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DATE 3 May 1996

TO/DEST. Chair and Members of Regional Council

FROM/EXP. Social Services Commissioner

SUBJECT/OBJET **TRANSFER OF RECOVERY HOMES TO THE MINISTRY OF
HEALTH**

BACKGROUND

On April 11 last, the Provincial Government announced that effective June 1, 1996, the Ministry of Health (MOH) will be assuming funding and administrative responsibility for all drug and alcohol recovery homes formerly funded as halfway houses by the Ministry of Community and Social Services or as hostels by the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton.

This initiative is part of the MOH's attempt to find ways to strengthen Ontario's addictions treatment system. The objective is an integrated system, with clearer mandates and consistent standards for all addiction programs. Eventually all addictions services may be consolidated under the MOH.

Consequently, effective May 31, 1996, the Social Services Department will terminate funding to 6 drug and alcohol recovery programs. Those programs are: Gateway House, Harvest House, House of Welcome, James Street Recovery, Salvation Army Anchorage, and Sobriety House.

Once the transfer takes place, MOH will establish a budget with individual agencies based on the Department's 1995 budget. We have been advised that MOH intends to maintain funding to the same levels as those currently provided by the Department during the first year of this arrangement. The MOH funding is intended to include provision for the basic needs of residents, i.e. food and shelter.

However, as of June 1, 1996, these programs will no longer be designated as a drug and alcohol recovery home funded as a hostel by the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. Consequently, people in these programs will no longer be eligible for General Welfare Assistance.

DISCUSSION

Redesign of substance abuse services in Ottawa-Carleton

For the past 3 years agencies providing services to persons with substance abuse problems, planning bodies in the field of addictions, and funders have been engaged in a number of initiatives to redesign substance abuse services in Ottawa-Carleton.

More recently as a result of a report reviewing residential services in Ottawa-Carleton, there is a project underway to allocate more equitably residential spaces to underserved target populations. As an initial step, this initiative would see the reallocation of a number of beds for men to women.

During the past year significant discussions have occurred with recovery home operators concerning the consolidation of funding under one funder. This discussion has also occurred among the 5 funders¹ of recovery programs in Ottawa-Carleton. All have concurred that it was highly desirable that the funding be consolidated under one funder. With the MOH taking the lead role in the funding of recovery homes, the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Social Services Department will no longer have an active role in overseeing the delivery of drug and alcohol services in Ottawa-Carleton. The United Way of Ottawa-Carleton will continue to be a partner in the funding of 4 community addictions programs, none of which were funded by the Department. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing will continue to provide funding to maintain mortgage payment for a number of programs.

In conjunction with the move to 1 funder, the stakeholders, including recovered substance abusers, have developed options for the governance of substance abuse services in Ottawa-Carleton. The District Health Council has been apprised of this in recent briefings. Recommendations concerning the governance structure recognizing these changes will be made public by the District Health Council in June.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Public consultation was not required for this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The approved budget for recovery homes in 1996 is in the order of \$ 1,192,000 (gross) and \$ 238,000 (net). The Department projects expenditures of \$ 456,000 (gross) and \$ 93,000 (net) to the end of May 1996.

¹ Ministry of Health, Ministry of Community and Social Services, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, United Way of Ottawa-Carleton, and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton

CONCLUSION

The Region has notified recovery home programs of the termination of their funding arrangement. The Region has also acknowledged the energy and caring spirit these programs have demonstrated during the time that they have been a partner in serving the residents of Ottawa-Carleton.

*Approved by
Dick Stewart*