

APRIL 08, 2025

JOINT SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT

REPORT NO. JSC-017-2025

COMMUNITY PARAMEDIC PROGRAM – HEALTH CANADA’S SUBSTANCE USE AND ADDICTIONS PROGRAM (SUMMIT)

**JONATHAN SYLVESTER
DEPUTY CHIEF, PARAMEDIC SERVICE**

RECOMMENDATIONS

For information purposes only.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications at this time, as this program remains 100% funded by Health Canada (HC). Approved federal funding remains approved for three full years to fiscal year of 2027-28. No impact is expected due to the recent Federal government prorogue or upcoming Federal election on Monday April 28, 2025. Contribution Agreements are in place along with Service Agreements between the Leeds Grenville Paramedic Service and the South East Health Unit to ensure funding commitments.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

Opportunities for incorporating energy efficiency and climate change awareness into paramedic operations will be identified and implemented where possible in the planning process. Minimization of travel distances to maximize response will also assist with emissions reductions.

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of minimizing response, is to maximize access to paramedic services. All equipment requires accessible design standards to be met. Implementation of technology to assist with special needs for communication purposes will be incorporated where cost effective.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

A designed Core Group to assist the guidance and program direction has been established for this project. Representatives from Leeds Grenville Paramedic Service, South East Health Unit, Rideau Community Health Centre, Lanark, Leeds, Grenville Addictions and Mental Health and John Howard Society make up the main Core Group. A greater Advisory Committee is currently being established made up of a wide array of community partners. Invitations to participate have been sent to proposed Advisory Committee members with an overview of the program and work plan for review. Ongoing dialogue with local health care and service providers to determine community needs and collaboration is underway. Communication is led by the South East Health Unit and Leeds Grenville Paramedic Service, with Health Canada's involvement.

BACKGROUND

The Health Canada's Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP) has moved forward with program development, hiring and operations beginning in January 2025. This new Program will be operating as Summit Integrated Care Program (Summit). The initial phase of the program has seen the creation and approval of the program's 2024-25 and 2025-26 Work Plan, the development of the program Logic Model. Health Canada has provided the approval of the performance metrics for the program, the initial phase of staff hiring, establishment of interim office and clinic location, as well as the approval of the program's operating name. Please see the attachment # 1 for further details on the program overview.

DISCUSSION/ALTERNATIVES

Summit is creating structured initiatives to help reduce harm, prevent, refer, and support individuals struggling with substance use, mental health, housing and food insecurities. Summit is incorporating best practices from public health, harm reduction services, medical and social work. Community engagement, stakeholder collaboration, and culturally competent approaches are crucial to ensuring effectiveness of this program.

Ongoing evaluation and data collection help refine strategies, address community trends and help improve outcomes. Summit is committed to working with its community partners to identify and support individuals through direct and indirect supports, supplies, treatment and referrals.

Location – Summit has entered into a lease agreement for offices and clinic space in partnership with John Howard Society at 125 Stewart Blvd. This partnership and location are advantageous, as the synergy between the two service providers will assist in identifying community clients in need and ensure collaborative efforts are focused on the program. Social and health services will be provided in the office/clinic location. Outreach services are being provided in the community and are designed to meet individuals where they are at.

Staffing update – Summit’s Project Coordinator has been hired and its two Health Systems Navigators are in the final stages of the hiring process. The Community Paramedic Program Outreach Paramedics are fully operational and have been working in various capacities to support Summit’s program development and service delivery in outreach settings. Administrative and operations staff will be continuing to work on partnership development, education and program development. Peer Support workers and Persons with Lived or Living Experience will be hired for further community connection and support through the Spring and Summer of 2025, as program needs dictate.

Budget update – The 2024-25 budget has been utilized appropriately as per the Health Canada budget plan and program supplies and start-up needs have been met in order to move comfortably into the 2025-26 operating year and further program development.

Programming – Summit is making connections with community partners to identify individuals struggling to access services through traditional pathways. Summit is working in the community to provide direct and indirect care, ongoing support, referrals for service, education and connections to the most appropriate services for individual client needs. The workplan through the beginning of 2025-26 includes increasing targeted communication channels to reach populations, establishing services tracking procedures, advocate for integration into existing community programs to reduce duplication of community services and increasing access to substance use and harm reduction services in the region. In addition, the program will be increasing staffing to include peer support workers and augment outreach services for individuals that are reticent to access care through traditional pathways.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment #1 - Summit Integrated Care Overview

The report set out above has been reviewed and the information verified by the individuals listed below.

**JONATHAN SYLVESTER
DEPUTY CHIEF, PARAMEDIC SERVICE**

**APRIL 1, 2025
DATE**

**JEFFREY CARSS
CHIEF, PARAMEDIC SERVICE**

**APRIL 1, 2025
DATE**

**PAT HUFFMAN
TREASURER**

**APRIL 1, 2025
DATE**

**ALISON TUTACK
INTERIM CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

**APRIL 1, 2025
DATE**