



**CITY OF HAMILTON**  
**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**  
**Healthy Families Division**

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members Board of Health
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	October 18, 2019
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Seniors Oral Health (BOH19026(a)) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Pat Armstrong (905) 546-2424 Ext. 7158
<b>SUBMITTED BY &amp; SIGNATURE:</b>	Jennifer Vickers-Manzin, CNO Director, Healthy Families Division Public Health Services

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- (a) That the Board of Health authorize and direct the Medical Officer of Health to receive, utilize and submit reports for the approved capital from the Ministry of Health to support the service delivery plan for low-income seniors.
- (b) That the Board of Health authorize and direct the Medical Officer of Health to increase complement in the Public Health Services by 5.8 full time equivalents as outlined in BOH19026(a).

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Oral health impacts overall health across the lifespan. Population health data shows that poor oral health is common in Hamilton and has greater negative effects on the city's most vulnerable populations, including seniors. Many seniors in Hamilton cannot afford dental care and either pay out of pocket or forgo regular dental care. As a result, many seniors increasingly seek dental care in hospital emergency departments. Seniors living in low-income areas are two times more likely to visit hospitals than those living in high income areas.

In April 2019, the provincial government announced a new Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program (OSDCP) for low-income seniors. The goal is to help reduce unnecessary trips

to the hospital, prevent chronic disease and increase quality of life for seniors. Public Health Services (PHS) alongside key stakeholders, has been actively involved in the planning and local development of the OSDCP following the Ministry of Health's (the Ministry) prescribed criteria and multi-staged process. Over the summer a capital funds application was developed and submitted to the Ministry by the August 14 deadline.

Areas with low-income seniors are distributed across the city with higher numbers in the lower west city, lower east city and central mountain. Proposed service locations are within a five kilometre radius of the largest low-income population clusters in Hamilton.

The purpose of this report is to provide more details regarding the proposed service delivery plan for the OSDCP in Hamilton, which is summarized in Chart 1 and Chart 2.

**Chart 1: Stage 1– Leveraging Existing Resources**

<b>Stage 1 Implementation</b>	
<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
PHS downtown dental clinic	Increase restorative, preventive and denturist services
PHS dental bus	Increase restorative, preventive and emergency services
PHS dental bus services to long-term care homes	Provide additional hours for new services to low-income seniors residing in long-term care homes. To be piloted at Macassa and Wentworth Lodges in the Fall of 2019 with expansion to other sites in 2020
PHS east end clinic	Increase preventive services
PHS mountain clinic	Increase preventive services
Urban Core Community Health Centre	Increase preventive services
All sites	Increase awareness of program and support seniors to apply for coverage

**Chart 2: Stage 2 – Capital Investments**

<b>Stage 2 Implementation (ranked order)</b>	
<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>
Centre de Santé Communautaire	Provide new restorative, preventive and denturist services 6 days per week
PHS mountain clinic	Expand from prevention only to include restorative and mobile services
Replacement of PHS dental bus	Maintain restorative, preventive and emergency services

Urban Core Community Health Centre	Expand from prevention only to include restorative and denturist services at new site at Cannon and Wellington
PHS downtown dental clinic	Expand capacity at PHS' downtown dental clinic to provide restorative, preventive and denturist services.

The service delivery plan will allow for over 4300 low-income seniors in Hamilton to access dental services. This includes the 1000 eligible clients in long term care homes and the expected 500 eligible seniors that can access denturist services. For the bus and clinic appointments, 77% of the appointments available will be for restorative services while 23% will be for preventive services.

The proposed service delivery plan will require a 5.8 full time equivalent (FTE) increase to PHS' Dental Program complement. In addition, 6.5 FTE of existing program staff will be moved from the Municipal dental programs and Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO) to the OSDCP to reflect the new plan and trends in service uptake.

The Ministry has indicated further communication is forthcoming regarding the date seniors can begin to apply to the program, the final service schedule, as well as, a decision regarding the possible introduction of patient co-payments for dentures.

Staff will report on 2019/20 budget implications through in-year budget reporting and the 2020 budget process.

### **FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: \$2,248,100.00 in additional base funding from the Ministry for the OSDCP. A breakdown of funding by service site is outlined in Chart 3.

Staffing: PHS dental staffing levels will increase by 5.8 FTE, consisting of 1.2 FTE clinical dentists, 1.0 FTE supervisor, 0.6 FTE receptionist, 0.1 FTE bus driver, 1.0 FTE denturist, 0.1 FTE registered dental hygienist, 1.0 FTE program secretary and 0.8 FTE dental assistant.

Existing 6.5 FTE program staff will be reallocated to the OSDCP based on current and projected numbers of clients serviced.

