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**Subject:** Budget Adjustment – Seniors Services

**Report to:** Public Health and Social Services Committee

**Report date:** Tuesday, July 11, 2023

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## Recommendations

1. That an adjustment to the previously adopted 2023 Regional Municipality of Niagara (Niagara Region) operating budget in the amount of \$7,682,725, to be fully funded through the Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC), **BE APPROVED.**

## Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to inform Council of a number of in-year MLTC funding announcements and to obtain Council approval of the related budget adjustment as per by-law 2017-63, Budget Control, items 6.6(a) and 6.6(b), requiring Council's approval for any amounts received in excess of \$1 million for operating programs.
- The MLTC is issuing a number of streams of one-time and base funding increases to address ongoing COVID-19 pressures, minor capital and staffing pressures. The funding adjustments have no impact on Niagara Region's 2023 tax levy.
- One-time funding categories are as follows:
  - COVID-19 prevention and containment funding
  - Comprehensive Minor Capital Program
  - Infection prevention and control (IPAC) professionals funding
  - Temporary Staffing Programs
- \$2,943,656 of the one-time funding is a reimbursement of incremental COVID-19 expenditures that were incurred in 2022. This funding will be used to replenish the Taxpayer Relief Reserve which was used as a funding source in 2022, prior to this funding being confirmed.
- \$932,864 of the one-time funding will be used to reduce the transfer from the Taxpayer Relief Reserve that was budgeted in 2023 for IPAC Professionals.

## Financial Considerations

The recommended budget adjustment of \$7,682,725, includes one-time funding of \$5,328,651 and base operating funding of \$2,354,074.

A summary of the financial implications are as follows:

**One-Time Funding**

Program Funding	(Confirmed) 2023 MLTC Funding Agreement	Previously approved 2023 Regional Budget	Budget Adjustment Required
2022 COVID-19 - Prevention and Containment Funding	\$3,365,500	\$ -	\$3,365,500
Comprehensive Minor Capital Funding Program	1,140,538	374,650	765,888
IPAC Professionals /Training	1,289,366	993,510	295,856
Temporary Staffing Programs	901,407	-	901,407
Total One-Time Funding	\$6,696,811	\$1,368,160	\$5,328,651

**Base Funding**

Program Funding	(Confirmed) 2023 MLTC Funding Agreement	Previously approved 2023 Regional Budget	Budget Adjustment Required
Case Mix Index Funding	\$3,182,690	\$2,055,075	\$1,127,615
Level of Care Per Diem Funding Increase	48,109,796	46,883,338	1,226,459
Base Funding	33,533,787	33,533,787	-

Program Funding	(Confirmed) 2023 MLTC Funding Agreement	Previously approved 2023 Regional Budget	Budget Adjustment Required
Total Base Funding	\$84,826,273	\$82,472,199	\$2,354,074
Total 2023 Funding	\$91,523,084	\$83,840,359	\$7,682,725

## Analysis

This report is being brought to Committee in compliance with By-law 2017-63, Budget Control, requiring Council approval for in year budget adjustments in excess of \$1 million.

### Ministry of Long-Term Care One-Time Funding Increases:

All new funding will be allocated to the appropriate LTC program areas in accordance with MLTC financial policies and eligibility criteria.

#### COVID-19 prevention and containment funding

- The MLTC has issued one-time funding to support the incremental costs of preventing and containing the transmission of COVID-19 in LTC homes. The Ministry announced \$3,365,500, in COVID-19 prevention and containment funding for the period of April – December 2022.
- Of the \$3,365,500, \$2,943,656 will be returned to the Taxpayer Relief Reserve as this amount was transferred from the reserve in 2022, to fund incremental expenses. This leaves remaining funding of \$421,844, which will support nursing and personal care, raw food and program support service expenses up to March 31, 2023. The ministry has announced this program ended March 31, 2023.

