



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HALTON

Report To:	Chairman and Members of the Health and Social Services Committee
From:	Adelina Urbanski, Commissioner of Social & Community Services
Date:	September 14, 2006
Re:	Domiciliary Hostel Program Standards
Report No.:	SS-52-06

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Regional Council approve the new Domiciliary Hostel Program Standards, Attachment # 1 to Report SS-52-06.

REPORT

Purpose

The purpose of this Report is to request Council approval of the program standards and guidelines with respect to the delivery of the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) Domiciliary Hostel Program.

Council may recall that the development of the program standards were directed within the evaluation recommendations as outlined in Report SS-34-06 and are also part of the Provincial requirements as it pertains to having received the increased per diem rate of \$45/resident/day. MCSS had mandated that service/program standards be established and implemented by December 31, 2006.

Background

Within the parameters of social assistance legislation, the domiciliary hostel program has been supported by the Region of Halton for many years through purchase of service agreements. Although not as well known as other forms of housing, these hostels are an important part of the housing continuum and considered to be a key component of the supportive housing mix. They provide shelter, food and supervision on a long term basis to persons living with severe and chronic mental illness. Patients generally fall under the following categories: those diagnosed with a mental illness, those having psychiatric difficulties, the frail elderly or those with developmental disabilities.

Over the years the Ministry of Community and Social Services has undertaken to review the program on more than one occasion. Establishment of program standards, consideration of licensing programs, funding, and many other policy questions have arisen. Other than adjustments to per diems during the tabling of various provincial budgets, little movement has been made, and subsequently no clear direction provided to Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM's) administering the program.

Halton has maintained Purchase of Service Agreements with the Domiciliary Hostel providers for approximately 20 years. During this time, the expectations regarding the accountability of the provider have been outlined, but service levels and standards have never been part of the process. The sector is not subject to any licensing standards or Ministry regulations. The agreements themselves have always focused on the administration of the contract rather than the delivery of the program, because of the lack of guidance from the Province and also because of assurances of best practices from the operators. Fortunately, Halton staff have enjoyed a productive and professional relationship with each of the five (5) operators and have assurance of their commitment to resident care and upkeep of their facilities.

In February 2006, the Region contracted with a consultant; Beth Blowes and Associates, to conduct the Program Evaluation. The evaluation was completed in April 2006 with recommendations having been approved by Council in July 2006, through report SS-34-06. Included as part of the recommendations was that staff work in collaboration with the Domiciliary Hostel providers to develop standards, guidelines and/or service expectations for the program.

Also as indicated in report SS-34-06, on March 23, 2006, the Provincial Government announced an intended increase to the maximum Domiciliary Hostel per diem from (effective June 1/06) \$41.20 to \$45.00. A provincial task force was established to work collectively with CMSMs, the Ontario Works Branch, and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to establish the provincial framework necessary to assist CMSMs with the development of common standards for this program which is to be released in the Fall of 2006. Halton staff are participating in this task force.

Both of these recommendations are considered positive reinforcement for a much needed improvement in the delivery and support of the Domiciliary Hostel program.

Development of Program Standards

At the end of July 2006, with completion slated for the end of August 2006, Regional staff continued to contract with Beth Blowes and Associates to work with the Domiciliary Hostel providers to develop new program standards, guidelines and service expectations.

Beth Blowes and Regional staff met in the middle of July 2006, and began to formulate a standards document template and a draft set of standards that would be presented to the Hostel providers as a starting point for further discussion. Not to reinvent the wheel, the draft document contained standards, gathered from other CMSMs that had already completed successful work in this area, work completed to date by the Provincial task force with respect to areas of priority, as well as industry standards that have been drafted by the Ontario Homes for Special Needs Association.

- **Standard 1 – General:** screening, referrals and intake
- **Standard 2 – Hostel Administration:** staffing requirements, resident files, health and safety, insurance, inspections, confidentiality and complaint procedures
- **Standard 3 – Environment:** bedrooms, washrooms, kitchen, disabled access, water and lights
- **Standard 4 – Resident Services:** menus, housekeeping, laundry, personal care items and ventilation

Once the draft document was completed, through a series of three (3) half day meetings, Regional staff, Beth Blowes and the Hostel providers reviewed and provided feedback and suggestions on each of the standards contained in the draft document. Modifications were made with a final draft document having been completed towards the end of August 2006. The final draft was circulated to key stakeholders within the Region, Legal Services, the Health Department and the Commissioner of Social and Community Services, to elicit and incorporate their additional feedback and suggestions prior to confirming the final document. The final document, attachment 1 of this report, was completed in early September 2006.

The participation of all key stakeholders in the development process has been instrumental in ensuring that the standards developed are relevant, realistic and ensure necessary accountability in all areas.