### **Chart 3: Proposed Budget for Ontario Seniors' Dental Care Program in Hamilton**

<b>Service Delivery Site</b>	<b>Annual Budget</b>
Public Health Services	\$1,402,683
Centre de Santé Communautaire	\$255,456
Urban Core	\$109,783

Contracted Dental Lab*	\$200,000
Contracted Oral Surgeon*	\$280,178
TOTAL	\$2,248,100

\*these services will be accessed by all sites

Legal: The OSDCP is part of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* and governed by the Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreement between the City and the Ministry. All partnerships between the BOH and Community Health Centres (CHCs) will be governed by a Service Level Agreement (SLA), which will outline performance expectations, funding, reporting requirements and accountability mechanisms. Denture lab work and oral surgeon services will be contracted in alignment with procurement rules.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The City of Hamilton currently provides dental services to low-income seniors at the Public Health dental clinic and the dental health bus for those who cannot afford dental care in the community. Prior to the announcement of the OSDCP, these programs have been 100% funded by the Municipality.

In addition, City of Hamilton residents who require dental care can apply for funding through Ontario Works Special Supports program. In 2018, staff collaborated with Hamilton Community Foundation (HCF) to develop and implement Oral Health Enhancements including supplemental denture coverage for eligible low-income seniors who access the Special Supports program.

In April 2019, the Provincial government announced the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program for low-income seniors.

Since May, the Ministry has held several webinars to outline Public Health Unit (PHU) requirements as well as operational roles and responsibilities.

In June, the BOH received a letter from the Ministry announcing Hamilton's annual base funding increase of \$2,248,100.00 to support the new dental program. This is a 100% provincially funded program (i.e., not cost shared with municipalities).

Since June, PHS has been working collaboratively with key stakeholders to develop a service delivery plan which best services Hamilton's low-income seniors and follows the Ministry prescribed criteria and multi-staged process.

In July, the BOH approved the Senior's Oral Health report (BOH19026), delegating authority to the Medical Officer of Health to receive and utilize provincial funding and develop a local Seniors Dental Care Program.

In August, PHS submitted a capital funds application that supports implementation of the locally developed Seniors Dental Care service delivery plan. As of the writing of this report, the Ministry has not communicated the status of the application.

Staff will provide updates on any further implications for all the above programs once further details from the Ministry are received.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS**

Amendments to the OPHS and related protocols were released August 1, 2019 that outline PHU requirements and operational roles and responsibilities. The Ministry has indicated further communication is forthcoming regarding the date seniors can begin to apply to the program, the final service schedule and a decision regarding potential introduction of patient co-payment for dentures.

## **RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

- PHS consulted and achieved consensus in the development of a service delivery plan with Centre de Santé Communautaire, Compass Community Health Centre, Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre and De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Center.
- PHS has consulted with Ontario Works Special Supports program and the HCF to discuss potential impacts on programming.
- The draft plan was presented to the Seniors Advisory Committee who provided valuable input about increasing awareness of and registration for the program as well as the date seniors can begin to apply to the program and outreach to vulnerable populations.
- PHS continues to consult and develop a plan with Macassa and Wentworth Lodges to address the needs of seniors in long-term care.
- Continued and expanded engagement with the broader long-term care sector and organizations providing services to seniors is planned.
- PHS is working with Legal and Procurement services to develop SLAs and Partnership contracts.
- The report was reviewed by Finance and Administration, who provided review of financial figures.

## **ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

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OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.  
OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.  
OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

Oral health is linked to overall health and is an important health matter for many seniors in the community. As people age, their oral health may become worse due to medications, medical conditions as well as mobility limitations that make good oral hygiene difficult to maintain. In addition, seniors may face barriers to accessing dental care due to cost, limited physical and cognitive abilities and transportation.

The goal of the OSDCP is to reduce unnecessary trips to the hospital, prevent chronic disease and increase quality of life for seniors. The Ministry estimates a 40% uptake in Provincial programs and has allocated funding based on an estimated 3,986 eligible seniors applying to the OSDCP in Hamilton. The OSDCP eligibility requirements include:

- 65 years and older;
- resident of Ontario;
- annual income below thresholds (single seniors less than \$19,300 and for a couple less than \$32,300); and,
- no access to any other forms of dental benefits (e.g. Ontario Disability Support Program or the Federal Non-Insured Health Benefits).

Public Health Units were asked to rank projects within their catchment area based on:

- local need;
- value for money (efficient and economical approach to dental infrastructure); and,
- equity (geographically underserviced areas and vulnerable sub-populations).

Further, the Ministry provided criteria for sequential ordering of projects within the capital proposal. They are:

- build on existing infrastructure;
- expand into unoccupied space; and,
- expand into occupied space, or lease expansion/new lease

Centre de Santé Communautaire, Compass CHC, Hamilton Urban Core CHC and De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Center have been actively involved in the planning and local development of Hamilton's Seniors Dental Care Program based on population health data and current literature in alignment with the Ministry's prescribed criteria and multi-staged process.

