



Office of the Commissioner  
Community and Health Services Department

## MEMORANDUM

To: Members of Committee of the Whole

From: Katherine Chislett  
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

Date: August 26, 2020

Re: Social Service Response to COVID-19 Global Pandemic – September Update

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This memorandum provides an update to the Social Service Response report brought forward to Committee in [April 2020](#) and the update memos brought forward to Committee in [May 2020](#), [June 2020](#) and [July 2020](#). It identifies any new trends and issues, highlights key changes to federal and provincial supports, and updates on Regional actions. Information from Paramedic and Seniors Services not otherwise included in regular updates to Council by the Medical Officer of Health is included in this memo.

### **Community needs continue to evolve as the Region responds to Stage Three provincial opening of the pandemic**

As York Region communities adapt to Stage Three provincial opening, they face new challenges including return to school stressors, end of the provincial moratorium on evictions, and end of some COVID-19 supportive benefits such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). At the same time, community needs identified during the earlier phases of the pandemic remain current and active.

Human service agencies identify food security as a continued need in the community, although the number and proportion of food-related calls to 211FindHelp continue to decrease (15, or 3% of all needs reported in July). Human service agencies also report that ensuring all population groups, such as seniors, have access to information about services re-opening and safety procedures remains a community demand. Access to technology is a related concern and agencies have identified the need for collaborative efforts to provide technology devices and develop skills for their clients.

Health remains another community concern. The majority of calls to Access York in July were related to health topics (3,218 inquiries, or 26%). In comparison, there were 1,092 health-related inquiries in July 2019 (12% of the total number). Also remaining high are inquiries related to social assistance (2,933 inquiries, or 24%) and housing (1,516 inquiries, or 12%). Overall, the total number of inquiries related to human services was 8,847 in July. In comparison, in July 2019 there were 6,730 similar inquiries. Staff continues to monitor and respond to current and emerging trends to best support needs of the community as impacts of the pandemic continue.

## **Federal and provincial governments continue to announce new supports**

Since the April report and May, June and July update memos, the federal and provincial governments have made further announcements regarding financial and social supports, including:

### Federal Actions:

- Announced a [\\$37 billion CERB transition plan](#) with increased access to Employment Insurance and recovery benefits when the CERB ends. The plan includes transitioning to a simplified Employment Insurance program, effective September 27, 2020, to provide income support to those who remain unable to work and are eligible, and introducing a new suite of temporary and taxable recovery benefits to further support workers. While the Government prepares for this transition, and to ensure support continues for Canadians whose employment has been impacted by the pandemic, the CERB will be extended by an additional four weeks, providing a new maximum of up to 28 weeks of benefits. CERB will end October 3, 2020
- Announced adjustments to the [Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program](#). Under a new COVID-19 Resilience funding stream worth up to \$3.3 billion, provinces and territories can use federal funding to act quickly on a wider range of more pandemic-resilient infrastructure projects, such as upgrading long-term care homes to deal with social distancing requirements.
- The [Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy](#) is proposed to be modified and extended to December 19, 2020. This wage subsidy is designed to enable employers to re-hire workers previously laid off as a result of COVID-19, help prevent further job losses, and be better positioned to resume normal operations following the emergency. Canadian employers whose business has been affected by COVID-19 may be eligible for a subsidy of 75% of employee wages for up to 24 weeks from March 15, 2020 to August 29, 2020
- Temporarily set a minimum unemployment rate for the [Employment Insurance program](#) to help Canadians transition back to the Employment Insurance system with the ending of CERB supportive benefits. This temporary measure will establish minimum entry requirements for Employment Insurance eligibility across the country for Canadians to

access the income support they need now or might need later due to the economic impacts of COVID-19

Provincial actions:

