

Request for Decision

Review and Rationalization of the Seniors' Information Line

Presented To:	Community Services Committee
Presented:	Monday, Sep 17, 2012
Report Date	Wednesday, Sep 05, 2012
Type:	Managers' Reports

Recommendation

Whereas following a review of the Seniors Information Line usage; Staff, supported by the Seniors Advisory Panel, is recommending the elimination of the annual operating grant that the Parkside Older Adult Centre contracts to the North East Community Care Access Centre to answer the Seniors Information Line.

Finance Implications

This will result in a \$50,000 reduction to the Community Services Department 2013 Operating Budget.

Background

The Seniors Information Line (705-673-3636) was launched in 2007 in response to a recommendation made at a June 2006 Seniors' Safety and Wellness symposium.

The initiative sought to provide Information on accessing senior services in Greater Sudbury related to but not limited to: Housing, Home and Yard Care, Government Services/Pension Plans, Respite Care, Fitness and Exercise Programs, Home Health Care, Transportation, Legal, Financial, Grants, Elder Abuse, Support Groups, Meals etc. Council has funded this initiative through an Annual Grant to the Parkside Older Adult Centre in the amount of \$50,000.

In April of 2009, the North East CCAC agreed to assume responsibility for the Seniors' Information Line from the Parkside Older Adult Centre in an effort to enhance services provided to seniors. Assumption of the Seniors Information Line by the NE CCAC was made by agreement including the transfer of the Annual Grant. The North East Community Care Access Centre (NE CCAC) is primarily funded by the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN's) to provide residents with the access to and information on care for residents in need who wish to remain in their homes.

Signed By

Report Prepared By

Richard Clouthier
Manager of Citizen Service Centres
Digitally Signed Sep 5, 12

Division Review

Ron Henderson
Director of Citizen Services
Digitally Signed Sep 5, 12

Recommended by the Department

Catherine Matheson
General Manager of Community Development
Digitally Signed Sep 5, 12

Recommended by the C.A.O.

Doug Nadorozny
Chief Administrative Officer
Digitally Signed Sep 5, 12

The NE CCAC also oversees 310-CCAC (310-2222) for North Eastern Ontario which provides information services for residents seeking to find in-home community-based health care services.

On February 1, 2007, the City of Greater Sudbury launched its' 3-1-1 telephone service to provide residents with one easy-to-remember access to municipal services more quickly and effectively than ever before. A universally recognized number for non-emergency calls, the City of Greater Sudbury's 3-1-1 telephone service offers live voice answer in both official languages.

On December 15, 2011, the 2-1-1 telephone service was launched in North Eastern Ontario to provide residents with an easy-to-remember three-digit telephone number meant to provide quick information and referrals to health and human service organizations. With information from more than 56,000 services and agencies across the province of Ontario, the 2-1-1 Telephone Service is able to provide assistance on a wide range of topics. These include, but are not limited to: abuse (including sexual assault), child and family services, consumer protection and complaints, emergency and crisis services, employment, education and training, financial assistance, food and clothing, general community services, government officials, health, homelessness, housing, legal issues, multicultural associations, seniors, settlement and newcomer services, and youth services.

Staff have reviewed call volume statistics for the Seniors Information Line as provided by the NE CCAC. They also provided the total number of calls that went to 310-CCAC, which as aforementioned, provides information services for residents seeking to find the in-home community-based health care services.

The total number of Seniors' Issues related calls to the Seniors Information Line and the total number of calls to 310-CCAC (in brackets) for the period of April/2011 until May of 2012 are:

<u>673-3636</u>	<u>310-2222</u>	
Seniors Information Line	310-CCAC	
814	(1212)	Annual Total

To put this into perspective, the 3-1-1 telephone service receives an average of more than 400,000 calls per annum including many enquiries by seniors seeking municipal services.

The calls placed directly to 310-CCAC are inherently the responsibility of the NE CCAC and funding for this service is already in place and provided by the Local Health Integration Network.

The calls placed to the Seniors Information Line, although extremely low in volume, generally cover a range of enquiries that may be better serviced by either 211 or 311.

In regard to the inevitable comparison between 3-1-1 and 2-1-1 telephone services; 311 provides information about municipal services whereas 211 can provide information about human services from most any level of government and other service providers. This is not a duplication in service as the databases used by 2-1-1 are developed to provide information and referrals to health and human service organizations. The 3-1-1 Call Centre was developed as a quick and easy way to access City services and respond to all of your City information requests.

Therefore in conclusion, the call volume statistics clearly indicate that the Seniors' Information Line call volumes are relatively low. Currently seniors dialing 673-3636 are forwarded to the NE CCAC for service based on an agreement whereby the Parkside Older Adult Centre contracts to the NE CCAC the Annual Operating Grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the provision of this service.

Based on a review of the call statistics as provided by the NE CCAC; it is recommended that the Annual Grant be eliminated effective December 31, 2012. This course of action has also been recommended by the Seniors Advisory Panel based on discussions held at their meeting of June 14, 2012.

A news release will be prepared to advise the community on the evolution of access to Information on obtaining senior services in Greater Sudbury.