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Report To: General Government Committee

Date of Meeting: June 3, 2024

Report Number: FSD-029-24

Authored by: Trevor Pinn

Submitted By: Trevor Pinn, Deputy CAO/Treasurer, Finance and Technology

Reviewed By: Mary-Anne Dempster, CAO

Resolution Number:

By-law Number:

File Number:

Report Subject: Physician Recruitment

Recommendations:

1. That Report FSD-029-24, and any related delegations or communication items, be received;
2. That Staff be directed to execute the Memorandum of Understanding with the Region of Durham, to the satisfaction of the Deputy CAO/Solicitor, substantially in the form as attached in Attachment #1;
3. That the remaining funds from the approved \$100,000 in the 2023 budget for physician recruitment be used to meet the Municipality's obligations to the Region of Durham under the regional recruitment program;
4. That Staff be directed to create an incentive program which provides up to \$25,000 per doctor, based on matching contributions from medical offices in a form similar to the Pilot Program in the Town of Whitby;
5. That an additional \$250,000 be approved to be drawn from the Economic Development Reserve Fund to fund the incentive program for up to 10 doctors; and
6. That all interested parties listed in Report FSD-029-24 and any delegations be advised of Council's decision.

Report Overview

This report is an update to Council on local physician recruitment attraction and incentive programs under development in the Region of Durham. The Region of Durham is focusing on attracting family physicians to locate within the Region in partnership with Lakeridge Health and Queens University, this work is focused on bringing family doctors broadly to the Region.

A separate initiative being proposed is a local incentive program to attract physicians locally to Clarington medical clinics. There is a broad family physician shortage across the Province, and it is key that the Municipality work to bring doctors to one of the fastest-growing municipalities in the Province to ensure that we maintain the quality of life that residents expect of a growing municipality.

1. Background

- 1.1 During the 2023 Budget deliberations, Council amended the proposed budget by adding the following resolution:

That the 2023 Budget be amended to provide \$100,000 for Physician Recruitment funded by the Economic Development Reserve Fund; and

That Staff report to Council on the framework, goals, objectives and processes for this recruitment prior to any funding being provided.

- 1.2 This report outlines two funding requests which meets the Strategic Priority of Council to facilitate local physician recruitment, one on a regional basis and one more locally focused.

2. Region of Durham Update

- 2.1 At its meeting of January 17, 2024, the Region of Durham Committee of the Whole approved [Report #2024-COW-3 Family Physician Recruitment Program](#). This report recommended the creation of a Region of Durham wide program to attract and retain family medicine trainees and physicians to the Region as well as the hiring of a full-time recruiter.
- 2.2 This report recommended the creation of a Region of Durham-wide program to attract and retain family medicine trainees and physicians to the Region, as well as the hiring of a full-time recruiter.
- 2.3 Durham Region is facing a shortage of approximately 145 family physicians, representing approximately 180,000 residents. It is anticipated that the new Queen' s-

Lakeridge MD Family Medicine trainee program will bring 20 new trainees to the area each year. During this time, the attraction program will work to ensure that these trainees choose to stay in the Region after the completion of their training.

- 2.4 The proposed program is not an incentive program; it is geared more towards promoting the Region as a place to work and live and assisting with programs such as school and job information for doctors' families.
- 2.5 The Region of Durham has proposed a Memorandum of Understanding, see Attachment #1, for cost sharing with the municipalities in the Region. The total program cost would be \$225,000, plus inflation, and would be shared on a population-based allocation.
- 2.6 The Municipality of Clarington would provide \$3,960 for the remainder of 2024 and \$16,200 in 2025. The 2026 and 2027 allocations would be subject to the inflationary index of CPI+2%.
- 2.7 It is recommended that the Municipality participate in this program on a Regional basis, as any doctors attracted to the area could provide capacity within the Region to assist with the shortage of family physicians.