- Invested \$83 million through the [Resilient Communities Fund](#) of the Ontario Trillium Foundation to provide grants to help eligible non-profit organizations, including food banks and child and youth programs, recover from COVID-19 and continue the delivery of vital programming in their communities. No details have been received to date on York Region's allocation
- Announced changes to [provincial housing legislation](#) aimed to strengthen protections for tenants. The *Protecting Tenants and Strengthening Community Housing Act* received royal assent July 22, 2020. These changes are highlighted later in this memorandum
- Provided [families with children on the Autism Spectrum](#) with services to support their child's ongoing learning and development. Foundational family services such as family and peer mentoring, caregiver workshops and coaching will be tailored to the unique regional and cultural needs in different communities. These services will build on existing virtual and remote options introduced during the COVID-19 outbreak

## **York Region continues to develop and implement actions as part of its social service response to COVID-19 and movement into Stage Three provincial opening of the pandemic**

Regional staff continues to adapt and deliver programs and services to complement other government initiatives that address social service needs.

### **Enhanced Housing and Homelessness Supports**

- Continued operation of the Self-Isolation Shelter in the Town of East Gwillimbury. The site provides a safe place and supports for people experiencing homelessness to isolate while they are awaiting COVID-19 test results, or are confirmed positive and have mild symptoms or are asymptomatic. As of August 21, 2020, the site has helped York Region hospitals support 30 clients during the 20 weeks since it has been in operation, to help limit the potential spread of COVID-19
- Through a continued partnership with Kingbridge Conference Centre and Hotel and The Salvation Army, the operation and services for the temporary Transitional Shelter in the Township of King have been secured until at least the end of 2020. The goal of the Transitional Shelter is to help people experiencing homelessness find and keep permanent housing by providing a place to safely self-isolate for up to 14 days. Case management and individualized housing plan supports in addition to wrap-around supports are provided to individuals who use the shelter. The results of the Transitional Shelter continue to be positive. Between May 13, 2020, when the shelter opened and

August 21, 2020, the site has supported a total of 294 clients; 117 clients have secured new permanent housing, and of those 54 have been reunited and housed with family and friends.

- Regional staff continues to analyze ongoing needs for Transitional Shelter services and explore options for program delivery. A great deal has been learned about how to rapidly rehouse people who are homeless. Possible next steps include leveraging other sites and spaces within the shelter system to deliver transitional and rapid rehousing services
- On July 29, 2020, over 150 staff from community agencies and organizations, who serve individuals experiencing homelessness, as well as senior staff from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, attended a virtual tour of the Transitional Shelter to see firsthand the work being done at this facility and gain a better understanding of the wraparound services that it provides. Those who attended commented positively on the innovative partnerships that made the Transitional Shelter possible, the carefully managed services keeping clients supported and safe, and the collaborative efforts with the United Way and others that contributed to successful rapid rehousing and family reunification
- Approved one additional household living in community housing to participate in the COVID-19 In-Situ Program since the July update to Council. This program provides relief to market rent households in community housing who have experienced a COVID-19 related income loss. To date, 33 households have applied and 15 households are now receiving a short-term rent benefit through this program
- Implemented wellness checks with 287 seniors living in 12 community housing locations participating to date. Housing Services provided referrals to programs and resources where tenants identified a need for support
- Developed resources and communications materials to support community housing providers and residents to implement mandatory masking in all common areas of multi-residential buildings and supported residents with access to non-medical face masks through Access York

