

For Information

DATE: December 3, 2012

REPORT TITLE: **MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE FUNDING FOR
HEALTHY BABIES HEALTHY CHILDREN PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE
INITIATIVE**

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

OBJECTIVE

To inform of new provincial base funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's, 9,000 Nurse Commitment to fund recently announced Ministry of Children and Youth Services changes to the Healthy Babies Healthy Children protocol.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) is providing 100 per cent base funding for the salaries and benefits of two Public Health Nurse positions, an increase of \$200,000.
- Funding will be used to implement the newly announced Healthy Babies Healthy Children protocol changes, specifically a new Screening Liaison role with area hospitals.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

The Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) program is a provincial prevention and early intervention program designed to help children achieve their full potential.

Program changes have been announced by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) to strengthen the program as it works to support parents in promoting optimal child development.

Newly announced 100 per cent funding, part of the provincial 9,000 Nurses Commitment, a province-wide health human resource strategy, is being provided to public health departments across Ontario to implement these changes.

2. Proposed Direction

Changes to the HBHC program as mandated by the MCYS include:

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- A new evidence-informed HBHC Screening Tool to assess families for risk factors during the prenatal, postpartum and early childhood periods.
- Families identified with risk factors will be referred directly for an in-depth assessment in the home by a Public Health Nurse. The aim of this strategy is to ensure vulnerable families in the Region of Peel receive timely home visiting services to help their children achieve their full potential.
- Families identified as having no risk will receive a telephone contact 48 hours after discharge from hospital. This postpartum contact is to provide families an opportunity to discuss health issues and learn about local resources to meet their needs. Key messages regarding child safety, breastfeeding and the importance of responsive, loving interactions to build strong parent child relationships will be shared.
- Families at high risk will continue to receive home visiting services from a Public Health Nurse and a Family Visitor.
- A new provincial information package containing community resources and Peel Health contact information will be given to all new parents in the hospital setting.
- A new HBHC Screening Liaison Nurse assignment will be established to liaise with and train prenatal service providers, hospital staff and midwives in completing the new screening tool.
- These liaison nurses will also work with primary care providers in the community in the implementation and delivery of the enhanced 18-month well baby visit screening.
- Evaluation of the new protocol will be done by Public Health Ontario following six months of full implementation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As outlined in Appendix I, Peel Public Health's HBHC program will be receiving \$200,000 of 100 per cent provincial funding from the MOHLTC to cover the salary and benefit costs of two Public Health Nurse positions.

Chronic underfunding of the HBHC program's budget, which has occurred since 2007 when the provincial budget was frozen, has required the program to gap staff positions each year. This results in clients waiting to receive service. The current wait list fluctuates between 70 to 100 clients depending on service demand. Clients wait approximately three to four weeks for service.

In 2013, the program anticipated gapping another two Public Health Nurse positions. This will no longer be required as the new funding will allow staffing levels to remain the same. The funding will be directed towards implementing the Screening Liaison role with hospital and community staff. This means wait listing for service will continue.

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CONCLUSION

Peel Public Health has received 100 per cent provincial funding to hire two Public Health Nurses. This increase in base funding will offset the previously anticipated gapping of two staff in 2013 due to chronic underfunding of the program. New funds will be directed towards implementing the Ministry's recently announced HBHC Screening Liaison model.

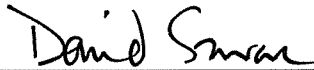


Janette Smith
Commissioner of Health Services



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 Anne Fenwick at extension 2449 or via email at Anne.Fenwick@peelregion.ca

Authored By:

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

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APPENDIX I

Ministry of Children
and Youth Services
Minister's Office
56 Wellesley Street West
14th Floor
Toronto ON M5S 2S3
Tel.: (416) 212-7432
Fax: (416) 212-7431

Ministère des Services
à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Bureau de la ministre
56, rue Wellesley Ouest
14^e étage
Toronto (Ontario) M5S 2S3
Tél. : 416 212-7432
Télééc. : 416 212-7431



Ontario

October 12, 2012

Dr. David Mowat
Medical Officer of Health
Peel Public Health
7120 Hurontario Street
PO Box 667, RPO Streetsville
Mississauga ON L5M 2C2

Dear Dr. Mowat:

I am writing regarding a new base funding for the Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) program as part of the 9,000 Nurses Commitment, a key component of the province's health human resources strategy. As you may be aware, the Ministry, together with the HBHC Advisory Committee and Public Health sector, has developed a new HBHC Screening Tool and Protocol which we are now ready to implement. We are also making improvements to information we provide to parents through new brochures and an improved web resource.

I am pleased to inform you that Peel Public Health will receive \$200,000 increase in base funding for two (2.0) new full-time equivalent public health nurse position to support the delivery of the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program.

Ministry staff will contact you shortly regarding the necessary amendments to your service agreement, specifications for the recruitment of the public health nurse position and the reporting requirements.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to improving services for Ontario's children and their families through the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Hoskins".

Dr. Eric Hoskins
Minister