3. Local Proposal

- 3.1 Staff have been approached by The Clarington Board of Trade (Sheila Hall) and Dr. Stone, who represent local physician recruitment priorities. They have proposed a model similar to the physician recruitment strategy employed by the Town of Whitby and the Oshawa Clinic (which is currently relocating its 117 King Street site to Whitby).
- 3.2 In 2023, [Whitby Report CAO-20-23](#) recommended \$300,000 be used from reserve funds to pilot a Family Physician Recruitment Incentive Partnership Pilot Program. Of this funding, \$250,000 would be used to provide incentives to the physicians, and \$50,000 would be used for the operating costs of the program. This would provide \$500,000 to 10 physicians over a five-year term, equally shared between the Town and the clinic. This would provide \$500,000 to 10 physicians over a five-year term, equally shared between the Town and the clinic.
- 3.3 The local proposal would see the municipality provide a \$25,000/doctor incentive paid upfront upon the successful recruitment of a family physician to the clinic located at 222 King Street in Bowmanville. The clinic would also provide \$25,000/doctor, for a total incentive of \$50,000/doctor.
- 3.4 It is suggested that the incentive be provided upfront, as new doctors have set up costs for new practices, and the first few months after school are financially the hardest. The

agreement would require that the funds be paid back if the doctor leaves within five years.

- 3.5 Each new doctor would be required to roster 1,000 patients to receive the grant. There is no ability for the Municipality to require that these patients all be from Clarington; however, given the location of the clinic a greater proportion of the patients are likely to be local.
- 3.6 The recently announced Bill 185 includes proposed wording which would allow municipalities to incent prescribed individuals and businesses in spite of the “bonusing rules” in S.107 of the Municipal Act to meet Provincial priorities. It is anticipated that one of the prescribed businesses will be family physicians/healthcare as this was used as an example in Provincial releases. If this is the case, it would be suggested that the agreement be between the Municipality and the clinic who would then be able to have the employment agreement with the physicians. This would streamline funding as agreements would not need to be entered into between the Municipality and each doctor. An alternative would be similarly to provide the funding to CBOT, which facilitates the funding to the doctors and clinics.
- 3.7 While the clinic at 222 King Street East has approached the Municipality, staff recognize that several other medical clinics in Clarington serve residents. Staff would suggest that any program contemplated be available to local clinics that meet the same requirements (five years, 1,000 patients, equal funding by the clinic).
- 3.8 If the funding model is approved by Council, staff would draft the required agreements to provide funding to participating clinics.

4. Financial Considerations

- 4.1 The Municipality has established a reserve fund that has been used in the past to facilitate physician recruitment. As of December 31, 2023, the Economic Development reserve fund had a balance of approximately \$717,500. These funds, less amounts already committed to Physician Recruitment through the 2023 budget process, would be the source of funding for any approved program.
- 4.2 During the 2023 Budget process, Council approved \$100,000 to be earmarked for Physician Recruitment. To date, \$20,000 has been spent.
- 4.3 The Municipality has established a reserve fund that has been used in the past to facilitate physician recruitment. As of December 31, 2023, this reserve fund had a balance of approximately \$632,500. These funds would be the source of funding for any approved program.

5. Strategic Plan

- 5.1 This Report addresses priority C.2.1 of the 2024-27 Strategic Plan “Support efforts to improve access to medical practitioners and health care services.
- 5.2 Specifically, it addresses the identified actions to “Partner with the Region of Durham to create a Family Physician Recruitment Program” and “Connect with local health care providers to advocate for increased access to services”.

6. Concurrence

This report has been reviewed by the Deputy CAO/Solicitor, Legislative Services and Deputy CAO, Planning and Infrastructure Services who concur with the recommendations.

7. Conclusion

It is respectfully recommended that Council approve the signing of the MOU with the Region of Durham and provide direction for Staff to create a local incentive program for Clarington-based clinics based on similar requirements to the Town of Whitby.

Staff Contact: Trevor Pinn, CPA, CA, Deputy CAO/Treasurer, 905-623-3379 x2602 or tpinn@clarington.net.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 -- Draft Memorandum of Understanding with the Region of Durham

Interested Parties:

The following interested parties will be notified of Council's decision:

- Region of Durham
- Dr. Stone
- Clarington Board of Trade