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QUALITY OF LIFE INCENTIVE ALLOWANCE

The Community Services and Housing Committee recommends adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, March 28, 2006, 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 provide Council with the first annual summary of Domiciliary Hostel operators' participation in the Quality Of Life Incentive Allowance Initiative.

The Quality of Life Incentive Allowance provides funding to operators of Domiciliary Hostels in York Region for the provision of programs, services, activities and related equipment designed to enrich the quality of life of the residents living in Domiciliary Hostels.

3. BACKGROUND

Council approved the implementation of the Quality of Life Incentive Allowance for Domiciliary Hostel operators, including an additional per diem increase of up to \$1.80, in order to improve the quality of life for residents of Domiciliary Hostels, on September 23, 2004 through the adoption of Clause 3 of Report No. 7 of the Community Services and Housing Committee.

Operators of Domiciliary Hostels in York Region are eligible to receive the Quality of Life Incentive Allowance upon submission of an annual Quality of Life Plan. York Region staff review and approve plans based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrated resident input into the planning process.
- Availability of a diverse and appropriate range of programs, services and activities.
- Effective process to monitor participation, costs and outcomes.
- Equipment requested supports the intent of the allowance.

Operators are responsible to determine the qualifications and experience of any service provider contracted and/or hired with funding from Quality of Life Incentive Allowance and to monitor safety and quality in the delivery of all services.

York Region approves the incentive allowance annually. It cannot be used to fund any services already funded through the Domiciliary Hostel Agreement or through other financial support programs such as Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program and Homes for Special Care.

3.1 Benefits

The Quality of Life Incentive Allowance provides additional funding to enable residents receiving subsidy under the Domiciliary Hostel program to participate in community activities, life skills programs, in-house recreation/instructional programs and social events.

Residents choose from a range of opportunities and meaningful daily activities according to their interests and abilities. Their participation promotes social cohesion within the Domiciliary Hostel, addresses boredom and promotes a positive environment. Overall, operators, staff and residents have stated the availability of this allowance has improved quality of life in participating homes.

Programs are at no cost to residents.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 Participation

In 2005, 60% of operators, representing 75% of eligible homes, entered into Quality of Life Agreements with York Region. As a result, a total of 325 residents were eligible for programs and services of whom 97% participated in a Quality of Life funded program at least once a month. In 2006, to date, operator participation has risen to 70%.

Table 1 summarizes the total number of program activities, number of times regional residents participated, the total expenditure for the five months the initiative was in place, and an average cost of participation by activity.

Table 1
2005 Program Participation and Program Cost

Total Number of Program Activities	Number of Times Regional Residents Participated	Total Expenditure	Average Cost of Participation by Activity
1,044	8,726	\$62,848	\$7.20

4.2 Equipment

A maximum of 10% of the approved incentive allowance provided to a Domiciliary Hostel operator can be allocated towards equipment that supports quality of life activities.

The types of equipment purchased included Bingo games, ping pong tables, board games and exercise equipment.

Table 2 includes the level of funding and number of operators who purchased equipment through this initiative.

Table 2
2005 Equipment Costs

Number of Operators Requesting Equipment	Total Expenditure
8	\$4,040.21

4.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

In 2005, York Region's Licensing and Compliance staff supported operators in their administration of the Quality of Life Incentive Allowance and monitored compliance with the terms of the Quality of Life Incentive Agreement.

Operators are required to evaluate the effectiveness of programs offered by consulting with residents and staff and completing an evaluation report for York Region. Residents report that they have something to look forward to every day and that the quality of life activities bring interest and happiness to their lives.

Staff also spoke positively about the effect the Quality of Life Incentive has had on resident behaviour, social interaction and the overall environment within the home. Comments include:

"They (residents) are learning to interact, be considerate of others and feel better about themselves. Many residents are taking more time to use appropriate dress for appointments and outings."

"New skills are being put into place each month and residents are exhibiting their new found abilities and confidence in their activities of daily living."

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Quality of Life Incentive is managed within the Department's budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Residents who are engaged in stimulating activities benefit physically, emotionally, spiritually and socially and, as a result, continue to contribute in their community in a positive manner.

7. CONCLUSION

The Quality of Life Incentive funding provides additional approved levels of funding to Domiciliary Hostel operators to support a range of programs, services and activities that have a positive impact on the level of quality care provided to this vulnerable group of York Region residents.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.