

# **The Regional Municipality of York**

Committee of the Whole  
Community and Health Services  
September 12, 2019

Report of the Commissioner of Community and Health Services

## **York Region's Partnership on Local Ontario Health Teams**

### **1. Recommendations**

1. Council approve York Region's participation as a partner in the full application stage for the following two Ontario Health Teams:
  - Southlake Community Ontario Health Team
  - Eastern York Region and North Durham Ontario Health Team
2. Council authorize the Commissioner of Community and Health Services to sign agreements related to York Region's participation in Ontario Health Teams as deemed appropriate in the Commissioner's discretion.
3. The Regional Clerk forward this report to Southlake Regional Health Centre and Markham Stouffville Hospital.

### **2. Summary**

This report seeks Council's approval to participate as a partner on two Ontario Health Teams in York Region for the following reasons:

- The Ontario Health Teams' goals align with the Region's Strategic Priority of supporting community health, safety and well-being
- To benefit from potential opportunities for the Region to leverage new funding and partnerships
- To ensure that the Region maintains current funding levels to provide continued services to York Region residents

The Region's participation on the Ontario Health Teams named above is based on the following conditions:

- No impact on Regional tax levy
- No additional Regional resources required to support this work

- The Region's priorities are represented during the planning and implementation stages

### 3. Background

#### **Changes to Ontario's healthcare system are underway**

On June 6, 2019, [The Connecting Care Act, 2019](#) came into effect in Ontario. This Act consolidates six provincial agencies and the Local Health Integration Networks into a new Crown agency called [Ontario Health](#) to oversee health care delivery, improve clinical guidance and provide support to ensure better quality of care for patients. York Region will be impacted by these changes as it currently receives annual funding from the Central Local Health Integration Network to provide services to York Region residents.

In addition to merging a number of agencies into a super-agency, Ontario Health will also support the establishment and oversight of local [Ontario Health Teams](#). These teams will: (1) provide a new delivery model comprised of primary care, secondary care, acute care, home care, long-term care, emergency health services, community support services, mental health and addictions, health promotion and disease prevention, and other social and community services, and (2) act as a community of providers that guide patients at every age and stage of their health care journey. At full maturity, the Health Teams [are expected to](#):

- Provide a full coordinated continuum of care for an attributed population within a geographic region
- Offer patients 24/7 access to coordination of care and system navigation services and work to ensure patients experience seamless transitions throughout their care journey
- Be measured, report on and improve performance across a standardized framework linked to the 'Quadruple Aim' (better clinical outcomes, better patient experience, better provider satisfaction, better value)
- Operate within a single, clear accountability framework
- Be funded through an integrated funding envelope
- Reinvest into front line care
- Improve access to secure digital tools, including online health records and virtual care options for patients – a 21st century approach to health care

#### **Each Ontario Health Team will be unique in its approach**

On April 3, 2019, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (the Ministry) invited health care providers and organizations across the province to establish local partnerships, and to submit a single self-assessment for each Ontario Health Team. The self-assessment included a proposed model of care for the local Health Team, initial target population(s), proposed geographic boundaries and implementation readiness. As such, each Ontario

Health Team will be comprised of different partners and have different capacities and strengths.

## **The Region was invited to participate as a partner in the self-assessment stage of three Ontario Health Teams located in York Region**

Regional staff provided input into the self-assessment application for the following three Ontario Health Teams:

- Southlake Community Ontario Health Team led by Southlake Regional Health Centre
- Eastern York Region and North Durham Ontario Health Team led by Markham Stouffville Hospital, and
- Vaughan Community Ontario Health Team led by Addiction Services for York Region

Organizations, such as York Region were invited to participate as partners in the self-assessment stage based on a number of factors, including: a strong history of collaboration with other local organizations on successful integrated care initiatives in the past; sufficient resources that can be dedicated to the early stages of the planning process; capacity and capability to continue to provide care, including social and health services to clients and caregivers; alignment with Ministry direction regarding the necessary types of organizations of the self-assessment application; and a shared vision for healthcare in Ontario.

The Western York Region Ontario Health Team, led by Mackenzie Health, did not invite the Region to participate as a partner.

## **Expectations of partners are still in development**

Partners are expected to contribute to the development of care pathways and provide services to residents/patients in the new model(s) of care. They are also expected to commit to shared investments/accountability, be accountable for leading engagement within their specific sector, and work towards formal agreement structures.

It is not clear at this time how the funding will be allocated for providing these services, or how the accountability and risk will be shared among partners. These details will be determined as the application progresses to further stages.

The Region's role to date has been to provide input that represents Regional priorities and Community and Health Services Department perspectives. Regional staff attend meetings to contribute expertise in community paramedicine, paramedic services, senior services, digital health and data support, and financial/funding planning. Some of the key activities include developing models of care for seniors and individuals living with mental health and addictions, patient engagement frameworks, quality and performance measures, and digital health frameworks.

## **The Region's community paramedicine program could be part of a comprehensive care service**

All three Ontario Health Teams that have invited the Region to participate in application development. They are primarily interested in exploring how the Region's community paramedicine program can support the Ministry's goal of ending hallway medicine by providing patient care outside of a hospital setting when appropriate.

## **Two of three Ontario Health Teams were approved to proceed to the Full Application stage and have invited York Region to be a partner**

In total, the Ministry received 157 self-assessment submissions from across the province. On July 18, 2019, the Ministry announced that 31 of these submissions were invited to proceed with a full application (due October 9, 2019). Forty-one teams were placed into the "In Development" category and must provide more information before being invited to submit a full application.

The Southlake Community Ontario Health Team, and the Eastern York Region and North Durham Ontario Health Team were approved to submit a full application and have invited York Region to be a partner.

