



Staff Report

Report Title: Kincardine Family Health Team and the Ripley Medical Center

Prepared By: Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer

Department: CAO

Date: Jun. 5, 2023

Report Number: CAO-2023-06-20

File Number: A19 Ripley Medical Center

Attachments: Summary of the Kincardine Family Health Team's Expression of Interest for the Expansion of Primary Care Services

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report Number CAO-2023-06-20, prepared by Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer;

AND FURTHER approves providing a letter of support for the Kincardine Family Health Team's Expression of Interest for the Expansion of Primary Care Services;

AND FURTHER supports Staff engaging an architect or designer to develop a renovation plan for the Ripley Medical Center, and obtaining quotes to complete the renovation project to be funded from the Community Sustainability and Well Being Fund Reserve Fund.

Background:

Earlier this spring, staff met with the Executive Director of the Kincardine Family Health Team and Dr. Murray to discuss future use of the Ripley Medical Center. Specifically, we discussed how to bring more health care services to our community and what infrastructure upgrades are required for the services to begin.

A few options were discussed at this meeting including bringing health care practitioners to the Ripley Medical Centre on a small-scale rotation or fully expanding services on a full-time basis at the Center (based on funding), and Dr. Murray attending the Center one afternoon per week to see his current patients.

The Executive Director of the Family Health Team discussed an upcoming funding opportunity that would support their expansion of services into Huron-Kinloss on a full-time rotation (multiple healthcare professionals rotating at the Center including a Nurse Practitioner, Dietician, Occupational Therapist, etc.). On May 31st, The Executive Director met with staff to discuss the application details, requirements for potential partners, and the timeline for this expanded project.

For all options being considered, extensive renovations would be required at the Ripley Medical Center.

Discussion:

Small Scale Rotation of Healthcare Providers

The Kincardine Family Health Team is committed to bringing programming back to Huron-Kinloss through use of the Ripley Medical Center and the Ripley-Huron Community Centre. In the past, the Family Health Team met with clients at the Center and offered programs like Boosting Balance at the Ripley-Huron Community Centre. We are working together to ensure the infrastructure is in place to support their return to our community beginning late fall 2023 or early 2024. In order for Healthcare Professionals to see clients at the Center, many upgrades are required to the building, as noted below. Without additional funding, they would only be attending the Ripley Medical Center to meet with clients on an occasional basis, as required and as staff are available.

Dr. Murray

Our staff also met with Dr. Murray about returning to see patients at the Ripley Medical Center on Friday afternoons and potentially a few other days each month. Dr. Murray also requires the Center to receive some essential upgrades in order to start seeing patients there again. Additional infrastructure requirements for Dr. Murray include 3 desktop computers and updated medical supplies.

Ripley Medical Center Renovations

There are a few key issues with Ripley Medical Center preventing Health Care providers from returning to the space.

- Secured Admin Area
- Accessibility
- Sound proofing
- Flooring
- IT – Access to Electronic Medical Records System

The requirements listed above are the bare minimum renovations required for the Center to be used by the Family Health Team and Dr. Murray. Our team is recommending a full review and floor plan design that will create a space that is functional, clean, safe and accessible for the long-term. If we are already replacing the carpet with flooring that is easier to clean, removing drywall to increase sound-

proofing, and widening hallways to make the building accessible; it makes sense to review the floor plan to ensure we are using every square inch of the Center in the best way possible.

Application for the Funding – Full-time Healthcare Provider rotation

The Kincardine Family Health Team is applying to Ontario Health, in partnership with the Ministry of Health for funding to expand their services into the region. The Kincardine Family Health Team borders include all of the Township of Huron-Kinloss and all of the Municipality of Kincardine but currently services and programs are primarily offered in Kincardine. This application for funding, if successful, would allow the Family Health Team to use the Ripley Medical Center on a full-time basis (outside of when Dr. Murray is using the Center to see patients) as well as offer more programs at the Ripley-Huron Community Centre.

The Center would be used on a rotational basis, full-time (Monday-Friday, all year), by all primary care Healthcare providers including a Nurse Practitioner, Dietician, Occupational Health Therapist, and other providers that focus on preventative health and improving wellness. Details are included in the attached summary provided by Pam Rantz, Executive Director, Kincardine Family Health Team.

If successful, the Family Health Team would pay market value rent for use of the space, bringing in additional income to support ongoing facility improvements and maintenance.

The Family Health Team is requesting a letter of support from the Township of Huron-Kinloss to include in their application for funding.

Timelines and Recommendation

The application for funding being completed by the Kincardine Family Health Team is due June 16th and they hope to hear the results of the application in the Fall.

Our need to renovate the Ripley Medical Center is required, regardless of the application results, if we want healthcare services to return to Ripley. The services provided by the Family Health Team would be available to all residents of Huron-Kinloss including the Nurse Practitioner. This would be a huge benefit to our residents, especially those who do not have a Family Physician or have other barriers to accessing healthcare services in other communities.

We are researching what is required for both the Family Health Team and Dr. Murray to access their Electronic Medical Records system and hope that functionality will be available by the Fall.

In terms of computers and medical equipment needs, if the Family Health Team's application is successful, they will have funds available to purchase computers that can also be used by Dr. Murray and the medical supplies and equipment needed for the exam rooms. We would like to focus our investment in this project on the capital

infrastructure rather than the computers and other equipment. Even though this would delay Dr. Murray starting to see his patients until the renovations are complete, we think this is a more efficient and practical path forward. The alternative would be a makeshift renovation and equipment purchase to get him started with the potential of having to close the Center if the Family Health Team gets funding for a full renovation.

Our Team is requesting to use funds from Community Well-Being Reserve Fund to engage an Architect or Designer to develop a renovation plan for the Center. Once the plan is complete Mike Fair, Director of Community Services, will obtain quotes to complete the renovation. We will bring forward another report to Council once the quotes are received, to gain Council approval to begin renovations.

We are recommending this path forward to align our timelines with the funding announcement for the Family Health Team's funding application and to ensure the Center is ready for all types of usage by early 2024.

As mentioned earlier, if the Family Health Team's application is not successful, they are still prepared to attend the Ripley Medical Center on an occasional basis and Dr. Murray has also committed to seeing patients one afternoon per week. In this scenario, the Township would be required to purchase computers and other medical supplies and source other Healthcare Providers to use the space when it is vacant. Staff would consider all funding sources to purchase the required equipment including but not limited to, grants, private donations, reserve funds or a community fundraising campaign.

Financial Impacts:

In 2018-2019 the Township of Huron-Kinloss invested \$228,266.00 to renovate the Lucknow Community Health Centre, in partnership with the Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh. Funding came from the Community Sustainability and Well-Being Reserve Fund and we are requesting to use the same reserve fund to complete a floor plan drawing of the Ripley Medical Center. Staff will obtain quotes once the drawings are complete and report back to Council with a recommendation for how to proceed. The current balance of the reserve fund is \$189,363.00.

Strategic Alignment / Link:

A2.4 Doctor Recruitment/Medical Centres

Respectfully Submitted By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer & Michelle Goetz, Manager of Strategic Initiatives.

Report Approved By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer