

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Bryna Warshawsky, Acting Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2012 November 15

HEALTHY BABIES HEALTHY CHILDREN: A COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Health approve an increase of \$100,000 to the base budget for enhancements to the Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program, it being noted that the increased resources are to fund a new 1.0 FTE Public Health Nurse position to support program delivery changes as described in this Report (Report No. 134-12).

Key Points

- The Ministry of Children and Youth Services is implementing enhancements to the Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) Program.
- The HBHC Program will receive an increase in 100% provincial based funding of \$100,000 in order to increase the staffing complement by one full-time equivalent Public Health Nurse (PHN).
- The HBHC Program will continue to provide universal post-partum contact 48 hours after discharge, as well as strengthened prenatal and early years assessment.
- Strengthened capacity for home visiting will be achieved through education of HBHC staff, which will ensure standardized and evidenced-informed interventions.

Background

The Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) Program is funded (100%) by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS). Over the past year, the MCYS, along with a Provincial Advisory Committee, have developed a new HBHC Screening Tool which has a greater ability to identify vulnerable families. In addition, a new protocol for all aspects of the program was written and is now ready for implementation. Improvements to health information packages given to all families with newborns and an improved web site resource will be launched shortly.

In order to assist in the implementation of the enhanced program, additional 100% provincial funding is being provided to Ontario public health units. This Health Unit will receive a \$100,000 increase in base funding for one new full-time equivalent Public Health Nurse position. This new position will support the delivery of the enhanced HBHC Program.

Summary of the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Enhancements

The revised HBHC Protocol (2012) will support a strengthened Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program. The enhancements include: universal screening and contact of families in the postpartum period; collaborative partnerships with health care providers; and personalized interventions to respond to child and family needs.

The revised HBHC Protocol will be incorporated into the Family Health Public Health Standard and will:

- Require all public health units to use the new evidence-informed HBHC Screening tool at the prenatal, postpartum and early childhood periods.
- Allow flexibility for health units to work in partnership with hospitals for administration of the post-partum screen. The new HBHC Public Health Nurse position is part of the Provincial Government's 9,000 New Nurses Initiative (a key component of the Province's health human resources strategy).
- Streamline the HBHC screening process to eliminate additional and duplicate screens currently administered to families. In addition, the universal postpartum contact by a Public Health Nurse for all families will continue to occur 48 hours following discharge from hospital.
- Require all Public Health Nurses to use the Family Service Plan to set goals, identify strategies and track family progress. Strengthened capacity in home visiting will be achieved through education of standardized and evidence-informed home visiting interventions.

Next Steps for the Health Unit

The funds for this new Healthy Babies Healthy Children position are subject to the following conditions:

- Funds must be used for the intended purpose (i.e. recruitment of a new full-time equivalent Public Health Nurse while maintaining the base number of nurses in the program);
- Proof of offer of employment including starting salary level and benefits for the full-time equivalent must be submitted to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

[Appendix A](#) provides a copy of the correspondence from the Minister of Children & Youth Services, the Honourable Eric Hoskins, informing the Health Unit of program changes and the increase in funding to implement the enhancements. [Appendix B](#) provides more specific details of the changes to the program and the intended purpose for the additional resources related to staffing. In order to move forward with these enhancements, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services requires the Board of Health's acceptance to the conditions of the new position.

It is believed that the enhanced Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program requirements will result in a greater number of families with babies and young children receiving the supports they need to ensure optimum growth and development for children and families across Ontario.

This report was prepared by Ms. Diane Bewick, Director, Family Health Services, and Ms. Nancy Summers, Manager, Best Beginnings Program Team.



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Acting Medical Officer of Health

<p>This report addresses the following requirement(s) of the Ontario Public Health Standards: Family Health, HBHC Protocol,</p>
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