



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	February 4, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Residential Care Facility (RCF) Liaison 2nd Quarter Update (HSC20040(a)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Rikki Frith (905) 546-2424 Ext. 7604
SUBMITTED BY:	Paul Johnson General Manager Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Emergency and Community Services Committee at its meeting of June 19, 2020 approved the following:

“That Staff be directed to report back on the recommended accountability standards, service levels and process requirements for the various types of complaints that can be addressed by the RCF Liaison position, including details regarding:

- (i) How the facility will be told that there is a complaint and given an opportunity to correct the situation;
- (ii) If the investigation reveals non-compliance, how the facility will be required to correct the situation and ensure future compliance and how the public will be notified; and,
- (iii) How the Complainant will be provided with follow up information regarding the outcome of the investigation.

That the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department will report quarterly a summary of the complaints received, and the status of the complaints”.

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.

INFORMATION

A one-year temporary Residential Care Facility (RCF) liaison position was created in June 2020 to answer phone calls and emails from RCF residents and/or their families, friends, caregivers, staff, etc. who have serious concerns or complaints about their residential care facility. Concerns may include (but not limited to) facility cleanliness or disrepair, food issues (lack thereof or quality), infestation, abuse or neglect, aggressive residents or lack of supervision, medication control and/or fire hazards. In the early days of this position being created, posters advertising the RCF complaint liaison phone number and email were distributed to all Hamilton-based RCFs for posting in their common areas. Public Health Inspectors have been advised to look for the posters during their routine inspections to ensure they are posted in high-visibility areas. The contact information is also available on the City of Hamilton website.

All complaints received are logged and forwarded on to the appropriate city staff to deal with (i.e. Municipal Law Enforcement (MLE), Public Health, Hamilton Fire Department) or, in some cases (including abuse and neglect), to the Retirement Home Regulatory Authority (RHRA) (www.rhra.ca or 1-855-ASK-RHRA). Where the RHRA might play a role, residents or their advocates are encouraged to call the RHRA directly to connect with someone who can either provide immediate support and recommendations or can begin an official investigation into the facility. If an investigation is warranted, results are posted on the RHRA website approximately 90 days after the investigation is opened.

The following table outlines the contact volume/type of contacts received, including complaint status, in the first quarter of this year-long initiative (October-December 2020):

Complainant	Complaint Type	Departments Involved	Outcome
Resident	Food – quality, lack of fresh fruit/vegetables, real fruit juice. PNA – inadequate to meet monthly personal needs	Public Health RCF Subsidy Office	Resolved. No charges laid.
Resident	Food – lack of variety, lack of seasonal fresh fruit/vegetables.	Public Health	Resolved. No charges laid.
Previous Resident	Concerns about theft of personal items and perceived disrespect by staff	Hamilton Police Services RCF Subsidy Office	Resolved. No charges laid.

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Complainant	Complaint Type	Departments Involved	Outcome
Relative	Sister's room size	Public Health	Resolved. No charges laid.
Resident of Retirement Home	Food quality and lack of variety. Limited funds to purchase alternatives.	Public Health	Resolved. No charges laid.
Employee of Retirement Home	Concerns with management of the home and the home's future stability.	Public Health MLE RHRA	Provincial and local license revoked. Under RHRA surveillance. Future unclear.
Resident	Food – quality, lack of fresh fruit/vegetables, real fruit juice. Only water served with meals. Residents told to purchase own toilet paper.	Public Health	Resolved. No charges laid.
Resident	Basic needs not being met. Staff/management verbally abusive to residents. Food quality/taste/repetition. Believes Canada Food Guidelines not being followed. Dirty pillows.	Public Health RCF Subsidy Office	Resolved. No charge laid.
Resident	Unhappy with COVID restrictions impacting furniture placement in common area	Public Health	Resolved. No charges laid.
Resident	Concerns with theft of personal items.	RCF Subsidy Office	Resolved. No charges laid.

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Complainant	Complaint Type	Departments Involved	Outcome
Agency Caseworker	Confused, wandering resident of RCF not retrieved by RCF staff. Told to send her home by bus/cab as she wanders quite often.	RHRA	Provincial and local license revoked. Under RHRA surveillance. Future unclear.
Relative	Operator of RCF not wearing appropriate PPE in common areas of retirement home.	Public Health MLE	Inspector dispensed to review and remind of PH guidelines and regulations.

Other phone calls and emails received via the RCF Liaison complaint mechanism were not specific to RCF residents and/or caregivers, friends, family, etc. These included neighbour complaints specific to RCF resident behaviours (i.e. drug dealing and use, public urination/defecation, noise/bad language, theft, aggressive panhandling), perceived lack of supervision by operators/RCF home staff, general disorderly conduct within a neighbourhood and the impacts these behaviours have on neighbours' lives. Often these complaints were shared with multiple contacts within the city and most recently, correspondence addressing these concerns and outlining the city's actions was sent to several residents who shared these concerns. Where appropriate, these complaints were shared with MLE and complainants were advised to contact the Hamilton Police Services for more immediate disturbances. Other phone calls and emails received had nothing to do with RCFs and were redirected as appropriate.

Public Health Inspectors and MLE Enforcement Officers routinely work proactively with operators of these RCFs to address issues related to food/menu planning, adherence to COVID guidelines and regulations and finding solutions to resident complaints. MLE and Public Health staff also track complaints received through their offices and if a pattern emerges, additional steps can be taken (including but not limited to suspension of RCF operator license renewal) to ensure compliance. In some cases (as noted above) the same complaint comes in via several different contacts (emails and phone calls to various departments, Councillor's office, Customer Contact Centre and RCF liaison). Representatives from the RCF multi-disciplinary team believe that a revamp of Schedule 20 would address some of the duplicities seen with these concerns but in the meantime, the RCF multi-disciplinary team meets on a regular basis to discuss mutual issues and proactively address concerns and inefficiencies.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None