



INFORMATION REPORT

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| TO: | Chair and Members Emergency & Community Services Committee |
| COMMITTEE DATE: | January 18, 2016 |
| SUBJECT/REPORT NO: | Changes to Intake Process for Domiciliary Hostel Program (CES16007) (City Wide) |
| WARD(S) AFFECTED: | City Wide |
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| SIGNATURE: | |

Council Direction:

Not applicable

Information:

Starting January 4, 2016 the Housing Services Division of the Community and Emergency Services Department introduced a new process for providing subsidies to Residential Care Facilities (RCF) residents. The subsidy program is called the Domiciliary Hostel Program. A central intake and waitlist process is being introduced with the goal of managing the number of people accessing the program in order to contain expenditures within the existing operating budget.

The change is rooted in the recommendations from a review of the Domiciliary Hostel Program which was completed in 2010. On September 8, 2011, Emergency and Community Services (E&CS) Committee received a report entitled Room for Potential – Domiciliary Hostel Program Review (CS10036(a)). Two of the review's recommendations focused on increasing the per diem rate paid to RCF operators and increasing the amount of money residents keep each month for their personal expenses.

In 2012, the Province gave the City the ability to set the per diem rate paid to operators and the monthly allowance retained by subsidized residents. On November 25, 2013, Report CS13017(a) was approved by E&CS Committee. The report recognized the importance of Domiciliary Hostels as part of the housing continuum and included a recommendation to increase the per diem from \$47.75 to \$48.25.

Council authorized a second increase in the per diem from \$48.25 to \$50 effective April 1, 2015 (Report CES15007 – 2015 Increase to Domiciliary Hostel Program Per Diem

Rate). The report stated that program costs would be monitored throughout the year and if it is forecast that actual expenditures may exceed the approved budget, a wait list for a Domiciliary Hostel subsidy would be implemented to remain within the approved budget.

On April 13, 2015, Report CES15021 – Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Housing with Related Support Standards Framework was approved by E&CS Committee. An increase in the monthly allowance that residents retain was increased from \$138 to \$150 effective June 1, 2015. In that report, it stated that given the increase it may be necessary to implement a wait list to remain within the approved budget.

The increase to the per diem rate and the monthly allowance for residents were managed within the 2015 budget given that neither of the increases spanned a full budget year. It is anticipated that in 2016, there will be a budgetary pressure if no action is taken to mitigate the program costs. The new intake process is designed to provide greater ability to manage the program costs by controlling the number of people accessing the subsidy program.

In the new procedure, a central intake process will become the primary entry point for individuals interested in applying for a subsidy to live in an RCF. The central intake service will be staffed by Housing Services Division RCF Case Managers. An application to determine financial eligibility for a subsidy will be completed over the telephone or in person, depending on the applicant's needs. The number to apply for a subsidy is 905-546-2225.

Operators may choose one of two options for a new admission to their RCF. The operator may choose to continue to admit people to their facility when there is a vacancy and enter into a private payment agreement with the resident until an application is completed to determine eligibility and a subsidy is available. The other option is for the operator to wait to admit the individual until after the subsidy has been approved and available.

All RCF Operators who participate in the Domiciliary Hostel Program were invited to an information session in December 2015 to learn about the new intake process. Their input was used in development of the policy and guidelines for the new process.

On an average month in 2015, 765 people received subsidy through the Domiciliary Hostel Program. In 2016, an average of 740 residents per month may receive a subsidy to remain within the budget. On average, 15 subsidized residents are discharged each month from RCF's. In order to downsize the total number of residents by 25, no new subsidies will be granted until the number of subsidized residents reaches 740. It is anticipated that there will be no new subsidies granted for the months of January and February 2016. When the number reaches 740, subsidies will begin to

be granted to individuals from the waitlist on a chronological basis as RCF residents are discharged and no longer require a subsidy. Expenditures and number of residents will be closely monitored to ensure that as many subsidies as possible are issued while remaining within the existing budget.

The 2016 Domiciliary Hostel program costs are budgeted at \$6,702,880 per year and funded with 100% provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) funding. There is no change in the budget from 2015. It would cost an additional \$321,077 beyond the current budgeted amount to maintain a service level of 765 subsidized RCF residents.

Hospitals and correctional facilities are two of the largest referral sources for the RCFs. Housing Services staff have conducted information sessions for hospital discharge planners to discuss the implications for their work. Regular meetings will be held in 2016 with hospital representatives to monitor the implications and develop strategies to mitigate them. Efforts will continue to work with the various facilities impacted by the implementation of the waitlist including the correctional system. Staff will also monitor the impact of the subsidy waitlist on other services such as emergency shelters.

The new intake process will be closely monitored and adjusted as necessary to ensure that the wait times for subsidies are as short as possible in order to reduce the impact on Domiciliary Hostel Subsidy applicants.