#### Comprehensive Minor Capital Funding

- The MLTC announced a consolidation of programs previously provided by the MLTC for minor capital purchases/replacements. These initiatives include: IPAC Minor Capital - \$765,888, LTC Minor Capital - \$279,150, and Falls Prevention Equipment Fund - \$95,500. Eligible expenditures include: minor adjustments to support distancing, ventilation/air conditioning systems, furnishings/small

equipment, water systems/plumbing, building envelope/concrete repairs, cleaning /sanitation supplies, falls prevention equipment and other expenditures approved at the ministry's discretion.

#### Infection prevention and control professionals/training funding

- The MLTC announced one-time funding of \$1,289,366, to support LTC homes onboarding of IPAC professionals. Under the new Fixing LTC Act, dedicated IPAC professionals are a legislated requirement. This funding will be used to retain temporary staff until the funding concludes or is made permanent by the MLTC.
- Of the \$1,289,366, in IPAC Personnel/training funding, \$60,646 in funding was confirmed in the prior year and included in the 2023 budget and \$932,864 will be used to reduce the transfer from the Taxpayer Relief Reserve that was budgeted in 2023, to fund the temporary staff. This leaves funding of \$295,856 that requires a budget adjustment which will be used to support training and education initiatives.

#### Temporary Staffing Programs

- Hiring More Nurse Practitioners - The MLTC announced a new program to increase the number of nurse practitioners working in LTC Homes. Two homes have received confirmation of funding totalling \$263,712 for 2023, to recruit and hire temporary staff.
- Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) - Ontario Health confirmed new funding which has been allocated amongst LTC licensees for the hiring of new, and retention of existing healthcare staff, to provide direct care services (e.g. conduct assessments, prepare behavioural care plans, deliver therapies to prevent and/or alleviate responsive behaviours) to the BSO target population within LTC homes. Two homes have received confirmed funding totalling \$139,692, to hire 1.8 temporary FTE's to support this initiative in 2023.
- Resident Health & Well Being Program - Launched by the MLTC, this program is intended to enhance resident access to social support services provided by Registered Social Workers, Social Service Workers and other Allied Health Professionals to increase overall health, well-being and quality of life. \$141,703

in funding will be received in 2023 to increase temporary staffing to support residents in these areas.

- Behavioural Support Unit, Step Down Unit Pilot Funding - Ontario Health confirmed that continued funding of \$356,300 for 2023, will be provided to continue to operate the six bed step-down unit at Linhaven LTC home. The program was initiated to help support health-care system flow.

**Ministry of Long-Term Care Base Funding Increases:**

Case-Mix Index

- The MLTC released the Case Mix Index funding methodology for the 2023-24 funding year which is a factor calculated based on LTC resident acuity at individual homes, that is then applied to LTC homes nursing and personal care funding. This factor increased the in-year funding for seven LTC homes amounting to \$1,127,615 in additional funding for the nine-month period of April-December 2023. This funding will be used to support staffing pressures along with high volumes of medical supplies.

Base operating funding increase

- The MLTC announced a 2.4% increase in the level-of-care global base funding effective April 1, 2023, for the 2023-24 funding year. This increase amounts to \$1,226,459, for the nine months of 2023 (April-December) and will become part of the base budget.
- The increase is broken down between a 2% increase in the areas of nursing and personal care, programs and support services, other accommodations and global increase, as well as a 9.7% increase in the raw food budget. The significant increase in raw food budget, is to support LTC homes to meet obligations under the new Fixing LTC Act, 2021, and the remaining funding will be used to offset temporary staffing pressures.

The table below details the funding amounts by funding envelope:

<b>Funding Envelope</b>	<b>Additional April-Dec 2023 Funding</b>
Nursing and Personal Care	\$ 546,260
Program and Support Services	63,030

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<b>Funding Envelope</b>	<b>Additional April-Dec 2023 Funding</b>
Raw Food	281,009
Other Accommodations	296,766
Global Increase	39,394
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,226,459</b>

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

Should the budget adjustment not be approved, the unspent funds will have to be returned to the provincial government, resulting in less funding to support the residents in our long-term care homes.

### **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

This recommendation is aligned to Council’s strategic priority of ensuring a “Healthy and Vibrant Community.” By approving this report, Niagara Region is able to leverage this additional provincial funding and support residents and staff in our LTC homes.

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

None.

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#### **Recommended by:**

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