

# The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole  
Community and Health Services  
March 12, 2020

Report of the Commissioner of Community and Health Services and Medical Officer of Health

## Procurement of Services for the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program

### 1. Recommendations

1. Council authorize an extension of the agreement between the Region and Golden Care Mobile Dental Services Inc. to provide clinical dental care service for a further six months, expiring on September 30, 2020, at a total cost of \$553,926 excluding Harmonized Sales Tax.
2. Council delegate authority to the Commissioner of Community and Health Services to procure interim dental services and to execute related agreements as follows:
  - a) Contracts may only be awarded by the Commissioner up until and including September 30, 2020
  - b) Time periods covered by the contracts for general dental services will vary, however, no contract shall be longer than 24 months
  - c) Time periods covered by the contracts for specialty dental services will not exceed 12 months
  - d) The total cost of services will not exceed the value of funding received from the Ministry of Health to operate the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program

### 2. Summary

This report is prepared to assist Council in carrying out its legislative duties and responsibilities as the board of health under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*.

To support the immediate needs of the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program, this report seeks approval to extend an agreement with Golden Care Mobile Dental Services Inc. until September 30, 2020 (the date the clinic at 17150 Yonge St. Newmarket is expected to open), to provide general dental services to low income seniors eligible for the Ontario Seniors Dental Program. Council approval is required under the additional deliverables provisions of Section 12.2 of the Purchasing Bylaw as the value of the additional deliverables exceeds 20% of the total cost of the contract.

This report also seeks authority for the Commissioner of Community and Health Services to enter into service agreements with dental service providers until September 30, 2020 provided the Ministry of Health funds all related costs. The length of time for these service agreements will depend upon how long it takes for the Region's other four clinics are operational. Under Section 3.3 of the Purchasing Bylaw, Council may authorize any method of procurement where to do so would be in the best interests of the Region.

Key Points:

- The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) requires public health units to deliver the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program services with dental providers, and in Public Health locations
- Implementation of the program requires capital infrastructure upgrades. The Ministry has confirmed funding for a clinic at 17150 Yonge Street, however, funding for the other four clinics has not yet been approved, and they are unlikely to be fully completed before April 1, 2021
- In the meantime, the Ministry has permitted York Region to contract with providers for general dental services on a salaried basis. Staff contracted with a provider that met the Ministry criteria through a direct purchase from [October 2019](#) and Council authorization is required to extend the contract to September 30, 2020, to align with opening of the 17150 Yonge St. clinic
- To cover service needs in response to demand until all Public Health clinics are operational, authority is requested to procure interim general and specialty dental services, subject to the costs being fully funded by the Ministry
- The interim use of salaried dental providers is permitted by the Ministry of Health until such time as the Region can directly provide the service

### 3. Background

#### **The Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program offers comprehensive dental care to eligible low-income seniors**

On April 11, 2019, the Province of Ontario announced a \$90 million investment in a publicly funded dental care for low-income seniors. York Region was allocated \$3,961,700 in additional annual operating base funding to support the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program starting in 2019.

The program offers a 'basket' of dental services, including:

- General services (e.g., examinations, preventative and restorative services, x-rays)
- Speciality services
  - Prosthodontics (e.g., dentures)
  - Endodontics (e.g., roots canals)

- Periodontics (e.g., gum disease treatment)
- Oral surgery (e.g., teeth removal)

## **York Region plans to have five clinics for the Seniors Dental program in 2021 for general dentistry, and contracts with salaried dental providers for specialty services**

In [October 2019](#) staff provided Council with an update on the programs implementation. The program requires that dental services be delivered by salaried dental providers through Public Health Units, Community Health Centres, and Aboriginal Health Access Centres. In accordance with Schedule B of the “New Schedules to the Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreement” (effective January 1, 2019) the Ministry has stated:

“The OSDCP (Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program) will be delivered through Public Health Units, Community Health Centres and Aboriginal Health Access Centres across the province with care provided by salaried dental providers. These service delivery partners are well positioned to understand the needs of priority populations and provide high quality dental care to low-income seniors in their communities.”

