Council Direction: Not Applicable

Information:

1. Background

Following the signing of the Labour Market Training Agreement in 2006, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) began a five-year project aimed at transforming how Ontarians receive employment and training services through Employment Ontario (EO) funding. MTCU, as part of the review project, sought input from all Service Providers in that they were asked to complete a Service Provider Capacity Survey. Organizations funded through EO were notified in October 2008 that MTCU would be introducing a new service delivery model. The new service delivery model is a single point-of-entry model that is intended to be more customer-centric, responsive, flexible to community needs and avoid duplication. Under the current system, someone seeking assistance with resume writing, career counselling and job search information may have to visit up to three separate organizations to access these services. The new model will see select service providers in each community who are equipped to deliver a full range of employment services; a one stop approach to training and employment services.

On January 21, 2010, MTCU announced the Service Providers that will be delivering employment services through EO in Hamilton. This announcement did not include the outcome of the review for stand alone Employment Resource Centres (ERC) or for organizations that deliver services to persons with disabilities; MTCU is in the process of reviewing these.
process of developing employment service strategies for these areas. The Career Development Centre Resource Centre, operated by the Community Services Department, is one of the stand alone ERCs funded through EO.

2. Community Organizations

Five organizations in Hamilton have been notified by MTCU that their service contracts will end August 1, 2010. It is anticipated that this loss of funding will create a pressure for these organizations to maintain current delivery levels beyond August 2010. These organizations are:

- John Howard Society, 225 King William Street
- Lowry Training and Consulting, 45 Frid Street
- Marafon Consulting, 77 James Street North
- Neighbour to Neighbour Centre, 28 Athens Street
- St Joseph’s Immigrant Women’s Centre, 8 Main Street East

The ending of these contracts in no way reflects the quality of service by the provider; it is as a result of the new model in that successful providers need to deliver a full range of employment services. The intent of the new model is to provide a better, more straightforward and consistent service for all in a one-stop-shop format. MTCU reports that capacity and service levels should not be affected; shorter wait times, and faster more efficient access to career training will be available.

Seven organizations in Hamilton will continue to receive MTCU funding and will deliver the new employment services starting August 2010. These organizations are:

- Amity Goodwill, 225 King William Street (new site to be determined in east mountain/Stoney Creek area)
- Hamilton Help Centre/Youth Employment Centre, 67 Victoria Avenue South
- Mohawk College, 135 Fennell Avenue West
- Settlement and Integration Services Organization (SISO), 360 James Street North
- VPI Inc., 1024 Upper Wentworth Street
- Wesley Urban Ministries, 195 Ferguson Avenue North
- YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington, 79 James Street South (new site to be determined in Flamborough)

MTCU has not yet released details on the specific responsibilities of the new full service providers or information on transition procedures and timetables.
3. Stand Alone Employment Resource Centres

Three organizations operate ERCs, which receive funding from MTCU for these services. These organizations are:

- The Career Development Centre (CDC), 181 Main Street West
- Hamilton Public Library (at the Barton, Dundas, Red Hill, Sherwood and Terryberry branches)
- L'Association canadienne-francaise de l'Ontario, 627 Main Street East

PATH Employment is an organization in Hamilton that delivers service to disabled persons. As MTCU is in the process of reviewing stand-alone ERCs and organizations that deliver services to persons with disabilities, their funding will continue until the review is complete.

The CDC is one of three ERCs operated by the Community Services Department, Employment & Income Support Division; the other two are located at 1550 Upper James and 2255 Barton Street East. The CDC offers a multitude of resources to assist Hamilton residents with finding employment such as free access to telephone, faxes, stamps, photocopiers, newspapers, reference library and computers with internet. The CDC is also the main location of our Employment Services program that provides services to Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program participants.

The CDC ERC has received funding of approximately $185,568 per year from MTCU since 2006. These funds are for 1 FTE, partial security charges, equipment and hardware lease/maintenance fees, books and library expenses, partial rent and a flat rate to cover items such office supplies.

The Employment and Income Support Division has received notification from MTCU that the contract for the CDC ERC will be extended for an additional year, expiring March 31 2011. Staff will report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee as to the outcome of the MTCU review for stand alone Employment Resource Centres, and any impacts this may have on staffing and budget.