To: Mayor and Members
   Board of Health

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Re: Staffing Reductions to the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program
PH06026(a) (City Wide)

Council Direction:
N/A

Information:

A report was taken to the June 26, 2006 Board of Health meeting - Staffing Reductions to the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program (PH06026) (City Wide) recommending staffing reductions in order to stay within the 2006 approved budget. At that Board of Health meeting the report was tabled as Public Health Services (PHS) was apprised by our HBHC Program Ministry consultant that a provincial funding enhancement announcement to HBHC was imminent. Although we have had continued assurances from our Ministry consultant following the June Board of Health meeting that the funding announcement is coming, we have not been provided with any clear commitment for timing or funding level. Given that we are now eight months into the 2006 fiscal year, we are recommending that PHS proceed with implementing the required staffing reduction. **Staffing reductions will be managed through attrition and will not result in any staff layoffs.**

With the current budget allocation, staffing reductions will occur including:

- 1.0 FTE PHN – Early identification strategies (growth and development clinics, public education activities)
- 0.6 FTE PHN – High risk home visiting (reducing the number of families receiving in depth assessments and home visiting supports from 570 families to 540 families per year)
• 0.5 FTE Family Home Visitor – High risk home visiting (reducing the number of new families that receive home visiting supports from 552 families to 537 families per year)
• Total Reduction = 2.1 FTE

A reduction in the operating budget for the Let’s Grow Program (savings of $25,000) and discontinuation of the one-time funding to Hamilton Health Sciences for an Infant Parent Program Therapist have already been implemented.

Public Health Services is now referring families to our Child Health and Reproductive health mandated programs before offering high risk home visiting services as an alternative, unless the risk factors identified make group-based interventions less appropriate or effective. At the time of the initial Board of Health report the wait list for high risk home visiting services ranged between 100 and 125 families. The wait list has gradually decreased since then to a low of 63 as of August 21, 2006.

HBHC is a provincially mandated Public Health Program that is 100% funded from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS). The service level targets to be achieved annually are set in consultation with MCYS, based on the allocated budget and actual program costs. There have been only small increases in funding (0-3%) with the exception of 2005, when a 12% increase was given. The 12% increase allowed for 4.0 PHN enhancements to support all aspects of the HBHC program. PHNs were allocated to the budget using entry level salary levels which were lower than the PHNs actually working in the HBHC Program. Despite the increase in PHNs in 2005, waitlists for long term home visiting remain high due to the demand for service from the community and the level of risk factors for the families referred to HBHC. There was no budget increase from the province in 2006 which is needed to offset the increased staffing costs as a result of the ONA contract increases, mileage rate increases, and increased equipment charges for IP phones and cell phones.

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