Council Direction:
N/A

Information:

The Mental Health/Outreach Team (MHOT) in Public Health Services (PHS), provides a much-needed service for individuals who are homeless or living with a mental illness. The MHOT programs include:

- Community Mental Health Promotion Program - 100% funded by the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)
- Harm Reduction Program - 100% funded by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care - AIDS Bureau.
- Off the Streets Into Shelters Program - 100% funded by the Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program through the Ministry of Community and Social Services.
- Public Health Nurse - seconded to and funded by the Housing Division of Community Services.
- Psychiatric Nursing – 100% funded by St. Joseph’s Healthcare

St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton has funded two psychiatric nursing positions on the MH/OT since 1998. St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton is planning to reduce their commitment by one FTE.

The nurse in this position would visit the Good Shepherd Mary’s Place and Sommerville House weekly and provide staff with mental health consultation and spend time
connecting with residents on site. The role of the Registered Nurse in the second position is to visit Mission Services and Salvation Army weekly and provide staff with mental health consultation and connect with residents referred through the MH/OT centralized intake process. St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton has confirmed that they are continuing to fund the second position.

The loss of this position is somewhat mitigated by the fact that the Shelter Health Network (SHN) in Hamilton has grown considerably over the past few years. The SHN provides primary health care services in the Emergency Shelters. Clients in need of nursing assessment will be able to access the SHN. Despite the loss of this nursing position the MH/OT continues to be committed to providing outreach service to individuals living with a mental illness and experiencing homelessness. Although PHS will not have a nurse on-site at the Good Shepherd, the MH/OT will respond to referrals made by the Good Shepherd through the MH/OT’s centralized intake process. Service impacts will be monitored and issues presented to the Hamilton Addiction and Mental Health Collaborative which is the planning table for all LHIN funded adult mental health agencies in Hamilton.