### **Innovative Children's Services**

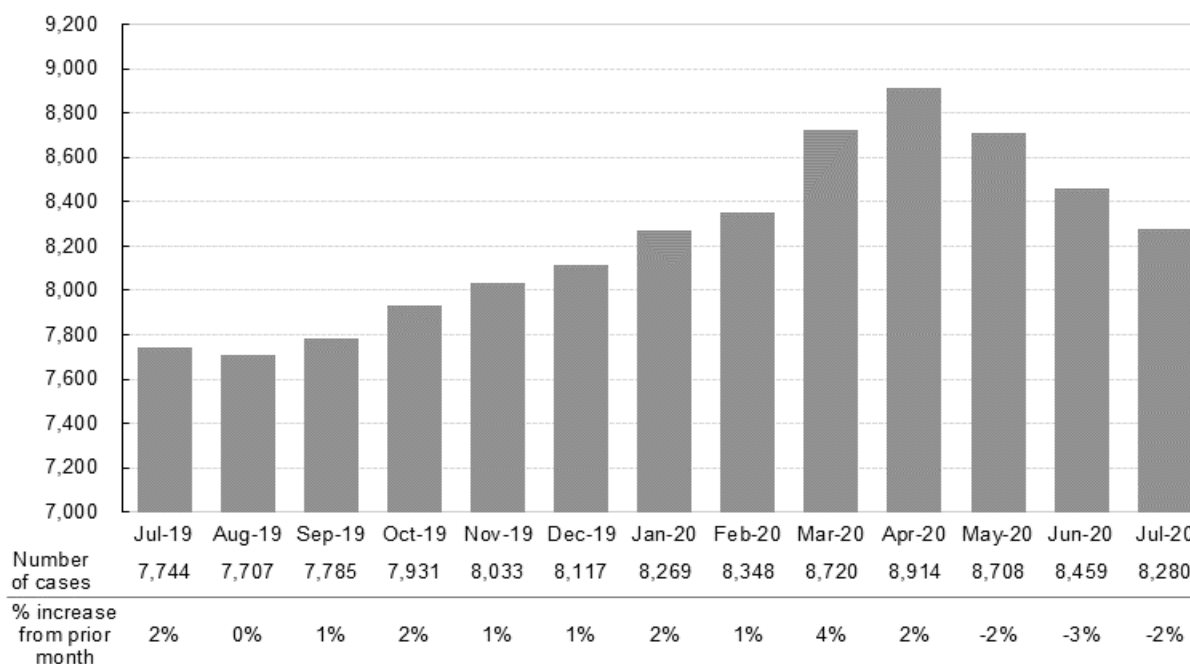
- On July 30, 2020 the Province announced its plan to allow licensed child care centres across Ontario to open at full capacity starting September 1, 2020 under enhanced health and safety requirements. Integrated Children's Services continue to receive notice from the Ministry of Education of child care centres who are opened and planning to open. As of August 18, 2020, there were 275 child care centres open. It is estimated that by September 10, 520 Child Care Centres out of the 540 will be open across the Region. Child care fee subsidy has also resumed to support families living with low income to be able to access licensed child care as centres reopen

- In response to the Province reopening licensed child care centres, Integrated Children's Services set-up virtual meetings with child care operators. Public Health provided information and resources regarding health and safety measures required for child care operators to reopen. As the province made additional announcements, information and resources were updated and shared with child care operators in the Region
- As child care centres reopen, Early Intervention Services has resumed service to support the successful return of children with special needs to child care. Service includes both virtual support as well as in-person visits for children with complex needs. Supports build on the experience gained from emergency child care to help children with special needs as well as other struggling with the changes encountered over the last few months
- Child care fee subsidy has also resumed to support families living with low income to be able to access licensed child care as centres reopen. As of August 11, 2020 there are 1,365 families in immediate need on the child care fee subsidy waitlist. Depending on the economic recovery, as families make the decision to send their children back to child care, staff anticipate there may be an increase in child care fee subsidy applications
- EarlyON Child and Family Centres were also permitted to reopen with in-person programming as of September 1, 2020. Participants will be required to pre-register and additional health and safety protocols must be in place. EarlyON agencies adapted quickly under the pandemic to offer a wide range of virtual supports for all families with young children. These virtual supports were very popular, with the videos being viewed almost one million times. Reopening of EarlyON centres will include a combination of in-person and virtual supports to meet the different needs of families.
- Offered 13 online professional development learning sessions in August with the participation of more than 770 early learning and child care professionals
- In partnership with the Children's Treatment Network, planning continues to resume in-person specialty Occupational and Physiotherapy clinics for children who require these supports. The Spasticity Management Clinic resumed in person client visits and by mid August saw 32 children. Two additional clinics to support children who need critical support, the Feeding Assessment and Consultation Clinic and the Neuromotor Clinic, are set to begin in September and will offer in-person client visits when needed
- Over the last several months, many new approaches have been developed to continue to meet the needs of families and children. York Region Early Intervention Services collaborated with EarlyON agencies, so that parents could speak with an early years professional over the phone about strategies to help them with creating daily routines, promoting positive interactions, behaviour management strategies and tips, supporting child growth and development. Other resources to support families with young children were launched on Pinterest and York.ca to make them easily accessible to parents

## Escalated Social Assistance and Income Supports

- Through virtual service and adjustments, staff has managed the steady increase in the Ontario Works caseload. As of the end of July 2020, there were 8,280 customers compared to 7,744 in July 2019 (a 7% increase from July 2019 to July 2020) as Table 1 illustrates. The caseload has been decreasing by approximately 2% each month since May 2020, however, staff anticipate a surge of Ontario Works applications when the CERB ends

**Table 1**  
**Ontario Works Caseload Changes – July 2019 to July 2020**



- Though with the availability of CERB it is too early to know true impacts, there has been a shift to slightly younger heads of households within Ontario Works cases in 2020. The proportion of cases with a head of household that is 45+ years has been declining over recent years, while the proportion of cases with a head of household that is 35 to 44 years has been increasing. In 2019 there were on average 1,989 cases every month with a head of household that was 35 to 44 years, compared to 2,309 cases on average in 2020 (January to June). In June 2019 there were 1,966 cases in this category and 2,256 cases in June 2020, a 15% increase
- There have also been more Ontario Works cases that are couples with dependents in recent years. In 2019 there were on average 763 couples with children cases every month, compared to 911 on average in 2020 (January to June). In June 2019 there were 761 in this category and 882 in June 2020, a 16% increase

- The temporary emergency discretionary benefit for eligible Ontario Works customers ended July 31, 2020. This benefit was provided monthly (beginning March 2020) to eligible customers (\$100 for singles, \$200 for families) and was 100% funded by the Province. Since the benefit was introduced the Region issued the benefit to 1,379 singles and 1,127 families for a total of \$1,053,379. With this benefit ending, staff expect to see an increase in need for food vouchers which is being funded through the Social Services Relief Fund

## **Rent arrears remain an area of focus for community housing providers including Housing York Inc.**

Housing York Inc. and other community housing providers reported that rent arrears increased significantly between March 2020 and July 2020. As of July 31, 2020, 13.3% of market tenancies (or 78 households) and 4.5% of subsidized tenancies (or 100 households) were in arrears for Housing York Inc., to a total of 178 households. Total arrears owing as of July 31, 2020, was \$181,176. Relative to July 2019, Housing York Inc. reports that there has been a 150% increase in market rent households with arrears and a 30% increase in subsidized households with arrears.

At this time, the Region does not have complete data on arrears owed to the non-profit and co-operative housing providers. The available data indicates they experienced an increase in arrears comparable to Housing York Inc. between March 2020 and June 2020, although there is considerable variation between providers, and in some cases the amounts owed had decreased by the end of June.

With the Province of Ontario's March 16, 2020, closure of the Landlord and Tenant Board, Housing York Inc. and some community housing providers suspended the normal practice of issuing a "Form N4-Notice to End a Tenancy Early for Non-payment of Rent" (N4 Notice) to households who had not paid their rent as required. In June 2020, Housing York Inc. began to issue N4 Notices again. Most households bring their rental accounts into good standing after receiving an N4 Notice. The N4 Notice is the first of many steps in the eviction process. The household can stop the eviction process at any time by paying their arrears. On a historical basis, very few N4 Notices lead ultimately to eviction, and community housing providers will continue to work with households in arrears to establish workable payment plans, and preserve tenancies.

The increase in community housing residents with rent arrears will remain an area of focus. Housing providers depend on this revenue to sustain their buildings, but also recognize that evicting residents who cannot pay their rent at this time will have deep negative impacts for individual households and create additional pressure on other Regional services, such as emergency housing and shelters. Staff is closely monitoring these trends and will continue to work with community housing providers to help residents whose income has been affected by the pandemic to pay their rent and maintain their housing.

