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Coming up at 1 pm, it's this month's Social Services committee meeting at Wellington County. Here's the Politico preview of what's coming up at the meeting:



MEETING PREVIEW: County Social Services Meeting for October 11, 2...

At October's Social Services Committee meeting of Wellington County things will be relatively more laid back than September's packed agenda. This month there will be mostly discussions ...

<https://guelphpolitico.ca/2023/10/07/meeting-preview-county-social-services-meeting-f...>

Chair Anderson has called the meeting to order.

Anderson begins by complementing the 24th annual Mayor's event for mental health, which took place yesterday at Guelph City Hall. Anderson calls the speakers inspirational and we would like to invite those individuals to speak at County council. "Their story has to be heard."

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest? None.

We start with a delegation from the Guelph Wellington Community Health Van

-Lindsay Sprague, Director of Community Programs, Sanguen Health Centre

-Michelle Steingart, Admin & Clinical Program Coordinator

-Cory Gillies, Van Team Lead & Social Support

-Steph Beaumont, Peer Lead

The team says they're thankful for the opportunity to present. They're going to talk about the services that the van offers and it's impact across Guelph and Wellington communities.

Fun fact: The van started as a Hep C clinic, which has since expanded into other health concerns and homelessness assistance. They were also initially Guelph based but have since expanded into seven different rural communities.

The goal of the van is to improve access to health and social services to people who are marginalised or have a barrier to accessing typical services.



Sanguen Health Centre provides health and social care for people who face barriers to accessing traditional supports, including people who experience homelessness, use drugs, and are living with Hepatitis C.



The big part of their mission is harm reduction, especially now with the toxic drug supply. Fentanyl and its analogs are contributing to the 21 opioid-poisoning-related deaths per day. Of all accidental opioid poisoning deaths, 81% involved fentanyl.

Important note: Locally, there have been 7 suspected drug poisoning deaths in September alone.

Harm reduction services offered by the van.

Harm reduction and Outreach services provided from the Van include:



- overdose prevention training
- Naloxone distribution
- Needle exchange
- Safer drug use information (peer-based)
- Pathways to detox and treatment services
- Nursing care (wound care)
- COVID-19 support
- Sexually transmitted or blood borne infection (STBBI) testing and treatment
- Immunization
- Peer-to-peer support
- Basic needs enhancement (hygiene, food, supplies)
- Mental health crisis support & intervention; access to emergency psychiatric consultations
- Warm referrals for shelter navigation, social and health supports

Van numbers from July to September of this year alone.

- 4,302 total interventions provided on van
- 2,209 unique individuals seen
- 120 individuals seen for the first time
- 188 patients received medical attention or treatment.

(cont'd)

- 113 total number of referrals made to other services
- 367 naloxone kits were distributed
- 927 harm reduction education encounters occurred
- 1125 harm reduction education interactions

The team has noted steady increase in community access as they've added peer support. Word of mouth has been their biggest asset as people who receive services recommend others.

As part of funding received from Health Canada, Sanguen has worked with Roots & Rivers Consulting to evaluate the program. They found that peer workers are key to taking down stigma and being more accessible. Also, it's low barrier and people feel comfortable reaching out.

Partners:



The van is presently funded with a Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP) grant through Health Canada. That grant runs out in March so they're hoping that the County might consider helping to keep the program afloat.

Anderson credits the program for all the good work it does in the community.

Mayor Guthrie asks about the funding grant. Staff say it was for the study and for operations. Giles also notes they get a TD trust fund grant and a grant from the City of Guelph, but those are small relative to what they get from the feds, about 80-20.

Guthrie clarifies that the team is sending out a flare. Giles says they are. They have received SUAP guidelines, but they're emphasising new projects, b/c that's what the program typically looks for. They've gotten advocacy from area MPs for an extra years of funding.

Guthrie: How much?

Giles: \$270k per year to run all programs as is right now.