In addition, on May 23, 2019, the Ministry stated in their first Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program webinar that program services are to be delivered by salaried dental providers. During this webinar, the Ministry outlined a staged implementation of the program which included public health unit staffing recruitment and onboarding.

The Ministry has stated that use of a ‘fee-for-service’ approach is not permitted. Public Health Units may enter into contracts on a salaried basis with other organizations or providers (specialist such as denturist, endodontists, periodontist and oral surgeons) as needed to provide services to enrolled clients.

In contrast to a ‘fee-for-service’ provider, a salaried service provider is paid through a fixed term contract which includes set re-imbusement rates for services provided (such as an hourly rate or a daily rate). Interim procurement of salaried service providers to provide general dental services will be required until public health clinics are operational; however specialty services will be required on an ongoing basis as the Region’s clinics will not have the specialized equipment or expertise to provide specialty services.

York Region staff will be hired to provide general dental services at five public health clinics (4261 Highway 7, City of Markham, 50 High Tech Rd., City of Richmond Hill, 9060 Jane St., City of Vaughan, 17150 Yonge St., City of Newmarket and 20849 Dalton Rd, Town of Georgina). The Ministry will cover operating costs.

The use of contracted services through Golden Dental Services Inc. is a temporary measure to meet Ministry requirements and is not intended to replace internal unionized staffing roles for long term service provision.

In York Region, the Vaughan Community Health Centre, a not-for-profit organization providing clinical and social services, does not have existing infrastructure to be able to

provide dental clinic services nor does the Region have an Aboriginal Health Access Centre to provide services. As a result, capital funding requests were submitted to the Ministry on August 6, 2019 for required infrastructure upgrades at each Public Health location. To date, the Region has received funding for 17150 Yonge St., with the location anticipated to be operational by October 2020. Timelines for the other four clinics depend on the timing of Ministry capital funding decisions, and for the Georgina Link location, on when the lease and base building construction are completed. At this time, we anticipate all five clinics could be operational in 2021.

Contracts with salaried dental service providers will be and are permitted to be procured to provide specialty dental services (e.g., prosthodontics, endodontics, periodontics and oral surgery). These services are on an as-needed, referral basis and require specific equipment that will be unavailable at the public health clinics.

### **Program was partially launched in December 2019 through a direct purchase of general dental services**

At the Ministry's request on November 22, 2019 staff initiated a 'soft launch' of general dental services to provide a minimum level of service until our public health clinics could be fully operational. Staff obtained permission from the Ministry to implement interim general dental services through a salaried contract. This contract was initiated on December 9, 2019 to coincide with the timing of when clients began to receive confirmation of program eligibility from the Province.

The Commissioner of Community and Health Services procured general dental services from Golden Care Mobile Dental Services Inc. using existing delegated authority as a direct purchase for a five-month term. This vendor was selected to provide services in existing Public Health clinics due to their ability to provide mobile x-ray services and their experience with senior dental care, as they provide services in Long Term Care Homes. The service provider is currently performing to staff expectations. The contract with Golden Care Mobile Dental Services Inc. ends April 9, 2020.

Services are currently being provided three days per week at three out of four existing Public Health children's dental program preventive clinic locations:

- 4261 Highway 7 East, City of Markham; one day a week on Mondays
- 22 Prospect Street, Town of Newmarket; one day every other week on Thursdays
- 50 High Tech Road, City of Richmond Hill; every Tuesday and alternate Thursdays

## **4. Analysis**

### **Demand for program services has exceeded capacity of available services**

The current contracted service with Golden Care Mobile Dental Services Inc. supports seeing up to 84 clients per month, including new patient exams and treatment and emergency appointments.

As of January 30, 2020, there were over 565 clients on the wait list for new patient exams with this number expected to grow. Since December 2019, the Region has:

- Received over 1,500 phone calls into the Seniors Dental Care Program Registered Dental Hygienist phone line, including 829 calls routed through Access York
- Mailed out over 190 applications
- Provided over 340 applications to clients who dropped into York Region offices
- Completed over 60 new patient exams in York Region Public Health Dental Clinics
- Referred 45 clients for emergency treatment at other public health units with capacity
- Distributed 225 application packages to community partners
- Distributed 275 application packages to promote to clients of Access York, Housing and Social Services

In York Region, there are no pre-existing contracts in place for specialty dental services that fit Ministry requirements for the Seniors Dental Care program, because current public health and social services dental programs use a fee-for-service model as permitted by the Province. Eligible seniors in need of specialty services are currently being referred to other public health units who had existing infrastructure and contracts in place prior to the launch of the new Seniors Dental Care program through their municipally funded adult dental clinics.

