

COVID Outreach Funding Agreement Report

Edmonton Community Outreach Table

Recommendation

That a funding agreement between the City of Edmonton and the Action for Health Communities Society of Alberta - AHC Alberta, as outlined in Attachment 1 of the February 19, 2021, Office of the City Manager report OCM00333, be approved, and that the agreement be in form and content acceptable to the City Manager.

Executive Summary

As one aspect of the provincial Community Engagement Plan to help target areas within the city experiencing the highest rates of active COVID-19 cases, Administration recommends approval of a funding proposal developed by the Community Outreach Table to provide multilingual, targeted support for residents that may experience barriers contributing to inability to isolate and increased transmission. Funding for the proposal comes from a grant received by the City from the Government of Alberta.

Report

On December 15, 2020 the Government of Alberta (GOA) announced the Community Engagement Plan to provide targeted support to communities in Edmonton and Calgary experiencing higher levels of COVID-19 infection and transmission. Residents of these communities may have several risk factors in common:

- Employment in public-facing, higher risk jobs, for example front-line health care, maintenance, transportation.
- Higher density living arrangements driven by below average incomes, often with multi-family or multi-generational homes.
- More newcomers to Alberta who may not have supports in place.
- Higher proportion of individuals with English language barriers.

The City of Edmonton received \$1.6M from the GOA in grant funding to implement the Community Engagement Plan in collaboration with local community partners. The intent was to provide on the ground outreach and required supports to help flatten the curve by:

- fostering understandings of COVID-19 and the protocols in place;
- creating and delivering care packages to people testing positive for COVID-19; and

- creating awareness of social support and facilitating access to available programs; and designing and delivering culturally appropriate supports.

The Community Engagement Plan in Edmonton has two elements:

- Distributing care packages containing masks, hand sanitizer and multilingual information to residents in highly-impacted communities.
 - In December 2020, volunteers distributed packages to over 3,300 Edmontonians and more than 5,000 packages were included in hampers distributed by the Edmonton Food Bank.
 - In January 2021, over 32,000 packages were provided to families through the Edmonton Public and Edmonton Catholic School Boards.
- Convening a Community Outreach table to inform the disbursement of the provincial grant, less expenses incurred to create and distribute the care packages.

Edmonton's Community Outreach Table is made up of 12 agencies working with a diverse range of communities throughout the city (see Attachment 1). The Community Outreach Table has representation from the following agencies:

- Action for Healthy Communities Society of Alberta
- Alberta Health Services
- Canadian Native Friendship Centre
- City of Edmonton
- Edmonton Food Bank
- Government of Alberta
- Medical Doctors International
- Mennonite Center for Newcomers
- Multicultural Health Brokers Cooperative
- REACH Edmonton
- Red Cross
- University of Alberta

The Community Outreach Table leverages existing local knowledge, networks, and assistance to ensure that the GOA, the City, and partnering support organizations can work together to address issues facing communities with high rates of active COVID-19 cases. Together, the Community Outreach Table has built a Collaborative Crisis Response Framework (Attachment 3) with a shared goal of contributing to flattening the curve and increasing well-being by providing dignified, culturally safe, timely, and relevant support and information to people from disproportionately impacted communities.

Funding Agreement Proposal

In order to implement the framework created by the Community Outreach Table, Action for Healthy Communities Society of Alberta developed a funding proposal for the creation of a multilingual, culturally sensitive intake and referral program (resource hub) to connect residents diagnosed with COVID-19 to resources in order to assist with isolation and prevention of further transmission. The full proposal is contained in Attachment 3, and the total budget is \$1.5M.

If the funding agreement recommended in this report, as outlined in Attachment 1, is approved, the resource hub is expected to begin implementation in mid-February 2021, and is anticipated to provide support for more than 7,000 individuals and families.

Public Engagement

No additional public engagement was done for this report; however, the funding proposal was developed collaboratively by the members of the Community Outreach Table, leveraging their existing networks.

Budget/Financial Implications

The funding source for this agreement is the provincial grant, which was received in December, 2020. The City is not contributing any portion of the funding, and has allocated the remaining \$100,000 to cover the costs of creating and distributing the care packages.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): Edmonton is a Safe City			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
Transmission of COVID-19 in Edmonton is reduced	Number of active COVID-19 cases in Edmonton zone per 100,000 population	186.1 (February 1, 2021) 185 (October 31, 2020) 19.7 (July 24, 2020)	Downward trend (2021)

Attachments

1. Funding Agreement Terms
2. Community Outreach Table Terms of Reference
3. AHC Proposal - Edmonton Emergency COVID-19 Response Plan

Others Reviewing this Report

- M. Persson, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- B. Andriachuk, City Solicitor