support residents' recreation needs.
<p>6. That the City collaborate with the operators and the Community Care Access Centre to better meet the basic care needs of individuals with higher needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) plays an important role, other health care providers must also be included. • A mini-workshop was conducted with the Complex Care System Planning Table regarding the domiciliary hostel system interaction with emergency rooms. Ideas emerged such as improving access to family physicians and improving the amount of information available to hospital discharge planners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A survey will be sent to operators in the fall of 2013. One important component will be determining which residents do not currently have a family physician. Housing Services Division staff will work with the Family Health Teams in Hamilton to help connect these residents with family physicians. • Housing Services Division staff will meet with CCAC in January 2014 and explore how care for residents could be better coordinated.
<p>8. That the City implement a qualitative monitoring of care for residents such as an annual survey or interview</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an important way to monitor how the Domiciliary Hostel is performing in terms of meeting its residents' needs. It is critical, however, that the survey be administered regularly and that the results be analyzed and acted upon. • A client satisfaction survey has been drafted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Services staff are in the process of developing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to hire a research group to undertake this effort on our behalf. • It is anticipated that the survey will be implemented in the spring of 2014 and the results available by the fall of 2014.
<p>9. That the residents and operators be informed of, be provided with assistance in making use of, and have access to other services including those that are available to all of Hamilton's residents such as recreational</p>	<p>See Recommendation 5.</p>	<p>See Recommendation 5.</p>

opportunities		
<p>11. That the City provide additional benefits for Domiciliary Hostel residents and support an increase to the monthly Personal Needs Benefit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recognized that the current Personal Needs Benefit (PNB) rate is inadequate for residents to meet many of their needs and participate fully in community life. It also must be acknowledged that the PNB is a barrier to people choosing Domiciliary Hostels as a place to live. • The team is investigating ways to increase resident benefits, including transportation and other client benefits through the CHPI review and discretionary benefits. • See Recommendation 4 regarding efforts to increase direct benefits to residents. 	<p>See Recommendation 4 regarding next steps for increasing direct benefits to residents.</p>
<p>12. That the City improve trusts and other supports for management of the residents' personal finances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustships have been identified as an important resource for many people. • The City funds Trustship Services for people in receipt of ODSP through the federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy. It can be hard to enroll people in these services because they are at full capacity. ODSP does not pay for trustship services. • An evaluation of the Trustship Services was completed by Housing Services Division in March 2011 which contained 14 recommendations to improve trustship programs. Processes have been implemented to identify and support trustship clients who can move towards independence. • The spaces created through this process will not address the trustship needs of Domiciliary Hostel residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standardized process is being implemented in the existing trustship programs and work is targeted to be complete by March 31, 2014. • As part of the third phase of the CHPI review, trustships will be reviewed as homelessness prevention strategy. Options for improving service to Domiciliary Hostel residents will be included.
<p>13. That the City make use of the current policy for Ontario Works</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would be helpful in addressing some operator concerns. A meeting was held with a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up will be undertaken with MCSS.

<p>recipients, and encourage the Ministry of Community and Social Services to make use of the current policy for Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) recipients, to permit personal needs benefits to be provided to the individual separately from the shelter allowance payments provided directly to the landlord, where agreed upon by the individual</p>	<p>representative of ODSP and it was identified that any change would require approval from MCSS rather than the local office of ODSP.</p>	
<p>15. That a web-based publicly accessible system be established that provides real-time information on the Domiciliary Hostel Program and Residential Care Facilities by location, number of beds, population served, vacancies, care provided, and contact information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for web-based information regarding the Domiciliary Hostel system has been reaffirmed by the Implementation Committee and others. • Websites containing Domiciliary Hostel information from other municipalities have been reviewed. Initial discussions have taken place to define the target audience and the relevant information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for each RCF will be collected through a questionnaire. • Web development will be undertaken through the winter and the target for completion of the website is spring 2014.
<p>16. That there be a feasibility study to establish a centralized placement process where clients are referred to Program staff who will conduct an assessment for subsidy and suitability for the program, determine the client's preferences and potential accommodations; arrange visits; and, enter into a subsidy agreement for the individual with their preferred operator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a lack of consensus at the Implementation Group regarding centralized placement which would suggest limiting choice for potential residents. • There was, however, consensus regarding exploring the development of a centralized intake process. It could ensure that all applicants receive consistent information about the DH Program and what it offers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralized intake will be further explored in Q1 2014.
<p>17. That the City identify a single</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff from Community and Emergency Services, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff from the three Departments are currently

<p>department in the municipal leadership role for the management of Domiciliary Hostels and provide the additional capacity to effectively fulfill this responsibility, including staffing and infrastructure</p>	<p>Public Health Services and Municipal By-Law Enforcement have been meeting to discuss options for streamlining communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions have focused on how to accomplish this within existing budgets. 	<p>developing a proposal for streamlined communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal will presented to senior leadership for review in January 2014.
<p>18. That the roles of various stakeholders in the Domiciliary Hostel Program be clearly defined</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and Emergency Services staff have been working with staff from Public Health Services and Municipal By-Law Enforcement on defining roles involved with administering the Domiciliary Hostel program and licensing expectations. • This exercise underpins the discussion of a single point of contact described in Recommendation 18. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of current roles and responsibilities will be complete December 2013. • A proposal regarding future rules will be made to management in February 2014.
<p>19. That the City consider creating a one-window approach, with a partnership focus, to support Domiciliary Hostel residents and operators, that coordinates a team of municipal staff from various departments which interacts with operators and facilitates communication. This may include joint inspections from more than one Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions regarding a one-window approach are connected with the recommendations regarding a municipal lead and defining roles and responsibilities. • Discussions between the Departments have sought to identify infrastructure to enhance communication among the municipal departments and operators. • Currently, systems are almost all manual. Opportunities are being explored for using software to capture client and facility information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2013 – investigate system solutions for data collection and potential data entry by operators. Look into how to store documents (inspections, licenses) in central repository for departments to share. • February 2014 – Present results of investigation to implementation team with recommendations.
<p>21. That the City expand activities to improve communications with stakeholders, such as expanding outreach to operators, developing a newsletter, and setting up a formal advisory committee to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A communique template has been developed that is being used to send information to operators, residents and staff. • A Domiciliary Hostel Working Group has been formed and meets monthly to address on-going operational concerns and issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Domiciliary Hostel Review Implementation Committee will continue to meet for one more year to continue providing advice regarding implementation of the recommendations. • A final report will come to Emergency and Community Services Committee in September

<p>provide advice to Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is also a Domiciliary Hostel Review Implementation Team that meets monthly to work on implementing the recommendations from the 2011 study. • The Tenant Advisory Committee to Council addresses issues relating to all tenants including Dom Hostel residents. • The Housing and Homelessness Action Plan also has representatives from the Domiciliary Hostel Program. 	<p>2014 including a proposal regarding the structure of committees to address Domiciliary Hostel issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Recommendation 15 regarding implementation of the website.
<p>22. That the City improve, update and formalize infrastructure, including information technology and operational policies and procedures, to facilitate stakeholders in fulfilling defined roles and responsibilities for the Domiciliary Hostel Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and Procedures for the Domiciliary Hostel Program have been updated and approved. • It is important that each department ensures their policies are up-to-date. Discussions have centred on where the policies can be most effectively housed. The Domiciliary Hostel website may provide an important venue for this. • The team is also investigating the potential for electronically filing all documents needed for licensing, inspections and subsidy in a central location. This would eliminate the need for duplicating documents and sending them to several different departments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Recommendation 15 regarding implementation of the website and Recommendation 19 regarding improvements to information technology infrastructure.
<p>23. That the City update the Domiciliary Hostel Subsidy Agreement Point Schedule</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A revised point schedule is under development to better reflect the quality of care provided by facilities wishing to receive subsidy contracts with the City of Hamilton. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft point schedule will be shared with the Domiciliary Hostel Review Implementation Committee and the Domiciliary Hostel Working group in December 2013. • The new Point Schedule will be implemented in 2014.
<p>24. That the City study the impact of reallocating subsidy agreements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue of chronic vacancies is a challenging one as operators have different rationale for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional data will be compiled regarding the current vacancy situation, the duration of those