All partners are expected to contribute to the development and review of the full application. This will require the Region's input and approval of the application and agreement to support the Teams. See Attachment 1 for details of each Ontario Health Team that has invited York Region to participate as a partner.

## **4. Analysis**

### **Partnering with local Ontario Health Teams aligns with York Region's Strategic Priority of supporting community health, safety and well-being**

Establishing the Region as a partner on the local Ontario Health Teams aligns with the Region's 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan of supporting community health, safety and well-being. Having a voice at the Ontario Health Teams will help ensure that the Region's residents have access to the necessary health and social support services where and when they need them.

Partnering with the Ontario Health Teams also aligns with the Community and Health Services departmental priority of helping people at all stages of life. The department has multiple roles in the delivery human services including:

- Acting as a Regional system manager for housing, homelessness prevention, Ontario Works and children's services
- Providing direct services to residents through the Region's two Long-Term Care homes, children's services, paramedic services and public health programs.

Although the Ontario Health Teams will focus on specific patient populations in the first phase of implementation, the long-term goal of the model is to focus on overall population health. Therefore, incorporating all aspects of human services into the Ontario Health Team model and taking a social determinants of health approach to planning will be essential for improving the well-being and health status of the Region's residents.

### **The Region will only enter into a partnership at the full application stage if specific conditions are met**

The Region's participation as a partner on the Ontario Health Teams will be based on the following conditions:

- No impact on Regional tax levy
- No additional Regional resources required to support this work
- The Region's priorities are represented in the development of the full application

### **As Ontario Health Teams become established, services may be re-aligned**

There is currently no association between the establishment of Ontario Health Teams and announcements made by the Ministry in 2019 related to new Public Health entities and boundaries, changes to long-term care funding, and the discussions about ambulance services. However, these systems may be re-aligned as the Ontario Health Teams system becomes established.

### **Implications for long-term care are still to be determined**

Although specific details on the role of the long-term care sector have not been released, the Ministry's vision is to incorporate all sectors of the local health care system into the Ontario Health Team model. As the Region owns and operates two municipal long-term care homes, it is imperative that the Region fully understand the implications of this model and have a stake at determining how the long-term care sector will be included.

### **The Ontario Health Teams will provide opportunities to leverage new funding and partnerships for the Region**

As the Ontario Health Team model will be focused on overall population health at maturity, there are opportunities for the Region to leverage new funding streams. For instance, community paramedicine is expected to take on a greater role in the new Ontario Health Team model; however the program has been significantly underfunded by the Ministry and the Local Health Integration Networks. The ability for local health teams to reallocate funding to innovative service delivery models such as community paramedicine presents a revenue opportunity for the Region. Furthermore, the Ministry has historically targeted funding almost exclusively to traditional health care providers such as primary care and hospitals. However, with a population health-based approach and a focus on overall well-being, there are opportunities to include non-traditional health care providers in the funding envelopes.

Having a seat with the Ontario Health Teams will create new partnership opportunities and strengthen current relationships.

## 5. Financial

There are no financial implications of participating on the Ontario Health Teams as a partner at this time. The Region's participation will have no impact on the tax levy and no additional resources will be required to support this stage of work.

### **It is important that the Region maintains current funding levels in order to provide continued services to York Region residents**

York Region receives annual base program funding from the Central Local Health Integration Network to provide the following services to support York Region residents: Psychogeriatric Resource Consultants that provide education and consultation for long-term care staff who provide care for adults with responsive behaviours; Adult Day Programs that help adults with care needs to live in their homes as long as possible, and help provide caregiver relief; and Client Intervention and Support Services that help older adults remain living independently in the community for as long as possible.

In 2019, the total base funding for these programs from the Central Local Health Integration Network is \$2,074,334. Once the Local Health Integration Networks cease to exist as separate agencies, it is unclear how these funds will continue to be provided to the Region. Similarly, a portion of funding for long-term care currently flows from the province through the Local Health Integration Networks; it is unknown how this new model will impact long-term care funding.

In 2018, the total provincial base funding provided to the two long-term care homes owned and operated by York Region was \$14.6 M, to support our 232 long-term care beds. Of these beds, 34 are operated as Convalescent Care Program beds (19 at Newmarket Health Centre, and 15 at Maple Health Centre). The Convalescent Care Program bed subsidy for the 19 beds at Newmarket Health Centre flows directly from the province, and the Convalescent Care Program bed subsidy for the 15 beds at Maple Health Centre (\$2.1 M) is flowed directly by the Central Local Health Integration Network. Due to funding announcements by the province in 2019, the annual base funding levels for long-term care have since increased, aligning with recently revised and released funding policies from the Ministry. It is unclear at this time how these provincial funds will continue to be provided to the Region, aligning with the provincial funding policies and direction.

There has been some discussion that the Ontario Health Teams will take over the contracts currently managed by the Local Health Integration Networks. As such, it is imperative that the Region is well positioned at the local Ontario Health Teams as funding and service-level decisions are made, so that the Region maintains current funding levels and residents continue to have access to these services.

## 6. Local Impact

Meeting the health care needs of the Region's residents is critical for ensuring the Region has a healthy population which is directly related to economic vitality. The Region has never had the ability to influence the local health care system as a true partner; however the Ontario Health Team model is presenting an opportunity for the Region to ensure that our local needs are met.

## 7. Conclusion

In alignment with the Region's Strategic Plan and the Community and Health Services Department's priorities, participation on the local Ontario Health Teams as a partner will ensure that the Region is promoting healthy communities and is helping people at all stages of life. The Ontario health care system is changing and it is imperative that the Region is at forefront of these reforms and has the ability to influence how these changes will impact our residents.

For more information on this report, please contact Lisa Gonsalves, General Manager, Paramedic and Senior Services at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 72090. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

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

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

August 29, 2019  
Attachment (1)  
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