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TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON JULY 22, 2013
FROM:	SANDRA DATARS BERE MANAGING DIRECTOR HOUSING, SOCIAL SERVICES AND DEARNESS HOME
SUBJECT:	HOMEMAKERS PROGRAM REVIEW- DEARNESS HOME

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director of Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home, this report regarding the implementation of a Services and Financial Program Review of the Homemakers Program at the Dearness Home **BE RECEIVED** for information.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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BACKGROUND

Overview:

The Homemakers Program is a discretionary program provided by the City of London through the Multi Sector Accountability Agreement (M-SAA) with the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). The program, which is operated out of the Dearness Home, is funded under the *Homemaker's and Nurses Services Act, R.S.O., c H.10*. The program is claims based with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care funding 80% of services and the City of London funding the remaining 20%. The City also incurs the cost of administering the program.

The purpose of the program is to provide housekeeping support to low income clients in order that they can live independently in the community. Clients must qualify both medically and financially for this program. In operation at the City for many years, the program facilitates the provision of homemaking services to eligible clients through Purchase of Service Agreements with four local community providers. In 2012 there were 6,473 hours of homemaking support provided to 47 clients.

Over the past two years, management with oversight of the Dearness Home have questioned the viability of this program and its alignment with the core business strategies of Long Term Care. Both the 2012 and 2013 City of London Business Plans indicated that the City should review the program and consider the feasibility of transferring this program to another provider within the community.

Discussion:

The Homemakers and Nurses Services Program is a non-mandatory program funded by the province through the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC). In order for the program to exist, the Province requires a municipality to assume cost sharing responsibility. Originally, Dearness Home staff provided the homemaking services under this program. In the mid to early 1980's, Council approved a recommendation to provide service to program participants through Purchase of Service Agreements with community service agencies, a service method which continues to be in place currently.



This program provides in home support to assist vulnerable individuals and families to maintain their home through the provision of light housekeeping duties. The majority of clients are in receipt of Ontario Disability Support or Canada Pension Plan disability payments. There is a requirement under the legislation to complete an assessment every six months to ensure that clients continue to qualify both medically and financially. Termination from the program is usually through transfer to another program such as Long Term Care, hospitalization or because of participant death.

The program budget allocation provided by MOHLTC has been static for several years. As a result, because service costs have increased, fewer clients can now be served. Additionally, as clients have discharged from the program, new clients have not been admitted resulting in the total number of individuals served declining from 65 in 2009 to 50 in 2013. The wait list is also declining from 116 in 2009 to 77 in 2013. It is unclear as to why the wait list is declining although it may not be a decrease in demand so much as the understanding of the length of time an applicant is required to wait on the list for service.

At present, the Manager of Community Life, Dearness Home, is responsible for the operational oversight of the program and the executive oversight has traditionally been the responsibility of the Administrator. Under the Manager's supervisor, program staff at Dearness is responsible for the administrative component of the program which includes visiting clients in their home to collect information on the applicant's eligibility, answering enquiries, managing the wait list and acting as the main contact with contracted service providers.

Financial Implications:

The City of London budget for the 2013 Homemakers Program is \$66,198. The total 2013 program budget is \$210,198 including an allocation of \$180,000 for service provision through Purchase of Service Contracts and \$30,198 for staff administration costs. Offsetting revenue of \$144,000 is received from MOHLTC. Actual net costs in 2012 were \$60,874.

Legal Implications:

Currently the City purchases homemaking services from four agencies through Purchase of Service Agreements. The agreements allow for termination by either party with thirty (30) days prior written notice.

Environmental Scan:

As a discretionary program, some municipalities have never provided this service, others withdrew from the provision of this service when the Community Care Access Centres (CCAC) were implemented across the province between 1996 and 1998 and others, including the City of Hamilton and the Region of Haldimand-Norfolk, have withdrawn from the provision of this service over the past few years. At present, there are currently 24 municipalities across the province that continue to provide this service in their communities.

Municipalities that have considered and/ or implemented changes to the delivery of this program over the past few years, including both Hamilton and Haldimand-Norfolk, have reported the service change/ divestiture process has been somewhat lengthy and required on-going discussions and support from the MOHLTC, CCAC and the local LHIN. In discussions with MOHLTC earlier this year, the City of London was advised that in the current provincial fiscal environment, there may be challenges in maintaining these funds in the local Homecare sector if the City was to consider changes in program delivery, including divesting the service to another community service provider. As a result, the City would need to work with the CCAC, the South West LHIN and the MOHLTC to understand all implications of any potential service change before moving forward.

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Implementation of a Program Review:

Consistent with direction provided in the City’s 2012 and 2013 Business Plans, Civic Administration will implement a Services and Financial review of the Homemakers Program at the Dearness Home. The purpose of the review will be to:

- Understand the current service provision, including opportunities, challenges and risks;
- Understand the service and financial implications and risk of both current service provision and any future changes;
- Determine community and stakeholder support for the program and possibilities for partnership;
- Explore opportunities for and consider implications of any future changes to service delivery; and
- Develop recommendations for Committee and Council review and approval regarding the Homemakers Program.

Key stakeholders including participants and their families, contracted service providers, program staff and MOHLTC, CCAC and SWLHIN representatives will be engaged in this review.

The review will be initiated in August 2013 and will be supported by City staff from the Dearness Home, Financial and Business Services, Legal, Corporate Services / Human Resources and Housing and Social Services. As necessary and within the City’s procurement policies, outside consulting services will be contracted to provide assistance to the completion of this review.

A report back to this Committee will be provided in the fall of 2013, which will include an overview of the information garnered from the review and recommendations for consideration for future program delivery.

Summary:

For many years the City of London through the Homemakers Program delivered by the Dearness Home has provided a meaningful program to assist the citizens of London to live independently in the community. As the City realizes additional financial pressures and service challenges, a formal review of this Program provides an opportunity to review existing service provision and consider opportunities for possible change. It will be incumbent upon City staff throughout this review process to ensure collaboration with other levels of government and the community in order to that citizens of London are supported and cared for.

PREPARED BY:	RECOMMENDED BY:
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