## **Supporting all vulnerable residents to maintain their housing will continue to be a priority as eviction orders resume**

The Landlord and Tenant Board began a gradual re-opening on August 1, 2020, including issuing pending eviction orders and scheduling hearings for non-urgent evictions such as for non-payment of rent. Over the coming months, residents who lost income as a result of the pandemic may be at increased risk for eviction if they are unable to repay the amount owed. The resumption of Landlord and Tenant Board hearings will impact renters in both the private rental market and community housing.

The pandemic does not change residents' legal obligation to pay rent; however, a number of options are in place to help households whose incomes were affected by COVID-19. As outlined in a separate report in September 2020 on changes to housing-related statutes under the *Protecting Tenants and Strengthening Community Housing Act, 2020*, the Landlord and Tenant Board will be required to consider whether a landlord attempted to negotiate an agreement to repay rent arrears that arose during the pandemic period before issuing an eviction order. Subsidized residents who experience an income loss may have their rent adjusted to reflect the income decrease.

Community housing residents paying market rent may be able to access the COVID-19 In-Situ program, and there is budget available to extend this program if required. Region-funded or delivered programs, including the Homelessness Prevention Program and Housing Stability Program, can also help eligible residents in both the private market and community housing with rent and utility arrears. Funding from the provincial Social Services Relief Fund and the federal Reaching Home Fund have been used to increase financial capacity in both programs. While community need has not increased to date, higher demand is anticipated for these programs going forward due to the Landlord and Tenant Board resuming eviction hearings and utility companies reinstating service disconnections due to arrears. In addition, when the CERB ends, more residents may be at risk for homelessness and increase the demand for the Homelessness Prevention Program and Housing Stability Program. Staff will continue to monitor the resources needs to reduce the risk of homelessness and help residents stay housed.

## **York Region continues to collaborate with community agencies to help respond to COVID-19 needs, including through supports for local projects and initiatives**

As part of the [COVID-19 Community Coordination \(3C\) initiative](#) the Region co-hosts with United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT), community agencies continue to identify collaborative opportunities and share information on funding opportunities. Community response tables continue, particularly those addressing issues faced by isolated, high risk seniors, unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness, and people facing food insecurity.

Members of the 3C Homelessness Response Table continue to work collaboratively to address the COVID-19 needs of individuals, who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in York Region, in new ways. From implementing drop-by services which provide



individuals with nutritional meals, a place to shower, do laundry and get supports, to second stage housing and wraparound supports of individuals leaving the Transitional Shelter, to installation of individual pods to increase emergency housing capacity for youth, to additional staffing to operate the Street Outreach Van seven days a week, this table continues to help people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness to find and keep housing in innovative ways to help York Region's most vulnerable residents.

Close collaboration between York Region and UWGT through the 3C initiative continues to help get resources to projects that respond to other social issues arising from COVID-19. Since April, UWGT has approved funding for 160 projects that serve York Region residents, including projects being supported under the Emergency Community Support Fund it is administering on behalf of the federal government. Examples of funded projects include educational supports for five months to 800 children between the ages of five to 13 who are newcomers, immigrants and living with low income; creating safe program spaces for 350 adults with disabilities in York Region who cannot comprehend the concept of physical distancing; and providing 300 vulnerable seniors living with low income enhanced fresh and frozen food choices and shopper services.

### **COVID-19 Community Coordination tables continue to help distribute face coverings to lower income households**

The Region is also leveraging agency partners through its 3C initiative and other networks to distribute free face coverings to individuals and households in need. To help address any immediate need as a result of the mandatory mask policy that came into effect in July 2020, 50,000 disposable masks were distributed through community agencies, including food banks, Violence Against Women Shelters, Temporary COVID-19 Shelters, Emergency Housing and Housing with Support providers. The Region is currently working on a further distribution of 300,000 reusable adult and child size masks to vulnerable residents through community agencies and social services programs. The Region also partnered with the health unit serving the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation to distribute reusable masks to residents of the island. Fact sheets are being included with the masks to disseminate information on the safe and appropriate use of face coverings, and other public health guidance, to help contain the spread of COVID-19. Residents in need can also request masks through Access York and York.ca.

