

Report to Council

Report Title:	South Bruce Grey Health Centre Nursing Shortages		
Prepared By:	Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer		
Department:	Administration		
Date:	January 11, 2022		
Report Number:	CAO2022-01	File Number:	C11AD, S09
Attachments:	County Resolution Passed, Hanover Resolution Passed		

Recommendation:

That the Municipality of Brockton Council hereby receives Report Number CAO2022-01 – South Bruce Grey Health Centre Nursing Shortages, prepared by Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer and in so doing supports the direction of Mayor Peabody and the CAO working in collaboration with municipal partners with input from the South Bruce Grey Health Centre (“SBGHC”) leadership to lead a third party review for a cost of \$2,500 for Brockton that will focus on opportunities to mitigate nursing shortages at the SBGHC in the short and long-term to ensure sustainable services and re-opening of the Emergency Rooms’ in Walkerton and Chesley sites.

Report:

Background:

On December 20, 2021, the South Bruce Grey Health Centre (SBGHC) released an announcement regarding the reduction in hospital services at both the Walkerton and Chesley Hospitals due to nursing shortages.

Starting December 27, 2021, as a result of the nursing shortages, the South Bruce Grey Health Centre has now implemented overnight emergency room closures at the Walkerton Hospital and modified the inpatient unit at the Chesley Hospital in addition to the existing closed overnight emergency services in Chesley. These changes have put an unnecessary additional burden on the surrounding hospitals to accommodate these lost services, impacting our first responders and the community at large.

On December 20, 2022 a Special Council meeting was called and Council passed a motion supporting the County of Bruce undertaking an independent third-party review for a cost of up to \$10,000 due to the urgency of this matter. A second motion was also passed opposing any reduction in services at local facilities and requesting the Province find an immediate solution to the staffing shortages to ensure consistent service levels for residents.

On December 22, 2021, the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie passed a motion regarding a request for the Province of Ontario to consider conducting a third-party review at their own expense to address the provincial wide issue of nursing shortages and the critical impacts of such on the local health care services within Bruce County.

On December 23, 2021 the Bruce County Executive Committee passed a resolution supporting the County's contribution of \$2,500 towards this review with Mayor Peabody indicating Brockton could lead the review and would welcome partnerships from the County, South Bruce, and Arran-Elderslie to contribute towards such a review.

South Bruce Council and Arran Elderslie Council will both be considering this matter and the third party review at their meetings next week.

As noted above several Bruce County Municipalities and the County have concerns with the reduction of services announced and have passed motions/prepared letters requesting the province to conduct a third-party review. A copy of the County's letter to the province is attached for information purposes and a letter with a resolution from Hanover is also attached as they are directly affected by increased patients from the ER closures.

Discussions have been held between representatives from Brockton, Arran-Elderslie, the County and South Bruce related to the reduction of services. The discussion focused on how the municipalities could work together with the SBGHC to find ways to mitigate the reduction in hospital services and ways to support and advance nursing recruitment strategies.

Analysis:

Based on the previous motion passed by Council and what has evolved since we wish to update Council on the current situation and seek Council's support for Brockton staff, mainly the CAO, to advance this third-party review in conjunction with a working group between South Bruce, Arran Elderslie, the County CAOs and Mayors and hopefully partnership from the SBGHC. All municipal partners have expressed their desire to see collaboration with the SBGHC to support nursing recruitment for sustained services. A third-party review of the SBGHC will require time and input from the SBGHC leadership and Board members of the SBGHC. Therefore, buy-in is necessary to ensure we can find solutions that are immediate, medium and long-term to sustain services locally.

The intent of the third-party review proposed is to mitigate nursing shortages at the SBGHC in the short, medium and long-term to ensure sustainable services and re-opening of the Emergency Room (ER)'s in Walkerton and Chesley sites.

Further discussions with Michael Barrett, CEO have confirmed his commitment to work with the Municipalities towards joint strategies that will support the hospitals work towards nursing recruitment to ensure service levels are sustainable and ER's can re-open. Some immediate actions have already been taken by the SBGHC to address nursing challenges and they are requesting a meeting with all Mayors and CAOs in the near future to discuss concerns and actions that can be collaborative in nature.

This report is to provide an update to Council on an evolving matter and confirm Council’s commitment to Brockton staff leading this review.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Strategic Action Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

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| • Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance | N/A |

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

This will require a contribution of \$2,500 towards this review that will be included in the 2022 Council budget.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer