



Office of the Commissioner
Housing York Inc.
Community and Health Services Department

MEMORANDUM

To: Directors of Housing York Inc. Board
From: Rick Farrell, General Manager
Date: February 21, 2019
Re: Housing Operations Activity Update

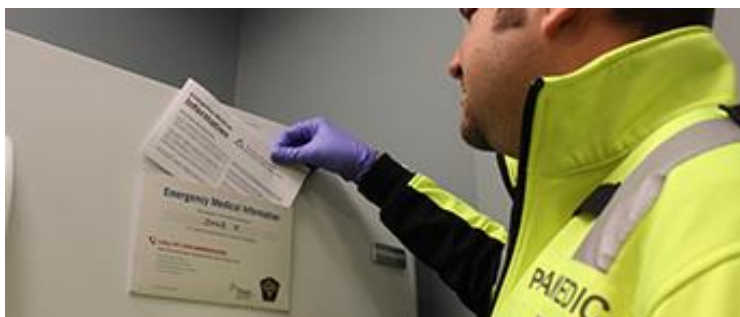
Resident Engagement and Programs

Personal Medical Information Kits - Partnership with Paramedic Services

In a health emergency, medical information can be difficult to remember or impossible to provide if a person is unconscious or unable to communicate. York Region's Paramedic Services approached Housing York Inc. (HYI) to support delivery of a program that helps first responders access a person's medical information during an emergency.

The program distributes Personal Medical Information Kits to seniors living in HYI communities. Residents complete the kit's forms to include information on pre-existing health conditions, medications, and allergies. Residents are reminded to include copies of their health card, emergency contact information, and related medical legal documents. Paramedic Services recommends that completed kits be affixed to resident's refrigerators, using a magnetic strip attached to the back of the kit, so the kit is easily visible to first responders when they enter a unit during an emergency.

HYI will distribute the kits throughout the year to over 1,400 senior residents during related senior safety talks offered in HYI communities through partnerships with Paramedic Services and York Regional Police. These venues provide residents assistance with completing the information. These initiatives support HYI's goals to strengthen community health to better support residents.



Personal Medical Information Kit on a resident's refrigerator

Healthy Hearing Workshops offered at Several Seniors Housing Communities

Community and Home Assistance to Seniors partnered with the Canadian Hearing Society recently to offer hearing workshops to seniors living in the community at large and extended the offer to seniors living in five HYI communities. Throughout the month of February, a hearing counsellor from the Canadian Hearing Society conducted one hour hearing information sessions. Each one hour workshop was designed to present information on healthy hearing, signs of hearing loss, hearing aids and to provide tips on effective communication strategies for people with hearing impairments. After the presentation, residents were offered free individual hearing screening assessments. Over 50 participants attended the five workshops.

Every Bite Matters – Connecting Seniors and Youth at the Richmond Hill Hub

The Richmond Hill Hub is a mixed use building with 202 residential units and a variety of community agency spaces at ground level. One of the services located at the base of the building is a youth hub where York Region's Social Services contracts with 360°kids to deliver a variety of programs and services for at-risk youth. "Every Bite Matters" is an initiative, delivered by 360°kids, that provides youth living in York Region with culinary training to prepare and serve meals. Youth prepare meals in a commercial kitchen located in the 360°kids space and serve the meals in the sixth floor resident lounge to seniors living in the Richmond Hill Hub. Youth program participants are also invited to enjoy their culinary work and dine with the seniors.

The program has served over 730 hot meals to Richmond Hill Hub seniors and supported 16 youth in achieving ongoing employment.

Housing York Expands English as a Second Language Program to Seniors in Aurora

Residents at Hadley Grange and Orchard Heights, two seniors' buildings in the Town of Aurora, expressed interest for English as a Second Language classes to help residents better communicate with one another.

Following the success of English as a Second Language classes at Rose Town in the Town of Richmond Hill and Kingview Court in the Township of King, housing staff connected with the

York Catholic District School Board to deliver official English literacy development classes for residents at Hadley Grange and Orchard Heights.

Over 20 residents living at Hadley Grange and Orchard Heights are participating in the classes that accommodate all levels of English proficiency.

Helping Residents Weather Snow and Ice Events

This year Housing York has enhanced resident communications to encourage them to take appropriate precautions when major winter weather events are expected. Using tenant meetings, paper notices and through HYI Alerts, an electronic notification system, HYI encourages residents to prepare to stay safely indoors during severe weather, ensuring items such as groceries and medications are stocked ahead of time. Residents are reminded that if they must go out during a weather event, they should exercise caution in parking lots and sidewalks.

Staff work proactively with snow contractors to ensure contract standards are met and to schedule curb to curb clearing of the properties once the event is over. Residents are informed of snow clearing processes and timelines so they can plan their activities.

In addition to helping residents stay safe, these communications have had the added benefit of reducing the number of snow related resident calls to the after-hours emergency line. We will also continue to communicate with residents so they can be prepared and informed of what to expect before, during and after a snow event.

Capital Updates

Elevator Modernization at Fairy Lake Gardens, Newmarket

With each capital project, HYI works with residents to minimize disruptions by holding onsite, interactive information sessions about the planned work. Meetings are followed up with notices that provide details about the project including areas of work, project timelines, potential resident impacts and staff contact information. Despite best efforts to be proactive and support residents through each capital upgrade, resident concerns relating to the project cannot be completely eliminated.

Capital improvements to the elevators at Fairy Lake Gardens commenced last December and include upgrades to cab interiors, new controls and new hoist motors. As there are two elevators at this location, one elevator is operational while work is performed on the other. Shortly after completion of the upgrades of the first elevator, residents experienced service interruptions.

The contractor investigated the service interruptions and determined that a number of factors had affected its performance. Adjustments to the elevator were been made by the contractor

and HYI also held a resident meeting to discuss the new elevators' performance. Work continues on the second elevator, with all work expected to be complete by the end of March.

Land Acquisition - 5676 Main Street, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

In 2018, there was a comprehensive property search for an affordable housing development site focused on the priority areas of the Town of Aurora, Town of East Gwillimbury and the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. In [June 2018](#), Council authorized acquisition of a 3.7 acre site at 5676 Main Street in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, and Region closed on the property in January 2019.

A consultant has been retained to develop some preliminary development options for the property. Staff are planning community engagement including Public Information Centres and establishing a Community Liaison Committee which would remain in place throughout the duration of the project. Currently, only the funding for the land acquisition has been approved by Regional Council. Capital costs for the development will be requested through the Region's capital budget process. The Region has \$4.1 million in federal and provincial funding that can be allocated to the construction of this project, which would require approvals to be achieved by March 2020.

Rick Farrell
General Manager

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