### **Paramedic Services continues to play an integral role in the health care system**

911 call volumes continue to be lower than normal, with call volume in July down approximately 4% from the same time last year, though calls from Retirement Homes remain up. In addition to responding to 911 calls, paramedics and the community paramedicine team continue to provide the additional supports described in the July 2020 update memo, as well as carrying out the following:

- Working alongside service partners to provide surveillance testing for staff within long-term and congregate care settings as needed

- Collaborating with Public Health, Local Health Integration Network and local partners (e.g. Georgina Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic) to support community based COVID-19 testing
- Collaborating with Health System partners including Ontario Health Teams, Ontario Health, Planning and Implementation tables and local emergency services to provide coordinated supports. More information on Ontario Health Teams and the Region's involvement are outlined in the September 2020 memo Update on the Implementation of Ontario Health Teams in York Region
- Providing supports and COVID-19 testing within multiple transitional housing sites in partnership with Social Services and Public Health. Conducting COVID-19 testing of healthcare workers on site at Paramedic Services headquarters. As of July 25, 2020, there were 3,865 COVID-19 testing swabs completed (including preventative surveillance, clearance testing and active cases)
- Participating in the Universal Influenza Immunization Program this Fall by providing flu shots for vulnerable populations, first responders and health care providers
- Preparing to re-integrate Community Paramedicine Programs, including Home Visits and Clinics (e.g. CP@Clinic) that were suspended due to COVID-19. The programs will be adapted due to COVID-19 to ensure safety of participants and paramedics, while continuing to provide support to residents

### **Seniors Services continues to implement preventative measures around the Region's long-term care homes**

As of August 6, according to provincial data, 23 of Ontario's 630 long-term care homes are in active COVID-19 outbreak, and 308 of Ontario's long-term care homes that had active cases have been resolved. York Region's two municipally operated long-term care homes (the Homes), Maple Health Centre with 100 beds and Newmarket Health Centre with 132 beds, continue to implement preventative measures to safeguard residents and staff as Stage Three reopening is underway, including:

- Enhancing contact tracing including using screening and scheduling software to manage, identify, educate and monitor individuals who have had close contact with someone who is infected with COVID-19
- Testing staff and residents at regular intervals (including checking temperature and oxygen levels) as part of the Province's comprehensive surveillance strategy
- Resuming indoor and outdoor visits for residents and families in each of the Homes using active screening measures and physical distancing barriers

- Resuming communal dining, small group programming and in-room tub bathing in each Home with safety measures, including physical distancing, enhanced cleaning and assigned seating for contact tracing in case a resident tests positive for COVID-19
- Preparing isolation wings to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 to other areas of the Homes in the event that a positive COVID-19 case is confirmed. The wings are stocked with required medications, medical carts, isolation procedures, technological equipment, and staff have received training and education resources

On July 22, 2020, the Region learned that one staff member at Maple Health Centre, who was asymptomatic, tested positive for COVID-19 as part of the enhanced surveillance testing of long-term care staff. The staff member was subsequently retested and received two negative test results. Under the circumstances, Public Health determined this was not an active infection.

As of August 6, 2020, Newmarket Health Centre has not experienced a positive case of COVID-19 in a resident or staff member.

### **Seniors Community Programs are working on recovery planning to safely work towards reopening**

The Region's Adult Day Program facilities remain closed but continue to provide virtual programming and weekly check-in calls for clients and their caregivers. The Psychogeriatric Resource Consultant program continues to provide virtual support to all 28 long-term care homes located in York Region. Seniors Services is currently developing a recovery plan to safely work towards reopening for both programs.

### **The Province announced further details on the membership of the independent commission into the long-term care sector**

On [July 29, 2020](#), details were provided by the Province regarding the membership of the Independent Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission that will provide the government with guidance on how to better protect long-term care home residents and staff from future outbreaks. The commissioners are expected to deliver their final report by April 2021.

As described in the July 2020 update memo, York Region staff participated in discussions and provided input on the composition and scope of the independent commission for [Advantage Ontario](#) and [Association of Municipalities of Ontario's Health Task Force](#) to include in their respective submissions to the Province. York Region staff continue to participate in discussions with sector partners and look forward to contributing to the work of the commission by providing a submission outlining the Region's experience with system challenges and offering recommendations for improvement.