In Hamilton, there are approximately 10,230 seniors who could be eligible for the new program by age, income and residence (Appendix "A" to Report BOH12026(a) - Senior's Oral Health Infographic 2018-2019). Of the 10,230, those with dental insurance will be ineligible. It is estimated:

- 23% of low-income seniors have access to other benefits;
- 1,000 eligible seniors reside in long term care homes; and,
- 47% of seniors in Hamilton wear dentures with denture replacement being required every 5-10 years.

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Emergency room data shows a higher need for appointment times in the mornings; on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and the weekend. Low-income seniors are distributed across the city, however, there are 3 main clusters in the lower east city, lower west city and central mountain (Appendix "B" to Report BOH19026(a) - Seniors Oral Health Map - High Density Clusters of Low-Income Seniors in Hamilton).

Local research indicates that geographic proximity to dental services is a significant predictor of receiving dental services but only explains about 20% of why seniors do not access dental services. Cost, fear and 'not thinking it is necessary' are also significant barriers to accessing dental care. The greatest oral health inequities are associated with the following social determinants:

- low-income;
- no partner (single, separated, divorced, or widowed); and,
- housing need (affordability, unsuitable, or inadequate).

A 2009 Statistics Canada report states three quarters of all seniors had a drivers licence and only a minority of seniors used other transportation. Fewer low-income seniors are likely to have driver's licences. One kilometre is typically referred to as "walking distance" while five kilometres is referred to as a reasonable distance to travel to access services.

Application of the Ministry's criteria, a review of the population health data and literature resulted in local prioritization by key stakeholders which is summarized in Chart 4.

**Chart 4: Local Prioritization**

<b>Ministry Criteria</b>	<b>Local planning decisions</b>
Local Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• restorative services prioritized over preventive services;</li><li>• organizations with greater capacity for service volume or ability to operate for a greater number of hours prioritized.</li></ul>
Value for Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• stage 1 solutions (leverage existing infrastructure) prioritized over Stage 2 solutions (capital investments);</li><li>• denture lab work and oral surgeon services will be contracted.</li></ul>
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• increasing services in east end prioritized, followed by increasing services on the mountain, followed by new service downtown;</li><li>• increasing access to services by eligible seniors in LTC prioritized;</li><li>• providing services by organizations that have access to marginalized populations prioritized.</li></ul>

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Hamilton's comprehensive service delivery plan will allow for over 4300 low-income seniors to access dental services. This includes the 1000 eligible clients in long term care homes and the expected 500 eligible seniors that can access denturist services. For the bus and clinic appointments, 77% of the appointments will be for restorative services while 23% will be for preventive services. Proposed service locations are within a five kilometre radius of the largest low-income population clusters in Hamilton.

The first stage includes leveraging existing infrastructure to maximize capacity. The plan includes:

- increased capacity at PHS' downtown dental clinic for restorative, preventive and denturist services;
- increased capacity at PHS' east end and mountain clinics for preventive services;
- increased capacity at PHS' dental health bus. Increased hours will be used to support eligible low-income seniors including those residing in long-term care homes. The model of care will be piloted at Macassa and Wentworth Lodges in the Fall of 2019 with expansion to other LTC homes planned for 2020; and,
- improved and enhanced capacity at Hamilton Urban Core CHC (existing site) for preventive services.

The second stage includes capital investment projects which are listed in ranked order:

- create capacity at Centre de Santé Communautaire for preventive, restorative and denturist services 6 days per week;
- create capacity at PHS' mountain clinic to expand beyond preventive service and include restorative and mobile services;
- a replacement dental health bus to replace aging infrastructure and continue to provide service as per Stage 1;
- create capacity at Hamilton Urban Core CHC for restorative, preventive and denturist services in the new location at Cannon and Wellington; and,
- increased capacity at PHS' downtown dental clinic to provide restorative, preventive and denturist services.

To support awareness of the OSDCP a comprehensive communication plan is being developed with key stakeholders. The plan will include:

- supporting seniors and their families to improve their oral health knowledge and awareness of oral health services;
- targeting outreach to priority populations;
- assisting seniors and their families to enrol, including assistance to complete all required documentation and/or consents;
- assisting eligible seniors in finding and accessing a dental provider; and,
- increasing awareness of available oral health services among community partners.



The result of our review and program development includes the reallocation of 6.5 FTE of existing program staff to the new seniors program. A proportion of these FTE are funded by the Municipality and a proportion through Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO). HSO is a 100% provincially funded program for eligible children 17 years of age and younger. Families may access HSO dental services through PHS or private dental clinics at their choice. PHS has improved HSO uptake through piloting and implementing the use of portable dental equipment at targeted schools. Despite ongoing attempts to increase HSO service at PHS dental clinic, HSO uptake remains steady but below previously projected numbers.

## **ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

Not applicable

## **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**

Appendix "A" to Report BOH19026(a): Seniors Oral Health Infographic 2018-2019

Appendix "B" to Report BOH19026(a): Seniors Oral Health Map – High Density Clusters of Low-Income Seniors in Hamilton