



CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
Healthy Families Division

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	April 19, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Secondment of Child & Adolescent Services Staff to Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services (BOH21005) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Lynn Foye (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3697
SUBMITTED BY:	Jennifer Vickers-Manzin, CNO Director, Healthy Families Division Public Health Services
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the Board of Health authorize and direct the Medical Officer of Health to receive, utilize, and report on the use of funding from Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services for a 0.4 FTE Psychological Associate position in the Child & Adolescent Services program;
- (b) That the Board of Health authorize an increase to the Child & Adolescent Services staff complement by a 0.4 FTE Psychological Associate for a temporary full-time position for the duration of the twenty-four month pilot project; and,
- (c) That the Board of Health authorize and direct the Medical Officer of Health to enter into a secondment agreement between the City of Hamilton and Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services for a twenty-four month pilot project with a one term renewal option, satisfactory in form to the City Solicitor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Local and Provincial data indicates increases in suicide, mental illness, and substance use overdoses, especially among youth and young adults. Emerging evidence suggests this trend has been exacerbated by COVID-19 and will result in increased need for mental health services. Psychological assessment is recognized as a key component in

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child and youth mental health. However, there remains a lack of accessible and timely psychological services for some of our most vulnerable children, youth and families and for those experiencing rising risk in the face of COVID-19.

The Child & Adolescent Services Program (C&AS) staff complement includes a permanent 0.6 FTE Psychological Associate position. Recruitment and retention of Psychological Associates within the child and youth outpatient mental health sector is difficult due to the available number of eligible candidates. Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services approached C&AS to enter into a secondment partnership to overcome these shared challenges and work together to build capacity to respond effectively to children, youth and families in need of psychological services.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services will provide annual funding for a 0.4 FTE Psychological Associate position to be seconded from C&AS for the duration of the agreement, which ends on March 31, 2023.

Staffing: This secondment will enable C&AS to create a 1.0 FTE Psychological Associate position.

Legal: Implementation of the recommendations will require Public Health Services and Legal Services to prepare a service contract between the City of Hamilton, C&AS, and Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

C&AS provides outpatient children’s mental health services for Hamilton children, youth and families from birth to 18 years of age. Services are community based and delivered by a multidisciplinary team comprised of registered social workers, psychotherapists, family therapists, an occupational therapist and a psychological associate.

The need for timely, appropriate and responsive mental health treatment for children, youth and families is well documented. The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified this need. At C&AS our referral volume has doubled across all programs, resulting in longer wait times and increased workload pressure for our staff team. Our modified Quick Access Service, virtual walk-in pilot and counselling and therapy programs continue to deliver high quality mental health services and we continue to use our resources to support local efforts to address the impacts of COVID-19 on priority populations.

Evidence suggests that as many as 75% of children and youth experiencing mental health do not access the appropriate services and of these, less than 25% have access

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to specialized treatment services. Psychological Associates are trained in child and adolescent development and have extensive training in mental health prevention and promotion and demonstrated competency in understanding the best course of treatment and activity-based therapies to enable positive outcomes. Psychological assessment services imbedded within community based mental health play an invaluable role in ensuring that children and youth are receiving the most appropriate mental health treatment, from the most appropriate provider and at the most appropriate time.

Maintaining a 1.0 FTE Psychological Associate position will enable C&AS and our community partner Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services, to retain and attract the high-quality staffing resources we need to provide timely, appropriate and responsive mental health services. Further, this secondment partnership will maintain valuable Psychological Associate services at the community-based service level, improving access to specialized assessment and positive outcomes for vulnerable children, youth and their families mental now and through the early stages of COVID-19 recovery.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

This secondment service agreement will be implemented in accordance to City of Hamilton Purchasing and Finance & Administration policies.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Legal and Risk Management Services, Corporate Services will be consulted in the development of the Secondment Agreement to ensure alignment with Corporate and Public Health Services policies.

The Manager, Labour Relations has consulted on CUPE 5167 Collective Agreement and human resource implications. Labour Relations confirmed that CUPE 5167 will be notified of the secondment agreement once approved.

Finance & Administration was consulted to determine the cost for salary and benefits of a 0.4 FTE Psychological Associate position. The Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services Executive Director will continue to work with C&AS to formalize the secondment agreement and associated implementation strategy.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Recruitment and retention of Psychological Associates within the child and youth outpatient mental health sector is difficult due to the number of available eligible candidates and the part-time contractual nature of the position. This secondment is fiscally beneficial for C&AS and Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services, it allows both programs to retain specialized and skilled workforce resources to continue the excellent

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work of promoting child health within outpatient mental health programs and fosters ongoing collaboration with Public Health Services.

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.

Our People and Performance

Hamiltonians have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not Applicable.

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