
REPORT TITLE: **Long Term Care Funding Initiatives**

FROM: Nancy Polsinelli, Commissioner of Health Services

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the addition of 3.0 temporary Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Attending Nurse Practitioners to assist with health care delivery for Long Term Care residents with complex needs for the duration of the government funding period (until March 31, 2025) be approved; and**
- 2. That to fulfill the requirements for Resident Health and Well-Being Program, the addition of temporary staffing resources for up to \$59,500 per year (fully funded by the Province) for the duration of the government funding period (until March 31, 2025) be approved; and**
- 3. That to utilize one-time provincial funding in the amount of \$580,014, additional resources including equipment and temporary FTE to implement the Transitional Behavioral Support Unit (TBSU) at Peel Manor be approved; and**
- 4. That, pending additional provincial funding, the TBSU program and staffing implemented at Peel Manor be continued at the Seniors Health and Wellness Village; and**
- 5. That additional operating expenditures including the addition of up to 1.0 temporary FTE, to fully utilize the funding received under the Public Health Agency of Canada grant for the Dementia Strategy Fund: Guidelines and Best Practices Initiative for the duration of the government funding (until March 31, 2024) be approved.**

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- In October 2022, the Ministry of Long-Term Care announced request-based funding for the new *Hiring More Nurse Practitioners for Long-Term Care* program which runs from 2022-2025.
- Peel Long Term Care homes are eligible to apply for this new funding and are requesting approval to hire three two-year contract full-time equivalent attending nurse practitioners for Tall Pines, Davis Centre, and Sheridan Villa. Once hired, the Region will be able to submit the funding request to the Ministry of Long-Term Care for reimbursement. An annual funding gap of \$37,941 is anticipated which will need to be addressed with regional resources.
- On December 19, 2022, the Ministry of Long-Term Care announced a new program called *Resident Health and Well-Being* (RHWB) which will run from 2022-2025 to provide long term care homes with funding to enhance social support services for residents to achieve optimum psychosocial and social functioning.

Long Term Care Funding Initiatives

- The Region's proposal to Ontario Health for an interim 26-bed Transitional Support Behavioural Unit at the existing Peel Manor site has been approved for funding. This unit will provide specialized support in a safe and secure environment to meet the needs of individuals with a diagnosis of dementia who experience complex expressive behaviours.
- In December 2022, the Public Health Agency of Canada informed Peel Region that the grant submission for the proposed Emotion-Based Dementia Care Training for First Responders program had been approved and funding will begin December 9, 2022.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

In October 2022, the Ministry of Long-Term Care ("the Ministry") introduced the *Hiring More Nurse Practitioners for Long-Term Care* program which is designed to increase staffing and address the complex health needs of residents living in long term care (LTC) homes. This investment supports the government's LTC Staffing Plan which launched in 2020 to help train and recruit new health care staff.

The Region of Peel has successfully received funding for attending nurse practitioners in Malton Village and Peel Manor through earlier nurse practitioner government funding initiatives in 2017 and 2021, however, this new program differs in that the Region must hire the staff prior to submitting the funding request to the Ministry.

The Ministry released another announcement on December 19, 2022, which speaks to the *Resident Health and Well-Being* (RHWB) program which will provide LTC homes with funding to enhance social support services. This funding will be distributed to licensed homes effective January 1, 2023 on a fixed rate for the duration of the program and is up to the homes discretion to determine what social services the funding can be used towards to best meet the needs of their residents.

The Region of Peel has been advocating for adequate resources to provide appropriate specialized, emotion-based care for people living with dementia and had a funding proposal approved in January 2023 for a proposed interim 26-bed Transitional Behavioural Support Unit (TBSU) at the existing Peel Manor site. The designation of the unit, which requires Ministry of Long-Term Care approval, is pending. This unit will focus on meeting the needs of seniors with advanced dementia through an enhanced staffing model, the integration of emotion-based care, and enhanced system flow.

While emotion-based care approaches continue to be at the forefront of the Region's philosophy in providing LTC services to residents and clients, it is an approach that can benefit people living with dementia in the community. Regional staff were successful in securing grant funding through the Public Health Agency of Canada for the Dementia Strategy Fund to develop a training program for First Responders. This funding will equip First Responders with the knowledge and tools to best support people living with dementia and their families in times of crisis and emergency response.

Long Term Care Funding Initiatives

a) Hiring More Nurse Practitioners for Long-Term Care' Initiative Summary

Nurse practitioners in LTC contribute towards a reduction in avoidable emergency department visits by providing clinical care to residents with complex care needs in the absence of a physician, including proactive screening and assessment, timely specialist referrals, follow-up care, ongoing chronic disease management, infection prevention and control practices, and end of life care for residents.

The attending nurse practitioner will also lead and collaborate on research, education, and evidence-based practice to optimize resident care and quality improvement initiatives.

b) 'Resident Health and Well-Being' Program Summary

Fixed allocations will be provided on a per bed, per month basis and homes can utilize this funding on salaries, wages and benefits for Registered Social Workers, Social Service Workers, and other Allied Health Professionals. Homes can determine if temporary staffing or incremental increases to hours of existing eligible staff will be required to meet the goals of the funding.