<p>and explore potential reuse of existing beds, and if appropriate to reallocate subsidy agreements, develop a formula for reallocating subsidy agreements based on chronic vacancies and undertake the reallocation of service agreements based on the formula chosen</p>	<p>maintaining their level of occupancy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a system level, however, these vacancies create challenges in terms of ensuring that services are available to various populations and controlling costs. • Initial discussions at the Domiciliary Hostel Review Implementation Committee have not yielded consensus. 	<p>vacancies and the potential implications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft guidelines will be reviewed with the Domiciliary Hostel Review Implementation Committee in April, 2014.
<p>25. That the City establish an evaluation framework for new or expanded subsidy agreements for reallocated beds that considers the client group served, locational amenities, existing facilities for specific population groups, available support services, and size</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formalized policy was approved in July 2013. The policy was based on the existing practice and offered clarification regarding the process. • Additional work is needed to create a policy that more effectively achieves the outcomes mentioned in the recommendation. • The team has discussed various approaches including an RFP process for new subsidy agreements. There was also discussion about shifting the focus so the subsidy follows the individual. There was no consensus regarding the approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional information will be collected regarding the process used by other municipalities to award new subsidy agreements in February 2014. • Each of the proposals will be further fleshed out and reviewed with the Domiciliary Hostel Review Implementation Committee in April 2014.

TO BE STARTED NOVEMBER 2013

Recommendation	Next Steps
<p>29. That the City monitor the development of the Accessibility for Ontarians Act (AODA) Standards on Built Environment and Ontario French Language Services (FLS) Act in relation to the potential financial impact on Domiciliary Hostels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Domiciliary Hostel Program’s requirements under the AODA and FLS Act will be summarized along with potential implications. Discussion will take place with the Implementation Team in October, 2013. • Issues for the system and individual operators will be identified and solutions proposed.

Domiciliary Hostel Program Mission and Policy Statement

MISSION STATEMENT

The Domiciliary Hostel Program prevents homelessness by providing a subsidy for safe and affordable supported housing in a communal setting for people who require assistance to remain housed.

POLICY STATEMENT

Program Description

The City of Hamilton recognizes the Domiciliary Hostel Program as an important part of the housing continuum. The program offers choices of housing with support options for people who would otherwise be homeless, inappropriately housed in institutions and/or shelters or inadequately supported in other settings.

The goal of the Domiciliary Hostel Program is for residents to achieve housing stability with the greatest community participation and quality of life possible. The Domiciliary Hostel Program (DHP) provides funding for the operation of affordable and stable housing in Residential Care Facilities with supports individualized to each resident's needs. Funding is connected to individual residents on a per diem basis. Supports are provided through collaboration with the resident, the Residential Care Facility and community agencies as appropriate. The City of Hamilton determines the criteria that Residential Care Facilities must meet in order to receive subsidy payments through the DHP.

Eligibility Criteria

All potential residents are assessed by a qualified health professional as to their eligibility for a given facility prior to admission. An additional financial review for subsidy is completed by City of Hamilton staff.

To qualify for the DHP, an individual must be 18 years of age or over and meet established asset and income criteria. They must be able to maintain personal mobility at the time of admission and require assistance with identified activities of daily living.

Eligibility to live in a Residential Care Facility and receive subsidy through the DHP is based on functional assessments and means testing, rather than specific diagnoses. Lack of diagnostic specificity reflects the primary mission of the program which is to address the housing needs of the individual first.

Length of Stay

1. Individuals have unique requirements and remain housed through this program as long as the individual requires the level of service;
2. Chooses to live in a subsidized facility because it meets their identified goals; and,
3. Their needs do not exceed the level of service provided by the program.

Program Site Characteristics

Residential Care Facilities that have a Subsidy Agreement through the DHP share common characteristics which include but are not limited to:

- Communal living in a welcoming, clean, and pleasing environment;
- Freedom from harassment and/or the threat of violence for both staff and residents;
- Common areas that can be accessed and utilized by all residents;
- Communal spaces for dining and/or recreation and social activity;
- Accessible staffing presence; and,
- The provision of meal services, support for medication management and cleaning/laundry services.

