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June 27, 2022

REGION OF PEEL
OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CLERK

June 25, 2022

Attention: Regional Clerk
Regional Municipality of Peel
10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A
Brampton, ON L6T 4B9

REFERRAL TO _____
RECOMMENDED _____
DIRECTION REQUIRED _____
RECEIPT RECOMMENDED ☒ _____

Dear Regional Council,

We, the Board of Directors at WellFort Community Health Services, are writing to strongly encourage that you support funding and implementation of supervised consumption services (SCS) in Peel and to provide our support for this service. Since 2014, our community has seen a drastic increase in fatal overdoses, resulting in tragic and unnecessary loss. As the governing body for WellFort CHS, we are proud to have our team step forward as the clinical lead for SCS in Peel.

As leaders in Peel, we have seen how the drug poisoning crisis has affected our local community. In the past year, our harm reduction team has experienced the loss of many community members to overdose. This team has increased distribution of harm reduction supplies by 216% since 2018, clearly indicating a community need for increased support for people who use drugs. We've witnessed several municipalities (urban, suburban, and rural) implement supervised consumption and safer supply programs, yet Peel has fallen behind in their response to the drug poisoning crisis. We cannot wait any longer. At this time, we are calling on Regional Council to approve the proposal and budget outlined in the July 7th Regional Council meeting for SCS in downtown Brampton with the future goal of expanding to Cooksville in Mississauga. These two areas have been identified as the neighborhoods in Peel that would benefit most from SCS by the people most affected by the drug poisoning crisis in our community.

From the Region of Peel's SCS needs assessment (2019) it is evident that SCS are needed in our community. Data from the Region clearly demonstrates that opioid related deaths have consistently risen from 2014 onward with a significant increase in the most recent years.

WellFort, alongside our many partners in this work are strong advocates of evidence informed practice and are prepared to educate community members about the benefits of SCS for the community, inclusive of but not limited to people who use drugs. Pulling from Vancouver data, where SCS have been operating and saving lives since 2003, it is evidenced that that SCS:

- Reduce overdose related deaths to zero (in these spaces) and significant decreases (35%) in fatal overdoses within a 500m radius, wherein SCS are accessible.
- significantly reduce ambulance calls to respond to overdose. One Canadian study indicated a 35% reduction in presentations to ER for overdose related concerns.

- significantly reduce hospital visits for acute care issues such as skin infections, wound care, abscesses, and basic first aid.
- significantly reduce overall transmission of blood borne infections such as HIV and Hepatitis C. Studies indicate up to 95% reduction in sharing and reusing of injection equipment, and public drug use in communities that have SCS.
- significantly reduce improperly discarded needles by providing community members accessible spaces to return used equipment
- provide linkage to primary healthcare services, mental health services, addiction treatment, and more.

SCS provide safe and culturally appropriate services for people who use drugs to access an array of services at the same time, creating safer communities for everyone. WellFort's vision is *A Healthier Community Where Everyone Belongs*. As you make the decision to approve SCS in Peel today, this is exactly what you will be a part of building – *A Healthier Community Where Everyone Belongs*.

We thank you for taking the time to consider the evidence and listen to the voices of community members and staff directly affected. We look forward to your response and being a part of meaningful change in our community.

Sincerely,



Nicole Salmon
Board Chair, WellFort CHS