

Executive Summary

At the Finance and Administration meeting on November 3, 2020, through Resolution FA2020-60, staff were directed to work with existing service providers to expand the availability of warming shelter space to the Community's most vulnerable population. This report will provide an update on the responding services implemented, which includes the YMCA Overnight Warming Centre and the Sudbury Action Centre for Youth's (SACY) Overnight Warming Centre and Temporary Youth Shelter Beds. As the result of additional identified needs, staff also worked with community partners to implement a food delivery service and the provision of a dining space for the vulnerable community.

Background

In response to the City of Greater Sudbury's State of Emergency declared on April 6, 2020, various public and social services providers closed to the public. There was an immediate and urgent public health and safety need to provide persons experiencing homelessness with access to basic needs such as washrooms, drinking water, hand washing stations, and shelter from the elements. Many services shifted to offering virtual services only, leaving those without access to phones and computers disconnected from the health and social services resources they required.

Analysis

The City of Greater Sudbury (City) and community partners responded quickly to address gaps in the community. Appendix A details a summary of COVID-19 updates from Social Services (Homelessness & Shelters) that have been undertaken since March 2020.

The Off the Street Low Barrier Shelter is consistently sheltering 30-35 persons per night who have been unable to access housing in the community. Appendix B provides daily utilization data on Warming Centres.

The former Youth Emergency Shelter closed as scheduled on March 31, 2020, and there was no available shelter geared towards the homeless youth population, aged 16 to 24 years, in our community. While youth may be served in the adult shelter, this is not an appropriate program for this age group to meet their specific needs. Serving this age group has placed additional capacity pressure on the adult Off the Street Low Barrier Shelter. The community outreach team reports a greater number of youth residing unsheltered in our community, and both shelter staff and outreach staff, report greater substance use issues among this population. During the COVID outbreak, the lack of a youth shelter has resulted in homeless and vulnerable youth being placed at greater risk of exposure to COVID as they do not have an appropriate place to receive emergency shelter.

Expanded Warming Centres

On November 24, 2020 at the City Council meeting, Mayor Bigger, under emergency orders, directed staff to work with existing service providers, including the Parkside Centre and YMCA Northeastern Ontario, to provide dining space for vulnerable individuals, and existing service providers, Elgin Street Mission and the Centre de Santé Communautaire du Grand Sudbury, to provide meal delivery services as soon as possible until April 30, 2021.

Service Updates and Utilization

Staff worked with community partners and service providers to implement the requested enhanced services as outlined below.

	YMCA	SACY	PARKSIDE CENTRE
Opening Date	November 16, 2020	December 1, 2020	December 7, 2020
Operating Hours	Monday – Sunday 10:00 pm – 7 am	Monday – Sunday 10:00 pm – 7 am	Monday – Friday Lunch – 11:00 am – 1:00 pm Monday - Sunday Dinner – 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm Saturday and Sunday Brunch – 10:00 am – 11:30 am
Capacity	Currently up to 22 due to lack of security	Warming Centre – 10 Shelter Beds – 4	36
Services	Warming Centre, showers, light snacks, clean clothes	Youth aged 16 – 24 Warming Centre and temporary youth shelter beds	Dining Space
*Utilization (Average)	Warming Centre – 23 Shower Services – 7	Warming Centre – 2 Shelter Beds – 2	Lunch/Brunch – 4 Dinner – 6
Cost	\$255,000 *Additional \$50,000 was approved for enhanced security services	\$175,000	\$250,000

*Data represents utilization from opening date up to and including December 20, 2020.

Other Support Services

Meal Delivery

Beginning November 30, 2020, meals from the Elgin Street Mission are being delivered daily to, and consumed at, the Centre de Santé Communautaire du Grand Sudbury. A total of 32 meals are permitted per sitting for each lunch, dinner, and brunch on the weekends.

This service will cost approximately \$7,100 and will be funded from Social Services.

Transportation Services

In order to ensure the homeless population receives the most appropriate service, clients are directed to the service that best fits their needs (i.e. youth to the SACY Centre, women to Cedar Place, or clients to warming centre when shelter is at capacity). To support this, individuals may require transportation between shelters and warming stations. The City has entered into an Agreement with Aaron Taxi to provide transportation at the request of staff when needed.

This service allows for people to be transported between any of the following sites between 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., seven days a week from December 7, 2020 until April 30, 2021:

- Off the Street Shelter (200 Larch St.)
- Cedar Place (261 Cedar St.)
- YMCA Warming Centre (140 Durham St.)
- SACY Warming Centre (95 Pine St.)

Supportive Isolation Services

Supportive Isolation Services for people who are homeless and require isolation for COVID testing or recovery are being offered through Health Science North Withdrawal Management Services. Transportation to isolation services is being provided by the Community Outreach Team under the Homelessness Network. Testing and reporting support is provided through the Community Paramedicine Program and Sudbury District Nurse Practitioner Clinic.

An overflow plan is in place, which includes an agreement with a local motel to cover the cost of motel rooms, when required, and the provision of meals through a local restaurant. The Children and Social Services Division has designated a staff person to coordinate the oversight of isolation supports. At the time of writing this report, these services have not been used.

Additional Security Measures

Service providers continue to note an increase in the amount of drug use in the community that has often resulted in overdoses and EMS calls for clients while attending programs. Drug use is prohibited within all shelters and warming centres, and, when found, may result in service suspensions for the individual. Providers have also noted increased negative and aggressive behaviours associated with mental illness and substance use. In some cases, this is affecting the safety of the clients and staff.

As a result, additional security has been approved for the YMCA's Overnight Warming Centre, along with additional security and screening staff at the Homelessness Network Day Centre. Service providers continue to provide additional training to their staff and have put in place policies and guidelines to ensure everyone's safety. Funding for these enhancements are expected to be covered through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Funding (CHPI) due to the continued reduction in demand for rental and hydro arrears. If the demand changes drastically for these services, staff will return to Council for direction on funding options, however, the Program fits within the funding guidelines of the CHPI Program.

Homelessness Network Day Centre Update

Centre de Santé Communautaire du Grand Sudbury currently operates their Homelessness Network Day Centre at 19 Frood Road in downtown Sudbury, however as of January 10, 2021, they are no longer able to operate in that space. City of Greater Sudbury staff have explored alternative locations and options for the continuation of services. On December 21, 2020, Council determined that the services are to be offered either at the Sudbury Arena or in Provincial Boardrooms A - D located at 199 Larch Street (Provincial Tower).

It has been determined that the Sudbury Arena is not a viable option at this time due to contractual obligations with the Sudbury Wolves and the Ontario Hockey League (OHL). Therefore, the Day Centre will continue to run their Program from 199 Larch Street, Provincial Boardrooms A – D beginning Monday, January 11, 2021 at noon.

Following the transition of the Day Centre Program to 199 Larch Street, staff will be examining options for integration with other services.

The Centre de Santé Communautaire du Grand Sudbury's Program runs from October 1 to May 31 and operates 7 days a week from 8 am to 9 pm. The focus of their programming is to provide persons who are homeless and in need, a warm space to sit, rest, find nourishment, and have an opportunity to connect to housing supports.

Next Steps

Staff will continue to work with community partners to implement the initiatives described above and monitor their effectiveness in supporting our vulnerable population. Further updates will be provided to Council.

Resources

Finance and Administration Committee Resolution FA2020-60 from the meeting on November 3, 2020

<https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=1480&itemid=rec>

APPENDIX A - Summary of Covid-19 Updates from Social Services (Homelessness & Shelters)

APPENDIX B – Daily Utilization Data