The DHP aspires to offer residents the choice of neighbourhood, size of residence, targeted or general client group, single or mixed gender, and single or shared rooms.

Operating Principles

The principles adopted by the City of Hamilton as part of the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan also apply to the Domiciliary Hostel Program.

- **Person-Centred Supports:** Residents need to be placed at the centre of decision making regarding setting goals and accessing supports.
- **Rights-Based and Anti-Discrimination:** Residents often face stigma and barriers in the housing market. The DHP must work to ensure that residents are treated with fairness and equity.
- **Risk and Protective Factors:** The DHP, RCF Operators and community service providers must work to help residents develop their strengths and address their challenges.
- **Evidence-Based, Measurable and Impact-Driven:** Decisions within the DHP should be based on intentional planning and good evidence which have measurable positive impacts and outcomes.

- Efficient and Effective Use of Community Resources: Budgets and policies should be fair and transparent, while keeping the full system of housing and homelessness services in consideration.
- Integrated and Comprehensive Community Planning: The success of residents is supported by the coordination of services in the Residential Care Facility and across the community.
- Place and Neighbourhoods: The DHP provides an important form of housing in different neighbourhoods and provides opportunities for social inclusion for its residents.

Supports

Supports in the Domiciliary Hostel Program (DHP) are:

- Individualized to residents.
- Integrated through planning involving the resident, facility operators and staff, community service and health care providers and City of Hamilton staff.
- Direct supports including but not limited to the provision of meals, cleaning services, support for individual activities of daily living and the facilitation of access to medical and social services.
- Indirect supports include but are not limited to the coordination of services and identification of resources.
- Articulated in a Resident Plan that identifies specific support needs and resident goals.
- Flexible as resident needs change with time and circumstance.

A resident qualifying for the DHP has inherently complex support needs. As such any facility with a subsidy agreement will operate in a manner that facilitates best resident outcomes. Operational characteristics of facilities include:

- High levels of collaboration
- Requests for assistance where services extend beyond scope
- Reasonable access to the facility by identified services
- Reasonable access to information that facilitates support of the resident

Conversely, partnering agencies and providers will conduct their business within a facility in a manner that is respectful of residents, facility operators and staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

The DHP is administered by the City of Hamilton which enters into subsidy agreements with RCF's. The City of Hamilton abides by the terms of the subsidy agreements. The City of Hamilton funds the DHP through the provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative and with municipal funding.

The City is responsible for administering the funding for the Domiciliary Hostel Program as outlined in the Subsidy Agreement between the Residential Care Facility operators and the City. The funding must be administered in accordance with Provincial guidelines and the City's financial policies and procedures.

The DHP provides funding to RCF Operators on a per diem basis. This recognizes the choice of individual operators to determine the number of residents whose stay is either subsidized or privately funded. Outcome measures are specified by the Province under the CHPI Program. The City will also determine other performance measures and the collection of appropriate data.

Hamilton Fire Services, the Planning and Economic Development (Municipal Law Enforcement), and Public Health Services are responsible for licensing and inspecting Residential Care Facilities to ensure that minimum standards are met. The Community and Emergency Services Department is responsible for planning, funding and administering the DHP and is accountable to the Province for delivery of the program through the CHPI. The Community and Emergency Services Department works with the Residential Care Facility Operators to ensure that the services meet the program's mission and bring partners together when gaps in service are identified.

RCF Operators are responsible for complying with the DHP Subsidy Agreement including compliance with the Licensing by-law and Residential Tenancies Act. They are responsible for providing quality accommodation and support to the residents who live in their homes.

RCF staff, including the owner/operator, deliver the direct services of the DHP. They are responsible for providing service within an identified scope of practice and maintaining their competency.

RCF tenants have responsibility of setting their goals, selecting appropriate supports and to be part of the RCF community in which they live. They must abide by the house rules and responsibilities under the Residential Tenancies Act.

Community service providers may include medical, mental health, recreational and other service providers. They have a responsibility to support clients in goal setting and achieving those goals. They also have a role in working with the RCF Operators to help ensure that clients are supported in their homes in order to achieve their goals.