

**THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF ST. THOMAS, THE COUNTY OF ELGIN,
AND THE ST. THOMAS-ELGIN GENERAL HOSPITAL
HEALTH RECRUITMENT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE**

COMMITTEE ROOM # 309, CITY HALL

MARCH 10, 2015

3:05 p.m. The meeting convened with Councillor C. McWilliam, Chair, presiding.

Attendance

Councillor C. McWilliam, Chair, County of Elgin
Councillor S. Wookey, City of St. Thomas
Cheryl Fish, Health Recruiter
Mark McDonald, CAO, County of Elgin
Wendell Graves, CAO/Clerk, City of St. Thomas
Matt Smale, Corporate Administrative Clerk

Guests

Jane Tillmann, Health Force Ontario

Absent

Dr. K. Scott, Elgin Medical Association
Dr. N. Whitmore, St. Thomas-Elgin General Hospital

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on January 27, 2015 were confirmed as circulated.

The members welcomed Ms. Tillmann from Health Force Ontario to the meeting.

Activity Report and Recruitment Projects

The Health Recruiter presented her report for the month of February.

The members were provided with an update on the status of negotiations between the Province and the OMA.

The members were informed that a meeting of approximately 20 Health Recruiters would be held at the Senior's Centre on March 12, 2015 in partnership with Health Force Ontario. Topics would include the use of social media as a recruiting tool and updates from the LHIN and Medical Association.

Health Force Ontario – Update

Ms. Tillman provided the members with an update on physician numbers in St. Thomas-Elgin. She advised that 65 physicians were registered in the area however it was estimated that only 40 of those were practising family medicine. It was also estimated that approximately 35% were 65 years of age or older.

Billing Models

Ms. Tillmann noted that most primary care physicians in this area practiced in the FHO or FHT models. The Province had placed a moratorium on the creation of new FHOs and FHTs until a determination could be made as to what areas were considered underserved. She noted that the St. Thomas-Elgin numbers could be misleading in the sense that the area had a healthy roster of physicians but many did not practice family medicine.

Ms. Tillmann noted that one impact the current moratorium was having was that physicians wishing to join a FHO locally only had the option to do so to replace a retiring physician. No new physician spaces could be added to an existing FHO the “underserved/high needs area” definition came into effect.

The members were informed that physicians interested in practicing in the area were still welcome to set up or join a Family Health Group or a Comprehensive Care Model.

Chairman McWilliam stated that his municipality had one physician practicing within its borders and a handful of others in neighbouring municipalities who treated some Dutton/Dunwich residents, however the Province in the past had refused to consider the municipality underserved based on the RIO score. Neighbouring West Elgin with more physicians qualified as underserved based on their score.

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Coun. Wookey advised that part of his frustration was that the moratorium seemed to be enacted by the Province without an alternative plan first being in place.

Ms. Tillmann stated that the Province was still developing its new classification model to determine a municipalities score. There was an understanding at the Provincial level that each area had its own circumstances and as such the LHIN had been invited to provide input to the Ministry of Health on how local municipalities were scored.

The members discussed the fact that there wasn't a good indication of the current number of unattached patients in the area. People were able to register with Health Care Connect however, many didn't know the service existed or didn't have access to a computer and/or the internet.

The Health Recruiter noted that many physicians seemed reluctant to provide their roster sizes.

The members discussed the role of Community Health Centres such as those in St. Thomas and West Lorne.

Ms. Tillmann stated that Community Health Centres were funded directly by the LHIN. The Community Health Centres focused on serving a lower volume of patients with higher need levels. There has been some reluctance on the part of the CHCs to expand their patient rosters beyond what is mandated.

The members agreed that the next step was to determine how the underserved scores would be determined.

Ms. Tillmann agreed to forward any further information she received on the score to the Health Recruiter for forwarding on to the Board.

Dr. Haruta Medical Building

Mr. Graves advised that Dr. Haruta continues to move forward on the planning and site preparation work required with his medical centre project.

The members discussed the hospitals proposal to attract physicians to the facility given the status of discussions at the Provincial level regarding family health models.

Ms. Tillmann noted that a FHG could still be applied for at the facility.

The members agreed to pass this information along to the hospital and that recruitment of physicians and the decision of what model to employ was at the discretion of the hospital and Dr. Haruta.

Follow-up : Round Table Stakeholder Session

The Health Recruiter advised that she continued to work on and complete tasks arising from the action plan developed following the stakeholder meeting. Recently she had met with the St. Thomas EDC.

The members agreed that the action plan should be updated quarterly.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2015 at 3:00 pm.

Ms. Fish and Ms. Tillmann left the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Health Recruiter Contract – Renewal

The members were in receipt of a copy of the Health Recruiter's current contract.

The members noted that they were pleased with the value and quality of work provided by Ms. Fish and would be interested in continuing the contract for another term.

The members discussed the current wage and mileage rate as well as the cell phone allowance. They requested that Mr. Graves approach Ms. Fish about a renewal utilizing the terms discussed by the members.

Mr. Graves advised that a request had been received from a hospital in a neighbouring municipality asking Ms. Fish to provide some recruitment services for that institution.

The members declined the request noting the potential conflict of interest it posed.

Ms. Fish returned to the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 pm.