Council Direction:

Not Applicable

Information:

The Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) Program, funded primarily by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS), is mandated to provide services to families using a “blended” model including both Public Health Nurses (PHNs) and Family Home Visitors (FHVs). In Hamilton, the FHV portion of the HBHC Program is provided by Wesley Urban Ministries (WUM).

At the March 18, 2013 Board of Health meeting, an information report describing a plan to reduce the FHV complement by 1.0 FTE was submitted (BOH13009). FHV salary costs had risen and the staffing reduction was necessary to contain the budget. It was hoped that service levels could be maintained through additional technological support. FHVs did not have texting capability on their cell phones. PHNs, able to text via Blackberry, had a much lower rate of “not found” home visits than did FHVs. Many HBHC clients prefer to communicate via texting. It was anticipated that adding texting capability for FHVs would result in a reduced number of “not found” home visits and thereby increase productivity.
The anticipated increase in productivity has been realized, and service levels have been maintained despite the reduction of 1.0 FTE FHV. WUM and all FHVs have been very receptive to the change, and continue to work hard to meet service targets. This successful problem solving demonstrates the advantages of collaborative partnerships.

Working collaboratively, Public Health Services and WUM will continue to seek further improvements to productivity through technology.