

HE-C1-1

For Information

DATE: May 16, 2011

REPORT TITLE: **ONE-TIME FUNDING FOR BED BUG RESPONSE**

FROM: Janette Smith, Commissioner of Health Services
David L. Mowat, MBChB, MPH, FRCPC, Medical Officer of Health,

OBJECTIVE

To inform Regional Council of one-time funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to enhance capacity to prevent and manage bed bug infestations, particularly where vulnerable populations are concerned.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Province of Ontario is providing 100 per cent one-time funding of up to \$439,989 to Peel Public Health to enhance community capacity to prevent or cope with bed bug infestations.
- The funding is intended to support bed bug program activities in two streams: education and outreach, and supports and interventions to assist vulnerable populations.
- This report outlines planned activities and associated costs.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

Bed bugs are not generally regarded as a health hazard under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* as they are not associated with the transmission of disease. However, bed bugs can be a significant nuisance. Bed bug bites can cause skin irritation, itchiness and inflammation, and scratching can lead to infection. Some people are allergic to bed bug bites.

Calls about bed bugs to the Peel Public Health, Environmental Health division customer contact centre increased from 133 in 2008 to 136 in 2009 to 207 in 2010. This represents approximately 10 per cent of the number of calls about bed bugs received by Toronto Public Health last year. The Peel Housing Corporation retained pest control services to treat 303 residential units in 2010 (four per cent of all units).

In response to the rise in bed bug infestations across the province, and to two recommendations made at the Bed Bug Summit held in September, 2010, the provincial government committed up to \$5 million (at 100 per cent) in one-time funding for Ontario's public health units for the period up to March 31, 2012.

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In January, 2011 Ontario public health units were invited to apply for one-time funding to support bed bug programming activities in two streams: education and outreach, and supports and interventions to assist vulnerable populations. The focus of education and outreach is to build capacity in organizations and populations to prevent and manage bed bug infestations. The second stream is intended to address health inequities and provide supports to vulnerable populations coping with bed bug infestations.

This opportunity is related to Term of Council Priority 19, "Build community capacity", by contributing to the sustainability of the not-for-profit sector.

2. Proposed Direction

In a letter dated April 26, 2011, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, The Honourable Deb Matthews, confirmed approval of one-time funding for Peel Region of up to \$439,989 (Appendix I). The money is to be administered by Peel Public Health and must be spent by March 31, 2012.

A number of conditions are associated with the funding, the most important of which are:

- funding must align with the activities and services detailed in the funding application submitted;
- interim and final reporting on the degree of bed bug infestations, and the populations and settings most impacted; and
- a description of activities implemented using the funding along with an assessment of the impact of activities on decreasing bed bug infestations in the health unit.

Pending transfer of the funds, staff will implement the activities in the Peel Bed Bug Support Funding application, including the following:

Stream 1 - Education and Outreach

Program Enhancement	Potential Cost
Stakeholder forums and education regarding bed bug prevention and control (e.g. landlords, tenant associations, retirement and residential home operators, shelters/group homes/lodging homes).	\$70,000
Communication regarding community forums and educational events, establishing a stakeholder information collaboration, producing a micro-CD for housing providers.	\$20,000
Contract staff (Health Promotion Officer and part time administrative support) to co-ordinate bed bug initiatives in Peel Region, including symposia, flowing monies to housing providers taking preventative actions against bed bug infestations.	\$75,000

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ONE-TIME FUNDING FOR BED BUG RESPONSE**Stream 2 – Supports to Vulnerable Populations**

Program Enhancement	Potential Cost
Training of facilities staff of housing for vulnerable populations (e.g. non-profit housing, retirement homes, shelters, etc.).	\$10,000
Contingency fund for pest control treatments of high-risk housing occupied by the most vulnerable. This work also connects with the Integrated Pest Management Strategy being developed by Human Services.	\$90,000
Establish a "Bug and Scrub" program (e.g. teams or community-based interventions that help vulnerable residents prepare for bed bug treatments)	\$130,000
A fund to assist high risk housing settings to replace mattresses and furniture that have been severely damaged by bed bugs.	\$40,000
Establish a bed bug identification service for community partners.	\$5,000

It is not expected that this will become on-going funding. While most of the activities listed above will build community capacity to prevent and manage bed bug infestations, some could create resident expectations that cannot be sustained without on-going funding. Public Health and Human Services staff plan to work together to mitigate this risk by exploring programs that sustain community capacity to deal with the bed bug problem. One such possibility is a start-up grant to a community-based program to assist residents to prepare for pest control treatments. It is expected that the demand for assistance in dealing with bed bug infestations will be reduced at the conclusion of this program.

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CONCLUSION

The one-time funding for bed bug support, once received, will be used judiciously to provide enhanced education, supports and interventions to prevent and manage bed bug infestations.



Janette Smith
Commissioner of Health Services



David L. Mowat, MBChB, MPH, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health

Approved for Submission:



D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

For further information regarding this report, please contact Paul Callanan, Director, Environmental Health at extension 2802 or via email at paul.callanan@peelregion.ca.

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c. Legislative Services
 Manager, Financial Support Unit (FSU)

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APPENDIX I

Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care

Office of the Minister

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Ministère de la Santé
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APR 26 2011

HLTC2976FL-2011-74

Mr. Emil Kolb
Chair
Peel Regional Board of Health
10 Peel Centre Drive
Brampton ON L6T 4B9

Dear Mr. Kolb:

I am pleased to confirm that the Ministry has approved one-time funding of up to \$439,989 (at 100%) for Peel Public Health to be spent by March 31, 2012 under the recently announced Bed Bug Support Fund. This investment is part of the government's commitment to fund bed bug related activities.

In a subsequent letter, Ms. Sylvia Shedden, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Health Division, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care will be writing to Dr. David Mowat, Medical Officer of Health, Peel Public Health, to provide the accountability and administrative details regarding this funding.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued commitment and dedication to protecting and promoting the health of Ontarians.

Sincerely,

Deb Matthews
Minister

- c: Sylvia Jones, MPP, Dufferin-Caledon
- Kuldip Kular, MPP, Bramalea-Gore-Malton
- Hon. Linda Jeffrey, MPP, Brampton-Springdale
- Vic Dhillon, MPP, Brampton West
- Amrit Mangat, MPP, Mississauga-Brampton South
- Hon. Harinder S. Takhar, MPP, Mississauga-Erindale
- Peter Fonseca, MPP, Mississauga East-Cooksville
- Hon. Charles Sousa, MPP, Mississauga South
- Bob Delaney, MPP, Mississauga-Streetsville
- Dr. David Mowat, Medical Officer of Health, Peel Public Health

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