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2006 LTC FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS AND BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS PHYSICIAN ON-CALL FUNDING AND NURSING STRATEGY

The Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, April 20, 2006, from the Commissioner of Community Services, Housing and Health Services:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Council approve the receipt and expenditure of 100% funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) in the amounts of \$29,000 (annualized and retroactive increases) for On-Call Physician Coverage and \$55,412 in one-time funding for Nursing Retention Strategies.
2. Staff be authorized to sign any Agreements with the MOHLTC that may be required.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to secure approval from Council for the receipt and expenditure of additional subsidy from the MOHLTC for program costs related to On-Call Physician Coverage and implementation of the identified Nursing Retention Strategies.

3. BACKGROUND

Subsequent to the 2006 Budget approval process, staff have received correspondence from the Province advising that the Long Term Care and Seniors Branch (LTCSB) was being allocated \$84,412 in additional funding for new MOHLTC initiatives related to Long Term Care programs and services for Physician On-Call Coverage and Nursing Retention Strategies.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The total increased 100% funding provided by the MOHLTC under these announcements for the LTCSB is \$84,412 in fiscal 2006. Of that amount, \$29,000 is a base and retroactive funding increase for On-Call Physician Coverage and \$55,412 is for one time funding for Nursing Retention Strategies.

4.1 On-Call Physician Coverage Funding Increases

The Hospital On-Call Coverage Committee has provided notification that under the terms negotiated between the MOHLTC and the Ontario Medical Association that funding had been approved for physicians who provide after-hours on-call service in long term care facilities in Ontario. The funding amount is based on \$100 per year for each licensed/approved bed, to a maximum of \$30,000 annually per facility.

Based on this formula, the LTCSB will receive \$23,200 on an annualized basis in additional funding (\$13,200 at the Newmarket Health Centre and \$10,000 at the Maple Health Centre) to fund costs associated with the On-Call Physician Coverage Program. In addition, in fiscal year 2006 the Branch will also receive \$5,800 in retroactive payments for the period October 1, 2005–December 31, 2005.

4.2 Nursing Retention Strategy

The Ontario MOHLTC has introduced a number of Health Human Resource Nursing Strategies to assist in the recruitment and retention of nurses in the province. One of the strategies is called the Late Career Initiative which is designed to support nurses in hospitals and long term care that are in the latter part of their career. The 2005–2006 provincial budget for this program is \$28 million which is accessed by application from eligible employers. The funding that is provided to employers is to enable them to allocate a portion of the scheduled hours of work, for nurses who are over the age of 55, to projects that are less physically demanding. The goal of this initiative is to encourage over age 55 nurses, who might otherwise consider early retirement because of the physically-demanding nature of their jobs, to continue working.

The LTCSB applied for and was granted approval for funding to support 12 nurses working in the Branch that meet the criteria for support under this initiative. The nurses will work on a range of projects that will include emergency preparedness, pandemic influenza planning, patient/resident education, convalescent care policies, patient/client safety initiatives, documentation policies and staff education. Their positions will be back-filled by casual and/or part-time staff so there will be no FTE implications associated with this initiative.

The funding provided to the LTCSB under this initiative is \$55,412 (\$18,412 at the Maple Health Centre and \$37,000 at the Newmarket Health Centre).

4.3 Relationship to Vision 2026

These funding initiatives support the attainment of the Vision 2026 goals of Developing Quality Communities for a Diverse Population and Responding to the Needs of our Residents. The LTCSB offers a continuum of community-based, outreach, day and institutional services that support clients with a diverse range of care and support needs. The funding provided under these initiatives supports the delivery of those programs and services.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As a result of the MOHLTC funding announcements, the LTCSB will receive an additional \$88,448 in 100% funds from the MOHLTC. Of that amount \$29,000 is a base and retroactive funding increase for On-Call Physician Coverage and \$55,412 is for one-time funding for Nursing Retention Strategies.

The following chart depicts the annualized and current year program allocations and funding increases.

Table 1
Overview of Funding Increases and Allocations

Program	Current Year \$ Increase	Annualized \$ Increase	FTE Increase
Physician On-Call Program	\$29,000	\$23,200	n/a
Nursing Retention Strategy	55,412	0	n/a
Total	\$84,412	\$23,200	n/a

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The utilization of the MOHLTC funding will allow us to continue to meet the needs of clients with greater service needs, assist in the provision of physician on-call coverage, and will facilitate retention of late career nurses which will benefit and support the programs and services we provide for all citizens needing/using our services in York Region.

7. CONCLUSION

The approval of the recommendations regarding the receipt and expenditure of the additional subsidy from the Province of Ontario will enable us to provide funding to our Attending Physicians for 24/7 on-call services at the health centres and facilitate retention of late career nurses working in the LTCSB.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.