

Region of Waterloo
Public Health and Paramedic Services
Strategy, Performance and Organizational Standards

To: Community and Health Services Committee

Meeting Date: December 5, 2023

Report Title: Alternate Destination Clinics Update

1. Recommendation

For Information.

2. Purpose / Issue:

To provide an update on the Alternate Destination Clinics initiative, as follow up to the report presented to Council on February 7, 2023 (PHE-SPS-23-001) that outlined our intentions to explore this model in Waterloo Region with health system partners who provide mental health and addiction services.

3. Strategic Plan:

Equitable Services and Opportunities: the Alternate Destination Clinics initiative explores new models of service by mental health and addiction community service providers through collaboration and partnership. The aim of this model is to provide people access to the services they need, when, where, and how they need them most.

4. Report Highlights:

- The Alternate Destination Clinics is an initiative within the Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan. The model will provide access to crisis mental health & addiction services at an alternate destination outside of the hospital emergency department. making available for appropriate
- In June 2023, a Community Steering Committee was established with over 20 service providers and individuals/care givers with lived experience (e.g. Ontario Health Teams, hospitals, mental health and addiction service providers, paramedics, police, Ontario Health West).
- As the Steering Committee moves into implementation, the goal is to open two sites in each Ontario Health Team area that serve all residents, including individuals experiencing homelessness. These sites will provide a safe-space for mental health and addiction support, with referral pathways into and out of the

service (e.g. walk-ins, paramedic services transport, police transport).

- The Cambridge North Dumfries Ontario Health Team will lead 'The Community Mental Health and Addictions Clinic' serving the Cambridge-North Dumfries area.
- Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington and Thresholds Homes and Support, on behalf of the Kitchener-Waterloo-Wilmot-Wellesley-Woolwich Ontario Health Team (KW4 OHT) members, will lead the 'Mental Health and Addiction Integrated Crisis Care Centre' serving the Kitchener-Waterloo-Wilmot-Wellesley-Woolwich area.

5. Background:

- Over the past year, Public Health, Paramedic Services, other Regional departments, and health system partners have explored mental health and addition crisis response in Waterloo Region. Despite new models of service emerging, a gap remains for individuals seeking care outside of the hospital emergency department.
- Public Health and Paramedic Services are facilitating a collaborative model led by health care, Ontario Health Teams, and mental health and addiction partners that supports community agencies, health-care leaders, and individuals/caregivers with lived experience to develop a proposal to the province.
- Between January 1st and November 1st of 2023, Region of Waterloo Paramedic Services had 1,007 responses to a total of 855 unique clients experiencing lower risk mental health and addictions related crises who could have been eligible for an Alternate Destination Clinic.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities:

Staff from each municipality were contacted and provided background information on the initiative. Engagement with local municipalities will continue as locations are considered.

Public:

Key stakeholders are engaged through the Steering Committee, advisory/working groups, and existing networks (e.g. Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo-Wellington Client Council, Ontario Health Teams, and the Community Safety Wellbeing Plan committees).

Needs and concerns identified by stakeholders are captured in the vision, mission, and values (see Appendix A). Engagement has highlighted following:

- Create referral pathways and system navigation
- A region-wide approach including multiple locations with 24/7 services
- Provide services and supports in a safe space across all ages

- Embed health equity, community engagement, and social determinants of health

A secondary analysis of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan and existing local consultation data was completed on specific needs related to health equity.

Financial Implications:

- The province funds mental health and addiction services. Public Health and Paramedic Services are supporting through in-kind resources from existing operating budgets. There is no incremental resourcing requirement in their 2024 Operating budgets.
- The Cambridge-North Dumfries Ontario Health Team (CND OHT), Kitchener-Waterloo-Wilmot-Wellesley-Woolwich Ontario Health Team (KW4 OHT), Thresholds Homes and Support, Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington and the Steering Committee will work with local service providers to determine what existing resources can be reallocated or co-located.
- A funding proposal for additional resources will be submitted to Ontario Health West.

7. Conclusion / Next Steps:

- Continue to engage community partners, service providers, people/caregivers with lived experience, and area municipalities through the Steering Committee and other existing networks in order to move forward with implementation.

8. Attachments:

Appendix A: Mission, Vision, Values

Appendix B: Alternate Destination Clinics Update Presentation Slides

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