



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

HS-21-31

To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Mark Poste, Director of Housing
Date: Wednesday, November 10, 2021
Subject: **Housing with Related Supports Update**

Background:

The County's Housing with Related Supports programme was originally known as the Domiciliary Hostel Program (DHP), and started as a provincial programme administered through the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM). While it has undergone several transitions over the years the programme has been in place since the 1950's. Funding for this programme was cost shared with the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the CMSMs on an 80/20 split. CMSM's would enter into an agreement with an eligible housing provider (traditionally a local retirement residence) to provide subsidy to eligible individuals to help with any affordability issues. A per-diem subsidy based on the individual's income is topped-up to a maximum amount. This per diem would be set by the Province and increase each year by 2-3%. In addition, eligible recipients of the programme received a personal needs benefits and other mandatory and discretionary benefits that were legislated through the Ontario Works Act. Housing providers funded through this programme would provide support with activities of daily living for people who require a minimal to moderate level of personal care.

In 2013, the Province consolidated 5 programmes: Emergency Shelter, Domiciliary Hostel, Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Programme, Emergency Energy Fund, and the Rent Bank. The new program was titled Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI). The mandate of the CHPI programme is to prevent and end homelessness by improving access to adequate, suitable, and affordable housing and homelessness services for people experiencing homelessness and for people at risk of homelessness.

Context in Wellington County Today

There are currently 8 Retirement Homes funded through CHPI in the City of Guelph and Wellington County representing 129 subsidized beds. Each of these facilities are unique in terms of the number of residents that have overall and the number of subsidy beds provided. This programme provides incredible value for the residents and the relationships with these providers is very important. Over the years there has been a slow reduction in the number of homes participating and a reduction in subsidized spaces due to the low per diem rate offered. At its highest point the County had funding agreements with 13 homes.

College Place

One of the retirement residences the County worked with to support their clients to make their living arrangements more affordable was the College Place site located at 166 College Ave W, Guelph and was owned and operated by Precision Health out of Nova Scotia. In 2018, Precision Health sold the building at 166 College Ave W to a developer and entered into a lease agreement with the developer until October 31st, 2021 while they looked for a new location for the residents. Over the summer

Precision Health confirmed that they would not be securing a lease extension and did not have a property to support the individuals at that were living at 166 College Ave W.

Over the Summer and early Fall, County staff worked with staff at College Place and the Ontario Health Team West on putting together transition plans for people within the complex. In total, 50 individuals were rehoused with new housing solutions as a part of this process. This rehousing effort was a large undertaking and was made possible by finding placements across a number of existing programmes and buildings.

Breakdown of Housing Placements:

- 19 placements were made with existing partners within the Housing with Related Supports programme;
- 10 placements were made in long-term care facilities with no need for subsidy;
- 2 placements were made in the existing social and affordable housing stock within the community;
- 8 placements were made in private rental market housing with shallow subsidy support;
- 11 placements were made in a number of private market residences with no need for subsidy.

A number of the housing solutions that were used in this rehousing effort ended up removing clients from the Housing with Related Supports programme. Housing options like long-term care facilities and rent supports, shifted the funding responsibility of the Housing with Related Supports programme from the homeless serving system to capacity within the Ministry of Long-Term Care, the Ministry of Health as well as the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing funded programmes. While there were initial concerns that the programme would see large cost increases through this rehousing process, staff are no longer expecting to see major budget impacts as a result of these changes. In the next 6 weeks, there will be follow up with residents to see how things are working out with their new housing placements.

In June, staff placed a temporary hold on intakes for the Housing with Related Supports programme while we worked with our partners on a solution to the College Place concerns. Staff will be lifting that temporary hold on intakes across the Housing with Related Supports programme as spaces and budget allows.

Although in the end this process saw all residents find a new housing solution, this was extremely difficult. Residents that had a place to call home were forced to relocate, and staff that worked at College Place and supported some of our community's most vulnerable for years lost their roles. We hope that everyone impacted by this facility's closing is able to rebound and find stability. Staff would like to thank everyone involved with finding solutions for the residents at College Place, especially the staff at College Place, members of the County's Housing Stability Team and members of the Ontario Health West Home and Community Care Team.

Financial Implications:

The previously planned 2022 operating budget allocation to support the costs anticipated as a result of the closing of College Place have been removed from the Preliminary 2022-2031 Social Housing Ten Year Plan that is also included on this agenda.

Recommendation:

That report HS-21-31 Housing with Related Supports Update be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Poste". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Mark Poste

Director of Housing