

4

RENEWAL OF HOMEMAKERS AND NURSES SERVICES SERVICE AGREEMENTS

The Community Services and Housing Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, February 27, 2007, from the Commissioner of Community Services, Housing and Health Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. This report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the renewal of Homemakers and Nurses Services service agreements with seven health care providers for an additional three-year term from January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2009.

3. BACKGROUND

The Homemakers and Nurses Services (HNS) program provides homemaking and nursing support to financially eligible residents with a temporary or permanent illness or disability. The Community Services and Housing Department administers the HNS program under the authority of the *Homemakers and Nurses Services Act*. The Program is cost shared with the provincial Ministry of Health (MOH) on an 80:20 basis (the Region's share is 20%).

The Region currently has service agreements with the following agencies: Bayshore Home Health Care, Comcare, Ontario Nursing Services, Preferred Health Care, Regional Nursing Services, Closing the Gap Healthcare and We Care Home Health Services.

York Region administers the HNS program under purchase of service agreements with the seven health care providers noted above. The Program provides mostly homemaking services (meal preparation, light housekeeping) and supports an ongoing caseload of approximately 100 individuals. Residents who are eligible for the HNS program may qualify for a maximum of eight hours of homemaking per week. The Region subsidizes the cost of a homemaker at a rate of \$21.70 per hour.

Nursing services are generally provided after an individual has received the maximum number of nursing hours through the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC). Residents

who are eligible for the program may qualify for a maximum of eight hours of nursing services per week which the Region subsidizes at a cost of \$42.22 per hour. The HNS program currently serves two individuals requiring nurses services.

All individuals requiring either homemaking support or nursing services must meet certain criteria including a financial needs test and residency in York Region. In determining eligibility for this program, the Region must also consider the availability of other supports within the home or the community (e.g. the presence of a spouse or other funded community agencies that could provide care).

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

In 2004, the Community Services and Housing Department renewed HNS service agreements with seven providers for a three-year term ending December 31, 2006. In late 2006, the Department, after consultation with Legal Services, extended these contracts with all seven agencies from January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2009. This extension involved no changes to contract wording or hourly rates for either the homemaking or nursing components.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2007 HNS proposed operating budget is \$345,000 of which \$276,000 is provincial funding (80%) and \$69,000 municipal funding (20%). This is an increase of \$26,600 (gross) and \$5,320 (net) over the 2006 approved budget due to trends showing an increase in demand for service. Program costs will be managed within the Department's 2007 Operating Budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

There is no local municipal impact resulting from the HNS service agreement extensions, however all municipalities benefit from continued homemaker and nursing supports to vulnerable residents.

7. CONCLUSION

The HNS program sustains quality of life by enabling individuals to continue living independently in their homes and avoiding potential placement in other long-term and more costly programs (e.g., retirement settings, long term care, supportive housing etc.).

The extension of the HNS contracts for an additional three-year term contributes to this important living option for a number of individuals, and supports the Region's Vision

2026 by maintaining and promoting a high quality of life and responding to the needs of vulnerable residents.

For more information on this report contact Ted Burley, Acting Director of the Employment and Financial Support Branch in the Community Services and Housing Department.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.