



CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
Epidemiology, Wellness, and Communicable Disease Control
Division

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	July 6, 2022
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Scarsin COVID-19 Forecasting Technology Procurement (BOH22013) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Ashley Vanderlaan (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4718
SUBMITTED BY:	Michelle Baird Director, Epidemiology, Wellness and Communicable Disease Control Division Public Health Services
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the Board of Health approve the single source procurement, pursuant to Procurement Policy #11 – Non-competitive Procurements, for:
 - (i) Scarsin Decision Support Software platform services;
 - (ii) Decision Support Software;
 - (iii) Software maintenance and support until February 16, 2023, with the option to extend for up to 24 months which option may be exercised incrementally or otherwise; and,
 - (iv) That the Medical Officer of Health be authorized to negotiate, enter into and execute a contract or amendment(s) to the City’s existing agreement and any ancillary documents required to give effect thereto with Scarsin Corporation, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor; and,

- (b) That the Board of Health authorize the Medical Officer of Health to execute an amendment(s) to our Collaboration Agreement with St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton, Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation and the Greater Hamilton Health Network to outline the continued cost sharing, use and sharing of the Scarsin Decision Support Software COVID-19 forecasting intelligence.

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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As per the Corporate Procurement Policy (By-Law No. 20-205, as amended) Section 4.11 (2(a)), it is recommended that Hamilton Public Health Services, through the Hamilton COVID-19 Response Table (HCRT): (1) continue to procure the Scarsin Decision Support Service platform to inform Hamilton's ongoing COVID-19 response planning and decision-making; (2) to do so by extension agreement, amendment or new agreement with Scarsin Corporation (Scarsin); and (3) to amend the Collaboration Agreement with St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton (SJHH), Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation (HHS) and the Greater Hamilton Health Network (GHHN). The current Scarsin contract and Collaboration Agreement are set to expire on August 16, 2022.

Per the Procurement Policy (By-Law No.20-205 as amended) Section 4.11 (2(a)), it is recognized that executing a contract or amendment to the City's existing agreement with Scarsin will exceed the Policy 11 cumulative spend threshold of \$250,000, and that further engagement requires the Board of Health's approval for negotiations to enter into a single source purchase of the Scarsin Decision Support Service platform until February 16, 2023 with the option to extend for up to 24 months which option may be exercised incrementally or otherwise.

Since February 17, 2021, through the Hamilton COVID-19 Response Table (HCRT), Public Health Services, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation, and the Greater Hamilton Health Network, have collectively worked with Scarsin, further to a Public Health Services acquired license to use the software. This partnership was established to perform local COVID-19 forecasting and reporting activities surrounding COVID-19 infection spread and severity in the short, medium and long-term horizons to inform our community's response. All partners have entered into a Collaboration Agreement outlining the continued cost sharing, use and sharing of the forecasting intelligence.

On both August 16, 2021 and February 15, 2022, Public Health Services entered into two six-month contract extensions with Scarsin. For the initial contract, first and second software contract extensions, and additional technical software support, as per the Procurement Policy, four Non-competitive Procurement Forms were approved by the Healthy and Safe Communities Department General Manager.

Hamilton's utilization of Scarsin's forecasting technology has helped to strengthen our community's collective response by anticipating case trajectory and severity related to COVID-19 transmission. This forecasting technology supports evidence-informed decision-making, allowing Public Health Services to take focused and collective action where it is most needed to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, while also providing the broader Hamilton community with a line of sight into the future of evolving COVID-19 epidemiology.

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Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: Since February 17, 2021, Public Health Services, St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton, Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation, and the Greater Hamilton Health Network have contributed towards the cost of the software, staffing and staffing related expenses, and such contributions are outlined in Appendix “A” to Report BOH22013. Per the Scarsin Contract, the specific pricing information contained in Appendix “A” to Report BOH22013 is considered confidential and is made available in-camera.

Staffing: Dedicated staffing resources are required to manage, maintain and support the use of the Scarsin Decision Support Software. It is estimated that the current staffing model (i.e. 1.0 FTE epidemiologist; 1.0 FTE Health Analyst) would continue to be an ongoing resourcing requirement to support this platform.

Legal: Legal Services will participate in the negotiations, drafting and finalization of the extension agreement, amendment or new agreement with Scarsin.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Table 1: Scarsin Contract Periods

Scarsin Contract (Software)	Timeline
Initial Contract	February 17, 2021 to August 16, 2021
Additional Technical Forecasting Support	February 17, 2021 to August 16, 2021
First Contract Extension	August 17, 2021 to February 15, 2022
Second Contract Extension	February 16, 2022 to August 16, 2022
Extension agreement, amendment or new agreement until February 16, 2023 with the option to extend up to 24 months which option may be exercised incrementally or otherwise.	August 17, 2022 to February 16, 2025

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Based on Corporate Procurement Policy, By-Law No.20-205, as amended, Section 4.11 (2(a)), it is recognized that procurement of the Scarsin COVID-19 Decision Support Services platform software will result in a single source purchase of COVID-19 forecasting intelligence.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

City of Hamilton's Procurement Section has provided guidance with respect to adherence to the Procurement Policy only.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Hamilton's utilization of Scarsin's forecasting technology has helped to strengthen our community's collective response by anticipating case trajectory and severity related to COVID-19 transmission. This forecasting supports evidence-informed decision-making, allowing Hamilton Public Health Services to take focused and collective action where it is most needed to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, while also providing the broader Hamilton community with a line of sight into the future of evolving COVID-19 epidemiology.

Scarsin forecasting has proven value. This adaptive technology uses Hamilton's local data and sophisticated mathematical modelling to forecast the impact of different interventions, thereby informing Hamilton's key decision makers' ongoing response and recovery/post-pandemic planning.

The Scarsin model has successfully adapted to the evolving pandemic information needs and data flows. As needed, Scarsin incorporated changes in public health measures, changing transmission of variants, the impact of vaccination on the population's susceptibility, and the impacts on severe outcomes such as hospitalization and intensive care unit admissions.

The ongoing pan-sectorial collaboration of the HCRT, facilitates collective action amongst public health, health care, and primary care partners to provide a unified voice to help control the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

The intelligence generated from the forecasts is regularly shared with the Board of Health, the Public Health Leadership Team and the HCRT, informing future strategic planning based on where we are and where we are heading.

The regular public dissemination of forecasts to Hamiltonians strengthens communication transparency and supports the rationale guiding public health decision making.

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

Appendix "A" to Report BOH22013

Scarsin Software and Staffing Costs
(Confidential)