



CITY OF HAMILTON
COMMUNITY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Housing Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency & Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	January 22, 2018
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Residential Care Facility Subsidy Program Waitlist (CES18003) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Greg Tedesco 905-546-2424 ext. 7168 Amanda DiFalco 905-546-2424 ext. 3132 Rob Mastroianni 905-546-2424 ext. 8035
SUBMITTED BY:	Vicki Woodcox Acting Director, Housing Services Division Community and Emergency Services Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the current waitlist for the Residential Care Facility (RCF) Subsidy Program continue to be maintained; and,
- (b) That the item respecting the RCF Subsidy Program be considered complete and removed from the Emergency and Community Services Committee's Outstanding Business List.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The RCF Subsidy Program, previously known as the Domiciliary Hostel Subsidy Program, is administered by the City of Hamilton and subsidizes the cost of accommodation, meals, supervision and assistance with activities of daily living for an average of 765 residents living in 54 RCFs. As a form of housing with supports, RCFs are an important part of Hamilton's housing continuum and provide an option for people who may require supports along with permanent housing.

RCFs are operated under a per diem funding model at a current rate of \$50 a day per resident, paid to the Owner/Operator of the facility. Residents of RCFs contribute to the cost of the service according to their income and the balance of the cost is funded through the RCF Subsidy Program which is 100% provincial CHPI funding.

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On January 4, 2016, the Housing Services Division of the Community and Emergency Services Department introduced a new process for allocating subsidies to RCF residents. A waitlist was introduced in order to manage the number of people accessing the RCF Subsidy Program to monitor and contain expenditures within the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) operating budget.

The CHPI budget is a capped budget, which means Hamilton receives a fixed annual allocation based on a provincial funding formula. It is important to continue to find ways within this context to manage programs where costs increase over time within fixed budgets.

The waitlist ensures that expenditures within the RCF Subsidy Program remain within budget, while also ensuring that individuals applying to the program are approved for subsidy as soon as possible into available spaces that meet their needs and that are a good fit for the RCF Operators. The Operators have been consulted during the development, implementation and operation of the RCF Subsidy Program waitlist in order to ensure that their operational and programming needs are also being supported.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial:

The RCF Subsidy Program is funded 100% through CHPI, with an annualized amount of \$6,702,880. If the current RCF Subsidy waitlist is maintained, there are no budget implications and no impact on the net levy.

A detailed review of the RCF Waitlist by staff in March 2017 concluded that the removal of the RCF Subsidy Waitlist would result in an additional annualized cost of approximately \$670,000, which would impact the net levy at 100%. This amount would be variable each year based on demand and could fluctuate, leading to additional financial pressures.

Staffing:

There are no staffing implications associated with Report CES18003.

Legal:

There are no legal implications associated with Report CES18003.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Previously, the Domiciliary Hostel Program was an 80/20 cost shared program with the Province and City of Hamilton. On January 1, 2013, the Province of Ontario consolidated funding for the Domiciliary Hostel Program into the Community

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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 CHPI program guidelines, the City has greater discretion in shaping the program.

On October 8, 2013, Report CS10036(c) was received by the Emergency and Community Services Committee regarding the City of Hamilton Domiciliary Hostel Review.

On November 25, 2013, Report CS13017(a) was received by the Emergency and Community Services Committee regarding the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Review. This report included a recommendation that the General Manager of the Community and Emergency Services Department or designate be authorized to implement spending caps, benefit frequency limits, or other controls necessary to ensure costs are contained within the approved CHPI operating budget.

On February 23, 2015, Report CES15007 was approved by the Emergency and Community Services Committee regarding a recommendation to increase the Domiciliary Hostel Program per diem rate from \$48.25 to \$50.

On January 18, 2016, Report CES16007 was received by the Emergency and Community Services Committee regarding Changes to Intake Process for Domiciliary Hostel Program.

On August 10, 2016, Emergency and Community Services Committee approved motion 16-007 Item 9.2 "Residential Care Facilities Subsidy Program". The motion included direction to staff to report back on the feasibility of ending the RCF Subsidy Program wait list.

On June 12, 2017, Report CES17030 was received by the Emergency and Community Services Committee regarding Investment Plan for CHPI Homelessness Funding. The report recommended that the current waitlist for the RCF Subsidy Program continue to be maintained.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

None

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

During the development of the waitlist process, RCF Operators were consulted to ensure that they were able to provide input into the development and design of the policy and guidelines of the new process.

All RCF Operators were invited to an information session in December 2015 to learn about the new waitlist and intake process. The Domiciliary Hostels Working Group meets regularly where ongoing consultation and feedback occurs.

All RCF Operators were invited to a community meeting in July 2017 to receive information and provide feedback on changes to the RCF Subsidy Program waitlist. They were also provided with an update on waitlist statistics, including average wait time and the number of individuals pending subsidy approval.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Since its introduction in January 2016 the waitlist for the RCF Subsidy Program has been successful in containing expenditures within its operating budget, while ensuring that individuals on the waitlist are being approved for subsidy and connected to open spaces within RCFs. The waitlist process has assisted both applicants and RCF Operators in better identifying and matching applicant needs to particular RCFs.

In 2013, in order to ensure that programs funded through CHPI remain within their allocated amounts, Council approved authorization for the General Manager of the Community and Emergency Services Department to implement cost controls such as spending caps, benefit frequency limits, or other methods necessary to contain costs within the approved CHPI operating budget (Report CS13017(a)). The continuation of the current waitlist for the RCF Subsidy Program ensures that it remains within the CHPI operating budget.

Within the CHPI budget, 57.7% of expenditures are variable and driven by demand. This level of variability within the budget requires the implementation of cost control measures in order to ensure that programs funded through CHPI remain within their allocated amounts. Any fluctuations within program expenditures may result in impacts to other CHPI funded programs or impacts to the levy.

Staff undertook a detailed review of the waitlist in March 2017. The review concluded that an additional annualized cost of approximately \$670,000 would be required in order to remove the waitlist and that this increase would be unsustainable within the CHPI capped budget. The estimated increase in annualized cost is variable year to year based on demand and may increase over time. Due to this unpredictability, staff recommended at the time to maintain the waitlist for the RCF Subsidy Program in order to continue to monitor and contain expenditures within the CHPI operating budget.

The current budget allows for subsidizing approximately 765 individuals. Although the waitlist is in place, individuals are still able to be approved for subsidy through attrition. Staff continue to implement waitlist process efficiencies while working closely with RCF Operators to ensure individuals who are approved for subsidy move as soon as

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possible into available spaces that meet their needs and that are a good fit for the Operators.

As of September 30, 2017, the average time on the waitlist was 25 days with 33 residents active and waiting for subsidy. Expenditures and the waitlist continue to be closely monitored to ensure that as many subsidies as possible are issued while remaining within the existing budget.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Healthy and Safe Communities

Hamilton is a safe and supportive city where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None