Cllr Cork asks how many vans are out there. There's 1 for Guelph and Wellington and there's another for K-W. It's a four person team, plus a nurse, and 7 peers.

Cork asks about how much they're looking for. Giles says that ideally, all the money. Finding grants is hard work, but they can come up with a formal ask. They don't have a long list of

potential funders.

Cllr Bulmer compliments the team for how they phrased harm reduction as a rope that people can pull. He's going to keep that in mind.

Guthrie asks Anderson if he's willing to entertain a motion. Anderson says not yet.

Cllr O'Neill asks if the \$270k cost covers the KW portion of the budget. Giles says no, they get that funding from Waterloo Public Health.

Cllr Busuttill asks about the structure of Sanguen. Their main funding is through the ONgov Hep C secretariat. Their other programs are funded through about 5-6 different funders to cover the other costs. They have a board of directors.

Busuttill asks whether the team has looked at a Trillium grant. Giles says they're looking for a fundraiser to work towards sustainability. They did have a grant through CHC to the Ontario Health Team, and they also got the Trillium grant years ago to launch the van.

CAO Wilson asks if they will approach the City for a \$130k split. Giles says they will probably go to the City next. Wilson asks if funding thru the rest of the term will help. Giles says that's a start, but they need base funding so they don't have to have hat in hand ever year

Who's the anchor? Giles says *ideally* it should be the ONgov, which gets an "Amen" from Guthrie and a couple of others.

Cllr Davidson asks about the work they've been doing for sustainability. Giles says that they were given some assurances about ongoing funding that never materialised, but they did get that reprieve thanks to area MPs. Last four grants to United Way have not been successful.

They've also approach local businesses and have looked for funding through pharmaceutical companies. Otherwise they've done their own fundraisers and created partnerships to get supplies.

Cork asks about the number of people they see and hours at each stop. Giles says that it's about 16 hours in Guelph and Wellington each every two weeks. They work in Guelph after normal biz hours and in Wellington in the day. It's about 60-40 split G-W.

Bulmer asks if Social Services is the best forum, what about public health? Wilson says WDGPH is a three way funder including Dufferin, so this would be the right forum.

Davidson asks why not Mapleton stop. Giles says that it's has to do with staff capacity. They were looking at extension to Puslinch, but there's a harm reduction program operating there. Mapleton and Puslinch the two county locations with no stops.

Busuttill asks if they've considered expansion into Dufferin. Giles says they have given that she's from Grey-Bruce. Sprague notes that Health Canada is looking for peer-based products for next phase of SUAP funding.

Anderson recommends that the van group should work with social services administrator Louisa Artuso to work out a proposal, and find other potential funding opportunities. Davidson says that it needs to be equitable across the county too.

Giles concurs and notes that there's a lot of invisible homeless in rural areas and the stigma is way different. Davidson notes that if they can meet people where they are, they're not

shuffling to Guelph.

Artusa says that they need to establish the community need because the numbers have gone up in 2023 and really "opened our eyes". First step is to find some health funding and the last step is to come back to the committee to fill the remaining gaps.

Wilson says that the county is working on it's budget next month so that they have to be prepared to answer the need if there's no immediate answer to the funding problems. They need the money by March 1.

Busuttill says that there needs to be a full report with data and information, especially when we're in tight budget times and there are many requests for help.

Motion: That the van presentation be received for info and that the van team work with director of social services to develop a report, and that a recommendation to come back with a request for \$108k.

Cork says it wouldn't hurt to get the report first before proceed to the funding. Anderson says with the budget next month, they've got to put a number tentatively into the budget.

Bulmer/Davidson formally move the motion.

Shauna Calder, Manager of Finance, says that the county can put it in for November and take it out in January, that's easy enough. She can also work out figures Artuso and have something ready for November.

Davidson moves deferral to the November meeting and Cork seconds.

Warden Lennox says he doesn't support the deferral because he feels that pretty encompassing. Cork and Davidson are the only ones to vote in favour.

