

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of Committee of the Whole

FROM: Adelina Urbanski, Commissioner of Community and Health Services

DATE: May 1, 2014

RE: Decommissioning of the Smoke Room in Maple Health Centre on April 30, 2014

This memorandum provides Council with information regarding the decommissioning of the resident smoke room in Maple Health Centre (MHC) on April 30, 2014. The closure of the Maple Smoking Room follows the successful decommissioning of the resident smoke room at Newmarket Health Centre (NHC) on January 1, 2014. A member of the MHC Family Council will be making a deputation at today's Committee of the Whole meeting.

Providing a smoke free and safe environment for our residents and staff

York Region is committed to optimizing the health of the community for all ages and stages through health care delivery, prevention and promotion initiatives. Evidence strongly suggests linkages between first-, second-, and third-hand tobacco smoke and negative impacts on one's health. There are also fire safety risks when smoking is permitted in a resident area. Closing the smoke rooms will reduce the risk to the residents, staff and York Region. In order to address these risks, the resident smoke rooms have been closed. The NHC smoke room closed on January 1, 2014 and the MHC smoke room closed on April 30, 2014.

Since 2011, all new residents have been advised that the smoke rooms would be closing

Since 2011 newly admitted residents who smoke (and their families) have been informed of the intent to close the resident smoke rooms. In MHC all short-stay residents admitted since 2012 have been directed to smoke in the designated outdoor smoking area.

The Region recognizes that some current long term care residents are smokers. In preparation for the smoke room closure, improvements were made to the outdoor designated resident smoking area to create an easily accessible area near the gardens. Sidewalks were replaced and additional concrete pads were created to ensure safe access and use by residents. Residents who wish to smoke do so independently. Smoking cessation programs were offered under the direction of the physicians.

The existing smoke room space will be repurposed as recreational space for all residents to enjoy with their families.

The Region worked with residents and their families to prepare for closure of the smoke room

Prior to the smoke room closure, the Region engaged residents and their families in a variety of ways. Each Home has a Residents' Council made up of elected resident representatives and a Family Council made up of volunteers. The Residents' Councils and the Family Councils in each Home supported closing the smoke rooms. Residents who smoke were consulted and concerns discussed with the resident and/or their families.

The NHC smoke room closure has been implemented without issue. At MHC, a member of the Family Council requested delay or cancellation of the smoke room closure. At that time, the Family Council agreed to support a delay. Staff agreed to delay the closing until April 30, 2014 when the weather is better and the three residents who smoke had an opportunity to engage in a cessation program. When this delay was communicated to the MHC Residents' Council, the Council voiced their disappointment and continued support for closure of the smoke room in their Home as soon as possible.

The smoke room at Maple Health Centre is now closed

Staff met with the member of the Family Council who objects to the closure on April 8, 2014 to discuss his concerns. Staff are considering his additional request for exterior smoking area modifications. Both the Residents' Council and the Family Council at MHC have recently asked the Region to proceed with the smoke room closure without further delay.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact Sylvia Patterson, General Manager, Housing and Long-Term Care, sylvia.patterson@york.ca or 905-830-4444 ext. 72091.

Adelina Urbanski
Commissioner, Community and Health Services

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