## **Regional activities are being planned and implemented within available resources, including provincial and federal funding commitments, but additional resources going forward will likely be required**

The Region's social service response is currently being delivered within the department's approved operating budget, supplemented by additional funding including under the provincial Social Services Relief Fund.

The initial allocation of the Social Services Relief Fund announced in Spring 2020 will not be sufficient to cover the cost of the COVID-19 related homelessness response, including the ongoing operating costs of the Transitional Shelter and Self-Isolation Shelter until March 31, 2021. In July the Province announced an [additional \\$150 million in Social Services Relief funding](#) and on August 12, 2020, provided the [Region's Phase 2 funding allocation](#) details. Under the Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2, the Region is eligible to receive an initial planning allocation of \$8,419,414 in 2020-21. It will flow through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative funding stream managed by the Social Services Branch. Staff is required to submit a business case to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing by September 11, 2020. Business cases will be assessed by a provincial inter-ministerial working group and final allocations will be provided to municipalities later this fall. The Province reserves the right to change initial planning allocations and re-allocate funds between service areas based on COVID-19 needs and emerging public health emergencies across the province. Additional resources, including Regional tax levy funding, may be required should provincial funding not be sufficient to cover COVID-19 costs.

## **York Region to receive \$14.2 million Safe Restart funding to support a safe, sufficient and adequate supply of child care for families as the economy reopens**

The federal government has committed to provide \$625 million in new funding nationwide to help the child care sector adapt to the COVID-19 environment and address the unique needs stemming from the pandemic. In Ontario, Safe Restart funding will provide [\\$234.6 million](#) in new funding. Funding will be used by the Province to procure and deliver face coverings directly to child care operators, licensed home child care agencies and EarlyON agencies across Ontario in order to comply with reopening operational guidance.

On August 14, 2020, York Region received notice that the Region's Safe Start funding allocation will be \$14.2 million to help the child care sector adapt to the COVID-19 environment as the economy reopens. Funding may be used to support child care and EarlyON agencies with additional personal protective equipment, enhanced cleaning, additional staffing needs to meet health and safety requirements, support for short term vacancies and minor capital required to meet reopening guidelines. Funds must be spent by December 31, 2020.

This announcement is part of the \$19 billion [Safe Start Agreement](#) and subsequent provincial funding commitments announced in July 2020 to assist local economies during the pandemic. As part of the commitment, \$4 billion in joint federal-provincial funding will be available to Ontario municipalities, including \$2 billion to address municipal operating needs and \$2 billion

for municipal transit systems. Safe Start Agreement funding details are highlighted in the September 2020 Operating and Capital Budget Mid-Year Progress Report.

## **Enhanced measures in Long-Term Care are resulting in unplanned staffing and budgetary pressures**

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to change how care is delivered at the Homes, including numerous protocols and infection prevention and control measures put in place to protect residents and staff. The Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care continue to implement new and updated directives and memos, which also impacts the Homes' staffing complements and how care is delivered to our residents. The new requirements have resulted in unexpected and unplanned increases to staffing resources and enhancements to personal protective equipment. The Homes have been fortunate to have access to redeployed staff to support these measures, including feeding residents and supporting the recreation staff in providing continued activities to residents to minimize social isolation. However, this staffing gap will need to be addressed as redeployed staff return to their home positions.

In the months ahead, additional resources will be needed to further prepare for recovery planning and a potential second wave of COVID-19. These unplanned, yet necessary resources are causing budgetary pressures in the Homes.

Additional [provincial funding](#) was announced on July 6, 2020, to provide long-term care homes with continued COVID-19 Prevention and Containment Funding. As of July 31, 2020 the Region's two Homes have received a total of \$290,800. The province has not indicated the total amount of future funding the Homes are expected to receive.

Regional staff will continue to monitor community needs and their impact on Community and Health Services programs and will bring forward any funding pressures or opportunities, including as part of the 2021 budget process.

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