### **Additional dental service contracts are required to continue supporting the program**

Staff anticipate approximately ten interim general dental service contracts will be required between now and when the Region's seniors dental clinics are operational, based on current and projected service demand. General dental services will be available at selected private dental offices (with salaried staff) throughout the Region. As Regional clinics open, the number of contracts will be reduced.

In addition, staff anticipate eight interim long-term specialty service contracts will be required between now and such time as when we can complete a traditional longer term process beginning September 2020 to respond to the need for specialized treatment outside of the scope of general dental services. Specialty services will be available, through referrals, at selected private dental offices (with salaried staff).

### **Delegated authority to procure interim dental services will support immediate program needs**

To respond to provincial delays on capital funding, and the significant current and growing demand for service, staff propose to secure multiple contracts for general and specialty dental services as an interim measure until the Region's five clinics are operational.

Delegated authority is requested in order to move quickly as the time required to successfully complete a traditional procurement process, such as a request for proposals, could take in the range of 9 months.

Staff propose the Commissioner of Community and Health Services be given authority to procure dental services on an interim basis as follows:

- In partnership with the Procurement Office and Legal Services, the Commissioner will procure these services through a fair, transparent and evaluative process
- The total cost of services will not exceed the value of funding received from the Ministry of Health to operate the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program.
- Contracts may only be awarded by the Commissioner up until and including September 1, 2020
- Time periods covered by the contracts for general dental services will vary depending upon the dates when the Region's clinics are operational, subject to that no contract shall be longer than 24 months
- Time periods covered by the contracts for specialty dental services will not exceed 12 months during which time the Region will initiate a traditional procurement process for long term service provision. Starting with 12 month contracts will ensure the ability of the program to secure providers as it is anticipated securing shorter term contracts for these types of services will be challenging.

### **An extension to the existing general dental services contract will provide continuity of services**

A six-month extension to the Golden Care Mobile Dental Services Inc. contract for general dental services is required to align with the anticipated launch date for the clinic at 17150 Yonge St. The extension will allow the program to continue to provide services for new clients and support the continuity of care for current clients.

## **5. Financial**

The approved 2020 budget includes expenditures for the Ontario Seniors Dental Care program totalling \$6.2 million, offset by 100% provincial funding (no tax levy impact) for operating costs and the costs of minor capital improvements/equipment. The Ministry has approved an annual funding allocation of \$3,961,700 to operate the program.

Operating, purchase of service and capital related costs will be managed within the approved funding allocations from the Ministry, with no tax levy impact.

Specific to Golden Care Mobile Dental Services Inc., the cost of the first five month contract was \$201,366 excluding Harmonized Sales Tax, and the cost to extend the general dental services contract for six months is an additional \$352,560, excluding Harmonized Sales Tax. The cost increase reflects the longer period of time covered and increasing clinic time from

two to three days per week. This cost will also be managed within the approved funding allocation from the Ministry.

## 6. Local Impact

Implementation of interim dental services for the Seniors Dental program will make services available to eligible clients throughout the Region.

## 7. Conclusion

Staff is seeking Council delegation of authority until September, 2020 to the Commissioner of Community and Health Services to procure interim dental services, and to extend a general dental services contract with Golden Care Mobile Dental Service Inc. for an additional six months. These services are mandated under the Ministry's *Oral Health Protocol, 2019* and the Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreements of January 1, 2019.

---

For more information on this report, please contact Dr. Karim Kurji, Medical Officer of Health at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 74012. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by: **Katherine Chislett**  
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

**Dr. Karim Kurji**  
Medical Officer of Health

Approved for Submission: **Bruce Macgregor**  
Chief Administrative Officer

February 27, 2020  
10502560