



October 16, 2012

Mr. John Fleming
Director of Planning, Planning & Development
Clity of London
206 Dundas Street, 1st Floor
London Ontario N6A 1G9

Dear Mr. Fleming,

My name is Sam Hosack and I'm the Chair of the Board representing the Western Day Care Centre. We have two locations in London, caring for 198 children. One is located at 27 Emery Street that is within 300 meters from the proposed Methadone Treatment Clinic at 425 Wharncliffe Road South.

WDCC has 40 years experience operating as a licensed non-profit child care provider, coupled with longstanding relationships with the City of London, the Ontario Ministry of Education and Community, Children, and Family Services, and the Public Health unit. Our mission is to promote the child's overall well-being by providing the best possible conditions for growth, learning, and development. We strive to provide quality care and education in a safe environment to children who are between the ages of 3 months and 5 years.

While we applaud the commitment of people who seek treatment for their addictions and the professionals who support them, the proposed location is dangerously close to what is intended to be a safe haven for our young children.

We urge you and your fellow councillors to reassess then recognize and protect centre-based licensed child-care centres from 'primary' methadone clinics locating within 300 meters.

We struggle to understand the difference between centre-based licensed child care centres, such as ours; and schools and the London Boy's & Girl's Club which you currently recognize and protect. Licensed Child Care Centres are legislated by the Ontario Ministry of Education. Their mandate is to provide a healthy, safe, and happy environment. We feel the proposed clinic will compromise the Ministry's safe environment mandate. The only difference between schools and licenced Child Care Centres is our children are more vulnerable and defenceless than the older school children. It's much more difficult to educate and expect a young toddler not to touch a dirty needle or pickup and eat a harmful pill or become victim to the other risks associated with the proposed clinic.

Furthermore, since many probable patients of the proposed clinic are considered 'at risk', we believe there is a serious threat to the safety of our children. Our concerns and risks include:

- The congregation of people lingering at or near our child-care centre and adjacent park. People who are not participants of the clinic will be attracted to the area with the interest of exploiting these patients in their fragile condition.
- Exposing our children to unnecessary risks from hazardous waste and litter such as drugs, dirty needles and condoms. Our school yard may be prone to illegal activities such as drug dealing or trading and prostitution.
- The lack of the clinic's direct responsibility for the behavior of patients when they were off the clinic property. This may be feasible within direct view of the clinic; but, not if the patients move out of their sight towards our school.
- Concern for the safety of our staff; we currently rent parking at Jack's garage for staff. It's located behind the proposed location. It's far enough away and out of sight from the clinic to provide another ideal location for illegal activities to occur.

Our Day Care will also incur monetary costs including:

- The withdrawal of children from the centre. Many parents have already expressed their concerns and decision to remove their children from the centre if the clinic is approved.
- The costs to further secure the facility, including the building and school yard from these credible risks.
- Our Emery Street location is a purchased building. It's unfeasible and impractical to re-locate if our ability to maintain attendance is disrupted. This would dissolve Western Day Care Centre; as each location can't exist without the other.

With many other continuing financial burdens such as continuous increased daily expenses, the implementation of full-time kindergarten, as well as, reduced government spending and subsidies, we don't want to, or can afford to, pass additional costs onto parents in attempts to protect their children.

Although City Staff have said that potential clinic locations would be dramatically reduced if daycares were included in the location restrictions, we offer you this recommendation.

It is our position that since the most vulnerable and at risk patients attend 'primary' clinics, and pharmacies can only dispense methadone to patients who are stable; we recommend separating 'primary' clinics and pharmacies for the required location restrictions. A 300 meter restriction is adequate for 'primary' clinics and less necessary for pharmacies. Secondly, clearly define daycare as centre-based licensed child-care centres. This addresses the obstacle that including child-care centres in the restrictions would reduce the number of locations available for methadone distribution.

As well, it should be remembered that there are other opportunities to dispense methadone through clinics serving less than 40 doses per day that are currently exempt from re-zoning applications. It is already the consensus that smaller clinics are deemed safer; so more of these smaller dispensaries can be easily situated throughout the city in more suitable and convenient locations for patients.

Our recommendation offers a more appropriate alternative that places the basis of the decision on public safety and not solely on the number of potential locations.

Please respect and protect our children from these risks and place Centre-based Licensed Child-Care Centres like ours on Council's recognized and protected list.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hosack', with a stylized, cursive style.

Sam Hosack
Chair of the Board
Western Day Care Centre