



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health
FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health / CEO
DATE: 2017 July 20

INFANT HEARING PROGRAM: INCREASED BASE BUDGET FUNDING

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Health:

- 1) *Receive Report No. 041-17 Re: “Infant Hearing Program Increased Base Budget Funding;*
- 2) *Approve the revised Screening, Assessment, and Intervention Team budget; and*
- 3) *Authorize the Board Chair sign the Amending Agreement with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.*

Key Points

- In July 2017, the Health Unit was notified that it will be receiving an annual funding enhancement of \$245,338 for the Infant Hearing Program. The 2017-2018 funding enhancement of \$184,004 will start July 1, 2017 and will reflect the remaining 9 months of the fiscal year (attached as [Appendix A](#)).
- The 2017-2018 Planning and Budget Template for the Screening, Assessment and Intervention (SAI) Team has been revised to reflect the enhanced funding (attached as [Appendix B](#)).
- The enhanced base funding will be used to address existing program pressures and maintain programs and services.

Background

The Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) has a signed Service Agreement with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) to fulfill the role of lead agency for the Infant Hearing Program – Southwest Region (IHP-SW). The program provides screening, assessment and early intervention in Middlesex-London, Elgin, Oxford, Huron, Perth, Grey, Bruce and Lambton counties. The IHP-SW screens the hearing of 10,000 newborns each year and provides follow-up supports and services to approximately 120 children with permanent hearing loss per year, from birth to school-age.

2017–18 MCYS Base Budget Funding Enhancement

On July 7, 2017, MLHU received a funding enhancement letter from the MCYS (attached as [Appendix A](#)). The funding enhancement provides for an annual base budget increase of \$245,338. The funding enhancement for 2017-2018 of \$184,004 will start July 1, 2017 and will reflect the remaining 9 months of the fiscal year. The funding is to be used for the Infant Hearing Program to enhance service capacity and to help build a more sustainable program over time.

2017–18 Revised SAI Team Budget

The Screening, Assessment and Intervention Team budget has been revised to reflect this enhanced funding (attached as [Appendix B](#)). The enhanced funding will help address pressures related to delays in screening, audiology rehabilitation and the ongoing cost of program supplies. The proposal includes the following funding increases: 1) in-hospital hearing screening, to backfill the majority of vacation and statutory holidays; 2) community screening, by approximately .65 FTEs; 3) audiology rehabilitation, by approximately .7 FTE; and 4) administrative support by .22 FTE, for the remainder of this fiscal year. All positions are contracted through our Service Provider Agencies. The funding allocations are flexible enough that changes can be made within budget lines, as required by program demand over time.

Previously, it appeared that additional funding would be required in the 2018-2019 fiscal year to maintain current service levels. With this increase to base funding, it is anticipated that a balanced budget will be realized with no additional funding for the next fiscal year.

2017-2018 budget increases from the original 2017-2018 budget are outlined below:

Salary, wages and benefits:	\$110,938
Program Supplies:	\$33,692 (Note: in order to balance the original 2017-2018 budget, this budget line was significantly reduced with plans of applying to MCYS for one-time funding. This restores the budget to levels which will meet existing need)
Equipment (one time):	\$34,000
Professional Fee:	\$3,994 (Note: this reflects increased need for interpreters)
Travel:	\$880
Staff Development:	\$500
TOTAL:	\$184,004

Conclusion

It has been over 10 years since there has been an increase in base budget funding to the Infant Hearing Program – Southwest Region, and this enhanced funding will help to address existing program pressures. It is recommended that the Board of Health approve the revised budget for 2017-2018 for the SAI Team. It is also recommended that the Board of Health Chair sign the Amending Agreement, as required by the Ministry by Friday, July 28, 2017 (attached as [Appendix C](#)).

This report was prepared by the Screening, Assessment and Intervention Team, Healthy Start Division.



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