Homes will be required to report on expenditures through their Annual Report and will need to create and maintain records for eligible funding period and report to the Ministry on the use of funds. Program status updates to the Ministry must be made available upon request.

c) Transitional Behavioural Support Unit (TBSU) Funding

The TBSU will set a new standard for supporting people living with advanced dementia by stabilizing their behaviours through a timely and person-centred approach by leveraging the Butterfly Model of Care. Individuals with a diagnosis of dementia who experience complex expressive/responsive behaviours will receive time-limited specialized support in a safe and secure environment and after receiving comprehensive clinical assessments and treatments they will be enabled to successfully return to their community or LTC home. The enhanced staffing model will include a geriatrician with subspecialty training in complex dementia and collaboration with an interdisciplinary team. Given there are no TBSUs in the Central West Region and increasing Alternate Level of Care pressures seen in hospitals, the Region has garnered the support of many health system partners and will be able to use these partnerships to ensure greater integration of services, skills and expertise within the broader care pathways and system supports.

The TBSU requires an enhanced staffing model to deliver care, as a result, staffing will be funded from annual base funding as well as the additional funding received from Ontario Health.

d) Public Health Agency of Canada: Dementia Strategy Funding Approved

In December 2022, PHAC approved the Region's proposal to implement emotion-based dementia care training for first responders. The education program will equip first responders with evidence-based and emotion-focused care approaches to best deliver care and services to clients with dementia in crisis and their loved ones. This project will

Long Term Care Funding Initiatives

include partnerships with Peel Regional Police, Peel Region Paramedic Services, Behaviour Supports Ontario Network, and endorsements from Meaningful Care Matters and William Osler Health System. The grant will be provided over a 16-month period in which a clinical educator will lead the research, development, and delivery of the education program. Upon completion of the funding opportunity, the Region will look to share their findings to help others implement similar approaches to improving access to dementia care.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

Attending nurse practitioners in long term care are able to practice with an extended skill set that would help meet the growingly complex medical needs of the residents in long term care. Anticipated risks of not participating in this funding opportunity can include unnecessary emergency transfers, longer waits for the residents to get test results interpreted, risk of medication errors, and potentially worsen publicly reported quality indicators, such as falls, pain management, and wound care.

The TBSU is currently awaiting designation from the Ministry of Long-Term Care. If designation is not received, the transitional unit will continue to operate as it is currently. Since there are no TBSUs in Central West region, the individuals with advanced dementia will likely end up in the already backlogged emergency departments increasing the Alternate Level of Care beds that the province is desperately trying to reduce.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

a) Hiring More Nurse Practitioners for Long Term Care

For the 3.0 temporary two-year contract FTEs proposed, the Province is expected to provide annual funding for salary and benefits in the amount of \$370,020 and \$25,539 in overhead costs. Based on Regional salary bands, the proposed staff's salary and benefits are expected to cost \$433,500. There is a \$37,941 funding gap between the estimated annual costs and the annual provincial funding. For 2023, there will be no funding gap due to timing. Staff will not be able to fill the positions until March 2023 so the funding gap will be addressed by the savings in salary costs from January and February. The funding gaps for 2024 and 2025 will be included addressed through the annual budget process. Once hired, the Region will submit a funding request to the Ministry. Funding will be provided based on approved requests from homes. As with many of the provincial programs, this type of funding has not included any increases for inflation.

b) Resident Health and Well-Being Program

Under the RHWB program, the Region's anticipated allocation is about \$59,500 for all five long term care homes each year for a total duration of three years. This funding is intended to be 100 per cent provincial funding and will be used to increase resources including temporary staffing up to the level of funding provided. Therefore, there will be no net financial impact to the Region.

c) Transitional Behavioural Support Unit

Ontario Health will provide \$580,014 in one-time funding for a Transitional Behavioural Support Unit which includes \$357,154.20 for specified program activities and \$223,000 for start-up costs. As proposed, staff will manage eligible expenses between the funding period

Long Term Care Funding Initiatives

of January 1 to March 31, 2023, within the allocated funding amount and three-month timeline. Therefore, there is no net financial impact to the Region. Any unspent amount is subject to recovery by Ontario Health.

d) Dementia Strategy Fund

The Dementia Strategy Fund will be funding the Region's provincially approved project in the amount of \$299,718 over the duration of 16 months with an end date of March 31, 2024. This funding will be used for hiring a clinical educator, developing an education module, and project materials. All expenses for the initiative will be managed within the amount of funding provided by the Province with no net financial impact to the Region.

CONCLUSION

While staff will continue to provide quality care for the long term care residents, these timely grants and funding opportunities will help with the health human resources challenges seen across the entire health sector. Council's approval to move forward in hiring the staff under the various funding envelopes will tremendously help to improve the quality of life and experience for those with complex medical needs living in long term care, be responsive to the needs of our seniors, and enhance services provided in order to advance the Seniors Services outcome of improving people's lives in their time of need.



Nancy Polsinelli, Commissioner of Health Services

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