Guthrie proposes striking the mention of budget. Receive info, get a report in Nov. and they make a decision next month about the funding. Calder notes that this means that the Sanguen funds will not be built into the budget docs at next month's meeting.

Bulmer says this is "bridge financing" to give staff and Sanguen more time to get figures and funding together. Davidson seconds Guthrie's motion and it's approved.

Main motion as amended also approved.

Next, Social Services Financial Statements and Variance Projections as of September 30, 2023. Calder says there's some savings on Ontario Works, and they will be coming in closer to budget than they expected earlier this year.

In childcare, they expect their to be savings by the end of the year thanks to Canada- Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC)

Housing is expected to be \$2 million over budget for the year end thanks to increases in homelessness prevention and labour/materials/abatement on County housing. There are some savings on non-profit housing, and rents are ahead of budget though.

Capital costs are coming in on budget.

Bulmer asks about getting some more details about unit repairs. The report is received for information.

Next, Reaching IN...Reaching OUT and Bounce Back and Thrive Update. Mandy Koroniak, Director of the Children's Early Years Division is presenting.

These are Canada's only evidence-based programs to teach kids resilience. They're presently offered at no cost to staff in the county. User fees are going to be introduced in 2024 for those outside the service delivery area.

Guthrie asks if the program is already open to people outside the catchment area. Koroniak says it is, people are trained to then become trainers in their own communities. Guthrie asks about concerns around capacity, but the priority is this service area says Koroniak.

Report received for information.

Next, Children's Early Years 2024 User Fees and Charges. Calder says this is coming one month early because they want to give parents 60 days notice. User fees will remain the same in 2024, but there will be a fee reduction coming at some point.

Cork asks how much fees will be going down. Calder says the goal is to get to \$10/day, but there's be no word about what the next reduction will look like. Information received.

Next, Increase to the 2023-24 Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit Funding Allocation. Director of Housing Mark Poste explains that there will be an \$335k increase, which is meant to reflect the increase in the number of asylum claimants.

Guthrie asks if the county tracks how people move through the housing continuum. Poste says they do, but the COB program is meant to get people into a permanent housing situation and how that works out depends on needs. It can also follow people.

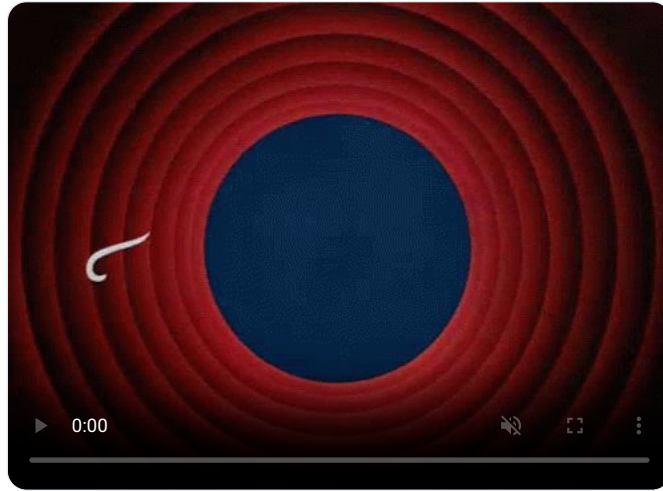
Guthrie asks about what happens if money's left over. Poste says the money sits with the ONgov, so if we don't use it, we lose it. Traditionally, the County tries to use that funding as quick as possible to make more room later in the year.

Motion to receive for information approved.

Cork asks about a lack of report from Chief Dewar and the paramedic service. He wasn't available. The county clerk says he will be invited to next meeting. Cork would like to have a member on the ambulance board, which the City doesn't have. City of Guelph has Comm of Whole.

Guthrie notes that it's a governance issue, and those are issues on both side of this. Cork says that there needs to be a discussion about how stats are collected and the county having more influence on ambulance service.

That's a wrap for this meeting!



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