

September 1 2023

City of London  
Municipal Council  
c/o Community and Protective Services Committee

**Re: Letter of Support for Security needs for London Cares Homeless Response Services**

With the City of London experiencing dramatic increases in homelessness and pressures on an already strained system, the rise in violence risk and level is unprecedented.

London Cares has experienced a significant increase of violence towards staff members including physical assaults from participants and neighbors in the community including pepper spray, bear mace, physical assaults and threats with weapons. These risks equate to unsafe working conditions that impact service delivery and may, without intervention, result in a loss of vital services. London Cares supports our community's most marginalized members, many who have been restricted from other community services. Restricting, reducing, or eliminating these critical services creates a risk of further escalation and violence and draw on public safety resources.

From January 16 2023 to August 30 2023 the London Cares Resting Space has supported 752 unique individuals and the service at 602 Queens St has supported 810 unique individuals. Approximately 25% of those serviced are identified as restricted from other services in the community. We understand that these shelter and social service resource locations will require place-based interventions, inclusive of security presence, to minimize the risk and reduce social disorder issues for staff, shelter patrons, and the immediate surrounding community members.

As the Whole of Community Response designs and implements an improved system of support the crisis remains in an escalated state which is anticipated to continue into the next 18 to 24 months. During this transformation window, LHSC supports the need for agencies, managing homeless response services, to assess risk and define interventions, inclusive of the addition of security presence, that contribute to a safe environment.

Sincerely



Deborah Wiseman  
President, Victoria Hospital  
London Health Sciences Centre