

ADDITIONAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE FUNDING INFECTIOUS DISEASES CONTROL PROGRAM

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council authorize the Health Services Department, Public Health Branch, to receive and expend 100% provincial funding in the amount of \$384,750 in order to hire 5.0 temporary FTEs.
2. The Commissioner of Health Services and Medical Officer of Health be authorized to sign a Letter of Agreement with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) dated September 25, 2003.
3. Regional Council authorize the Regional Chair to write to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care requesting that the 100% provincial grant for these positions be provided on a permanent basis and that the allocation formula be based on population as opposed to hospitals beds.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek authorization for the receipt and expenditure of 100% provincial funding in the amount of \$384,750 for the purpose of hiring and one-time start-up costs of 5.0 additional FTEs in the Infectious Diseases Control Division for the period October 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004. The 5.0 additional temporary full-time FTEs will assist York Region in monitoring and controlling infectious diseases, as well as enhance The Region's ability to maintain business continuity during infectious disease outbreaks.

3. BACKGROUND

On May 28, 2003 the Provincial Government announced that approximately \$120 million would be invested annually for immediate health care improvements to respond to the 'few normal' conditions. These measures included strengthening the Ontario public health system's ability to track infectious diseases and respond to related outbreaks through the deployment of rapid response teams.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Provincial health units were allocated 180 additional FTEs to address areas of concern including monitoring and responding to infectious diseases. On September 19, 2003, the MOHLTC advised through correspondence that York Region Health Services had been approved for a 100% grant in the amount of \$384,750 for 5.0 additional FTEs.

MOHLTC based the distribution of FTEs on the number of hospital beds within each region. However, infectious diseases are not directly linked to hospital beds, but population diversity and size. If the MOHLTC were to use a population-based formula for a more accurate distribution of needs, York Region would have qualified for 12.75 FTE.

On September 25, 2003 the MOHLTC, through further correspondence, clarified that the positions eligible for funding under the provincial initiative included physicians, inspectors, nurses and epidemiologists. The MOHLTC also asked that each public health unit provide monthly reports on the status of the recruitment of these new staff positions. The Infectious Diseases Control Division has, therefore, identified the need for an additional 1.0 FTE Epidemiologist, 1.0 FTE Senior Public Health Inspector, 1.0 FTE Public Health Inspector, 1.0 FTE Public Health Manager, and 1.0 FTE Public Health Nurse.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The MOHLTC has committed to 100% provincial funding for these positions and start-up costs until March 31, 2004. After March 31, MOHLTC has advised that continued funding of these additional staff would be provided on a 50/50 cost-shared basis. Through the 2004 Business Plan and Budget process, the Public Health Branch will request that these 5.0 FTEs become permanent positions. The Table 1 outlines the expenditures from October 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004 and also provides full annualization costs.

Table 1
Allocation of MOHLTC Funding for the Infectious Diseases Control Program

	100% Funding Oct. 1/03 to Mar. 31/04	2004 Annualized Impact		2005 Annualized Impact	
		Gross	Net	Gross	Net
Salaries & Benefits	\$221,450	\$442,900	\$166,088	\$442,900	\$221,450
Program Costs (incl. training, mileage, etc.)	19,000	38,000	14,250	38,000	19,000
One-time Start-up Costs (workstations, etc.)	115,050	115,050	0	0	0
Administrative Costs (incl. space, telephones, etc.)	29,250	58,500	21,938	58,500	29,250
TOTALS	\$384,750	\$654,450	\$202,276	\$539,400	\$269,700

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The additional 5.0 FTEs staffing resources allocated to infectious disease monitoring and tracking are essential to ensure that the health and safety of all residents in local municipalities are protected from future infectious diseases outbreaks.

7. CONCLUSION

The additional staffing resources will enhance the Health Services Department's ability to deal with surges in activity related to outbreaks in diseases throughout York Region.

It is recommended, however, that the Regional Chair write to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care requesting that the 100% provincial grant be provided on a permanent basis. In addition, an allocation formula based on population as opposed to hospital beds should be requested.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.