RECOMMENDATION:

That the Medical Officer of Health be authorized and directed to execute a contract with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, allowing Public Health Services to administer payment for general anesthetic services for children aged 5-13 years within the CINOT (Children in Need of Treatment) Program, and also to receive the administration fee to be spent within the Public Health Services Dental Program, in a form satisfactory to Legal Counsel.

Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health
Public Health Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Dental Program within Public Health Services administers the CINOT (Children In Need Of Treatment) Program in Hamilton. This program provides funding to allow children with dental needs and financial barriers to receive treatment from a community dentist. The CINOT Program is cost shared by the Province and the City (75:25).

General anaesthetic (GA) for children aged 5-13 years was delisted as a CINOT funded service early in 2006. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care recently announced that they will be making funds available for this service, as a 100% provincially funded pilot program, with a 25% administrative fee provided to health departments. It is
recommended that the required contract be signed to allow Public Health Services to administer these funds and thereby make this program available to Hamilton children.

BACKGROUND:

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care acknowledges that CINOT-enrolled children over the age of four who require general anaesthetics (GA) for their dental treatment are experiencing uncommonly long waits. In order to allow more timely access for this vulnerable group, the Ministry has launched a one year pilot program to finance the cost of the GA for children ages 5-13 years old that are currently enrolled in CINOT, as of June 1, 2007. In this pilot program, the Ministry will provide one-time funding to participating public health units for the purpose of allowing them to fund anaesthesia services in out-of-hospital facilities for medically-appropriate CINOT-enrolled children. As one of the participating health units, the City of Hamilton will receive a letter approving our program, the amount of dollars approved according to the number of cases identified, along with a 25% premium to cover the extra administration to process these claims. These claims will need to be processed differently than the other CINOT claims as they are 100% provincial funds and not cost shared. The 25% administration dollars must be spent in the Dental Program.

GA was provided previously, until 18 months ago, for children 5-13 years of age, but was de-listed due to financial restraints, and GA through CINOT was restricted to children up to 4 years of age only. There are funds available in the paediatric wait-time strategy and after review by both the Federal and Provincial Ministries, on the issues of wait times, dental surgeries for children were at the top of the list of concerns. The plan is to buy anaesthesia time for children who are waiting for hospital-based dental surgery, as well as providing for anaesthesia in the community via the CINOT program.

ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:

This agreement will allow children in financial need the opportunity to receive much needed dental treatment under proper medical conditions and without undue hardship. The City of Hamilton does not have a large number of cases waiting for GA at this time. It is estimated that approximately 24 units of anaesthesia would be required at a cost of just under $1,000. The additional administration fee of 25% would be approximately $250, which would be spent on educational and health promotion items strategies within the Dental Program. However, the Ministry is indicating that it will cover all cases identified and completed by March 31, 2008. Other cases will be identified, through school and clinic screening and dentist referrals, in this time frame and thus covered, along with additional administration fees. Therefore it is not possible to indicate the total number of dollars that would be received for this service.

Public Health Services staff are well positioned to take on this pilot program in addition to administration of the regular cost-shared CINOT Program.
**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

The Board of Health could decline the letter of offer for GA for children aged 5-13 years; this is not recommended since then the children in need of this service would not be able to receive it.

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

*Staffing*
It is anticipated that the increased workload could be accommodated by existing staffing levels.

*Financial*
Additional revenues would be provided by Ontario in response to claims. The City would receive 25% of claims to cover administrative costs, to be spent within the Dental Program. If no funds are required to increase staffing, the administrative fee would be used for education and health promotion activities within the Dental Program. There would be no impact on the net levy.

*Legal*
The Ministry’s proposed contract for the one year pilot program would be reviewed and approved by Legal Services, then signed and executed by the Medical Officer of Health.

**POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:**

None

**RELEVANT CONSULTATION:**

Legal Services will be consulted prior to signing of the contract.

**CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:**

Community Well-Being is enhanced. X Yes □ No

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. □ Yes X No

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. X Yes □ No

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines? □ Yes X No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants? □ Yes X No