



CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
Epidemiology and Wellness Division

TO:	Mayor and Members Public Health Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	August 16, 2023
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Mental Health Street Outreach Program and Hamilton Public Library Partnership (BOH23027) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Susan Boyd (905) 546-2424 Ext. 2888
SUBMITTED BY:	Julie Prieto Director, Epidemiology and Wellness Division Public Health Services
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Health authorize and direct the Medical Officer of Health to enter into an amendment of the current Collaboration Agreement between the City of Hamilton Public Health Services' Alcohol Drug and Gambling Services and Mental Health Street Outreach Program (Mental Health Street Outreach Program) and the Hamilton Public Library, satisfactory in form to the City Solicitor, including:

- (i) The temporary increase of a 0.4 FTE Social Worker, in the Mental Health Street Outreach Program, to increase service delivery to the Hamilton Public Library for up to an approximate four-month period to be fully funded by the Hamilton Public Library; and,
- (ii) Upon request and written agreement, that the complement in the Mental Health Street Outreach Program may at any time during the term of the Collaboration Agreement have the City provide an additional Social Worker, for up to 14 hours per week at the expense of the Hamilton Public Library.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hamilton Public Library approached Public Health Services in 2022 to discuss the possibility of working collaboratively to address the needs of community members who were experiencing complex social and health needs and to build capacity within the library to provide enhanced services. The Hamilton Public Library identified that a social

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work position could effectively work within the library system and enhance their ability to respond to the needs of the vulnerable population described above.

Board of Health Report BOH22009 established a partnership between Public Health Services' Alcohol, Drug, and Gambling Services and Mental Health and Street Outreach Program (Mental Health Street Outreach Program), and the Hamilton Public Library to support a full-time social work position to address the above needs. The Central Library location was identified as the library site to implement enhanced services and these services have been provided for the past eight months.

The Hamilton Public Library has approached Public Health Services, Mental Health Street Outreach Program, to pilot an approximate four-month pilot of 0.4 FTE social work position at the Barton Street Branch. This enhancement would provide the opportunity to determine the needs at this Branch, provide direct service to members, and to build capacity with Library staff.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: Hamilton Public Library agrees to cover the full cost of 0.4 FTE social worker including salary and benefits, for an approximate four-month period. Based on current staffing the approximate cost will be \$13,110.

Staffing: The Mental Health Street Outreach Program will extend hours of existing staff to fill this request.

Legal: An amendment to the original collaborative agreement will be signed between the Hamilton Public Library and Public Health Services for the current request. The amendment will also include an option, upon request and written agreement, to increase the complement in the Mental Health Street Outreach Program at any time during the term of the collaborative agreement to provide an additional Social Worker (Bachelor of Social Work) for up to 14 hours per week during the length of the term.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Hamilton Public Library has a membership base of over 130,000 and regularly sees an average of 70,000 visits per week system-wide. Libraries are community spaces where individuals experiencing issues such as, housing and income insecurity, physical health, mental health and addiction issues visit to have a place to rest, access resources (e.g., knowledge resources, technical resources, basic needs, etc.), and find a place of community.

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A partnership between Public Health Services and the Hamilton Public Library was implemented in the fall of 2022 to provide social work services to library members at the Central Library site. The social work services have been well utilized by library members. The social work and library staff have been building relationships and capacity through consultations around resource needs, harm reduction work and referrals. The successful uptake of services at the Central Library site and needs identified at different branches has resulted in the request to pilot similar services at the Barton Street site.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

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

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Consultations have taken place with members of the Hamilton Public Library Senior Leadership Team, Legal Services, and Finance and Administration staff, who support the recommendation in Public Health Committee Report BOH23027.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The current program offering services at the Central Library site has been well utilized by library members and has resulted in capacity building for staff in both programs. The Hamilton Public Library has identified that similar services offered at the Barton Street site could benefit community members accessing that site.

The implementation of a short-term pilot would assist the library to determine the needs and service uptake at the Barton Street site. This work would also benefit individuals using the site to address needs related to health and social services.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Not Applicable.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not Applicable.