



MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

REPORT NO. 06-21

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2021 January 21

GRANT FUNDING TO SUPPORT CANNABIS PROGRAMMING**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Health:

- 1) *Receive Report No. 06-21 re: “Grant Funding to Support Cannabis Programming” for information; and*
- 2) *Approve receipt of the 2020 and 2021 funding allocation from the City of London’s share of the Ontario Cannabis Legalization Implementation Fund.*

Key Points

- The Ontario Government provided municipalities with funding, through the [Ontario Cannabis Legalization Implementation Fund \(OCLIF\)](#), to assist with implementation costs related to the legalization of non-medical cannabis.
- The Health Unit was issued its first installment, of \$230,849, from the City of London’s OCLIF to support public health cannabis programming in 2019.
- A funding proposal for 2020 and 2021 was drafted and submitted to the City of London’s OCLIF as per their request in December 2020.
- In December 2020, the health unit was informed the request was approved in full and MLHU will be receiving a total of \$531,348 of which \$227,788 is to fund 2020 expenses and \$303,560 is allocated for 2021.

Municipal Support for Privatized Retail Sale of Non-Medical Cannabis

To support municipalities as they implement a legalized non-medical cannabis system and to address activities within the illegal cannabis market, the provincial government created the [Ontario Cannabis Legalization Implementation Fund \(OCLIF\)](#). In early January 2019, a first payment totaling \$15 million was made to all municipalities on a per-household basis, adjusted so that each municipality received at least \$5,000. A second payment of \$15 million was distributed following the January 22, 2019 deadline for municipalities to opt out of retail sales under the *Cannabis Licence Act*. Municipalities that did not opt out received funding on a per-household basis, adjusted so that each municipality received at least \$5,000. Municipalities that chose to opt out of retail sales received a second payment of \$5,000 only. In August 2019, the government announced that since Ontario’s portion of the federal excise duty on non-medical cannabis over the first two years of legalization exceeded \$100 million, the Province will provide 50% of the surplus only to the municipalities that did not opt out of hosting private retail stores by January 22, 2019. A full list of funding by municipality is available [online](#).

Funding Opportunities through Local Collaboration

In November 2017, the City of London established the Cannabis Implementation Working Group (CIWG), comprised of staff from the City's planning, licensing, bylaw enforcement, fire prevention, and governmental/external relations departments, as well as representatives from London Police Services and the Health Unit. To ensure public health and safety and to respond and adapt to this complex policy change locally, it has been imperative that municipal, enforcement, health, education, and community/social service partners work together and share information as it becomes available. Through this collaborative partnership roundtable, the Health Unit has been able to keep City staff apprised of activities and funding pressures related to cannabis programming.

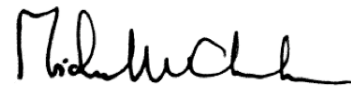
With the legalization of non-medical cannabis, there are greater expectations on the public health sector: to monitor trends associated with cannabis use and the impact of legalization on community health; to provide public education and to respond to inquiries from the public regarding potential health risks; to field complaints and to enforce laws related to the consumption of non-medical and medical cannabis; and to work with and support municipalities and workplaces in the development and enforcement of policies and bylaws that further regulate cannabis use to reduce exposure to second-hand smoke and vapour. These growing demands for cannabis programming come at the expense of program and service delivery per the Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction Program Guidelines, 2018 set out under the Ontario Public Health Standards.

In 2019 MLHU received \$230,849 from the City of London's OCLIF to support public health cannabis programming. The City of London then requested that the Health Unit submit a similar funding proposal for its 2020 and 2021 cannabis program costs, to be allocated from the remainder of the City's OCLIF dollars. In December 2020 MLHU submitted a proposal, find attached as Appendix A, and was approved to receive an additional \$531,348 of which \$227,788 is to fund 2020 expenses and \$303,560 is allocated for 2021. This funding will enable MLHU to hire 2 full-time temporary Enforcement Officers. Additional enforcement staff are needed to respond to complaints and enforce cannabis consumption in public spaces and to inspect cannabis retail outlets for their compliance with vapour product sales requirements in London. Currently there are 34 cannabis stores either open or with pending applications in London and Strathroy. Additionally, this funding will enable MLHU to recruit a full-time temporary Health Promoter to work in the area of cannabis prevention and protection and support some additional administrative work required for the cannabis program.

This report was prepared by the Healthy Living Division.



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Medical Officer of Health



Michael Clarke, PhD
Chief Executive Officer (Interim)