



CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
Healthy Families Division

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	November 15, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Child & Adolescent Services 2021-2022 Budget and Base Funding Increase of Five Percent (BOH 21010) (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 2021-2022 Child & Adolescent Services Program budget funded by the Ministry of Health be approved; and, that the Medical Officer of Health be authorized and directed to receive, utilize, report on and execute all service agreements and contracts, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor, required to give effect to the 2021-2022 Child & Adolescent Services Program budget; and,
- b) That the Board of Health approve the increase of a permanent 0.61 FTE Clinical Therapist.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Child and Adolescent Services (C&AS) provides outpatient children's mental health services. C&AS serves Hamilton children, youth and families from birth to 18 years of age presenting with mental health concerns including social, emotional and/or behavioural problems. Services are community based and delivered by a

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multidisciplinary team comprised of registered social workers, psychotherapists, family therapists, an occupational therapist and a psychological associate.

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. This trend has been evident at C&AS where referrals for some programs have peaked at two times the pre-pandemic level. In recognition of the importance and increased demand for mental health services, the Ministry of Health is providing a five percent increase to the C&AS 2021-2022 base budget.

We have continued throughout the pandemic to provide high quality mental health services through both in-person and virtual care. High referral volume and public health measures have however significantly impacted service duration and wait times across all programs and wait times currently range from three weeks to eight months. The recent allocation of a five percent base increase to the C&AS operating budget allows us to maintain our current clinical therapist FTE and add a permanent 0.61 FTE clinical therapist. Increasing clinical therapist FTE will enable C&AS to support broader community efforts underway to strengthen existing services, reduce wait times, and respond to the negative impacts of COVID-19 in our community.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The 2021-2022 budget allocation and increase to base funding will add a permanent 0.61 FTE clinical therapist (\$65,324) to the 100% MOH funded budget. The remaining funds (\$44,176) from the five percent base increase will be used to offset cost of living, step increases, and to maintain current clinical therapist FTE.

Ministry of Health (MOH) Funding						
	2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022	
	Annual Budget	FTE	Annual Budget	FTE	Annual Budget	FTE
C&AS Children and Youth Mental Health Services	\$2,190,518	17.39	\$2,190,518	17.39	\$2,300,020*	18.00**

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* This amount reflects the additional annualized 5% increase to the 100% MOH funded operating budget.

** 0.61 FTE permanent clinical therapist added using 100% MOH funded dollars

Staffing: The addition of a permanent 0.61FTE clinical therapist will increase the overall complement at C&AS from 17.39 FTE to 18.0 FTE. The FTE will assist in reducing wait times for service.

Legal: C&AS is contracted with the Ministry of Health to provide programs and services to children and youth, aged birth to 18 years old.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

To stay within budget cap over the past five years C&AS has made the following FTE changes:

- **2016-2017**
A 0.60 FTE receptionist and 0.24 FTE clinical therapist reduction (BOH16025); and,
- **2017-2018**
A 0.22 FTE clinical therapist reduction (BOH17014); and,
- **2018-2019**
A five percent base funding increase enabled the program to maintain clinical therapist FTE and increase 0.46 FTE clinical therapist (BOH18024); and,
- **2019-2020**
A decrease of 0.17 clinical therapist FTE (BOH19036); and,
- **2020-2021**
Staffing levels and permanent 17.39 FTE staff maintained.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Provincially funded child and youth mental health services are provided to children and youth under 18 years of age under the authority of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* (CYFSA). Services and supports that address a range of social, emotional, behavioural, psychological and/or psychiatric problems are provided to children and youth who are at risk of, or who have developed, mental health problems, illnesses, or disorders.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Finance and Administration has been consulted regarding the preparation of the budget and provided review of included financial figures.

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ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Each year C&AS provides high quality, evidence-based mental health treatment services to approximately 800 new children, youth and their families in addition to those carried in from the previous year. Many of these clients are vulnerable children or youth dealing with serious emotional and/or behavioural problems as well as complex social problems such as the lack of sufficient housing and the experience of homelessness and poverty.

Mental health issues are a significant concern for children and youth in Hamilton. Increasing rates of hospital emergency room visits for self-harm have been well documented at both the provincial and local level. The services provided by C&AS are highly valued by families and can vastly improve the life trajectory of those served and help to turn the curve on mental health and well-being of children and youth in our community.

The number of families C&AS services each year is variable and dependent on several factors such as: the number of families referred; the length of time each family requires services; staffing levels and the length of wait for services. Continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts enable us to achieve small gains to maintain service levels and enhance access for those who vulnerable. For example, in 2020 we implemented onsite service provision through Good Shepherd Centre to increase access to children and families experiencing homelessness. In addition, immediate access to a clinical therapist through a virtual walk-in resulted in decreased wait times. We anticipate this virtual model will further assist us in mitigating operational and system pressure by streamlining administrative process for referrals while also mitigating long wait times for mental health services for children, youth and families.

We will monitor impact of this budget allocation on service delivery with a focused priority to mitigate potential negative impact to children and youth and staff.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Not Applicable.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Healthy and Safe Communities

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Our People and Performance

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

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not Applicable.