In particular, Halton's Domiciliary Hostel Standards were designed to:

- Ensure consistent basic resident services throughout the Halton service system
- Articulate an acceptable standard of service delivery
- Ensure that standards are results focused, observable and verifiable
- Ensure that the standards are attainable within current resources
- Reflect local needs and priorities

The Region of Halton's Domiciliary Hostel Standards will be reviewed on a regular basis and may be amended from time to time as necessary.

FINANCIAL/PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

Effective June 1, 2006, the Region of Halton implemented. The increase in per diem from \$41.20 to \$45.00 per day. In response to a request for additional information to support a commitment for a further increase in per diem as outline in Report SS-34-06, a financial review was undertaken by the Region's Corporate Services Department. The financial review included an analysis of the financial statements and information provided by the operators as part of the previous Program Evaluation conducted by Beth Blowes and Associates.

Upon completion of the analysis, support was not found for an increase in per diem beyond the \$45/day. However, during the consultations pertaining to the development of both regional and provincial service standards, two areas of financial pressure were identified by most hostel providers as requiring further support.

These included funding required for staff training, specifically CPR/First Aid Training, as well as, funding to support direct service to the resident – transportation, personal needs items (not currently provided by the operators) and participation in community programs. Accordingly, it is recommended that during the 2007 budget process, staff consider additional financial support for residents through an increase to their Personal Needs Allowance (PNA), assistance with transportation, provision of day programs and incontinent supplies, as well as, assisting operators with obtaining First Aid/CPR training and recertification for staff. The cost of such financial support in these areas is expected to cost approximately \$160,000 and would ensure ongoing and improved quality of life and care for each resident.

It is important to note that the standards, as set out in this Report, serve as a framework to be used to monitor purchased services and will, therefore, form part of the funding agreements between the Region and the Domiciliary Hostel operators. Future staffing resources will be necessary in order to assist with the implementation and monitor compliance of the above standards, as well as, all other areas pertaining to the purchase of service agreement.

While these standards apply to only those beds subsidized under the Domiciliary Hostel Program, the intent is that providers ensure that a comparable level of service is also provided to those residents in non-subsidized beds.

Once standards and guidelines are in place, they can also be adapted and applied more consistently to all residential programs including the emergency shelter. It should be pointed out however, that the emergency shelter agreement already contains specific service delivery standards based on the criteria endorsed by Council through the public process.

As has been traditionally the case with all our programs, staff will continue to monitor the above program enhancements and will also assess the impact of the Provincial standards implementation through 2007/2008. If this evaluation demonstrates the need for additional requirements with respect to resident care, staff may consider a possible re-examination of the current per diem rate.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This Report relates to the theme of *Services for People* in the Regional Strategic Plan. Action 1 (f) states: Maintain and develop mental health programming in consultation with community partners including: reviewing the Domiciliary Hostel Program, which provides services to clients with mental health issues, to ensure that appropriate funding and standard levels are met.

Conclusion

The Domiciliary Hostel Programs provide housing and support services to vulnerable individuals residing within the Halton Community. The program evaluation recommendations provide staff with the opportunity to improve the quality of financial and program support currently available to the operators. The Program is extremely important in our community due to the limited amount of support systems available to this particular client population. Without this program many persons would end up living on the streets, in emergency hostels, in jail, or in inadequate housing.

Staff firmly believe that increased accountability and enhanced quality of service to the resident are paramount to the continued success of this program. Through our involvement at the Provincial task force and the coordinated development of Program Standards, Halton has demonstrated leadership with respect to achieving both of these objectives.

Respectfully submitted,



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Adelina Urbanski
Commissioner of Social & Community Services
Department

Approved by



A. Brent Marshall
Chief Administrative Officer

If you have any questions on the content of this report, please contact: Susan Lazzer

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Attachment #1
To Report SS-52-06

Regional Municipality of Halton

Domiciliary Hostel Standards

September 7, 2006

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INTRODUCTION

Background

The *Ministry of Community and Social Services Act* provides Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM) with the discretion to enter into agreements with private or non-profit operators for the provision of accommodation, meals and limited services to individuals 'in need'. While the *Act* provides detail on provincial-municipal funding mechanisms, as of this date, there are no provincial legislation, regulations or program guidelines that articulate service expectations or standards for domiciliary hostels.

For over twenty years, the Regional Municipality of Halton has maintained funding agreements with privately owned and/or not-for-profit domiciliary hostels located throughout the Region. While expectations regarding the accountability of service providers have been outlined in the funding agreements, service levels and standards have not been comprehensively addressed.

The Region of Halton undertook a review of its Domiciliary Hostel Program in May 2006 which resulted in several recommendations being approved including the development of standards, guidelines and/or service expectations in collaboration with domiciliary hostel operators. Support for this action has also come from the Ministry of Community and Social Services who has indicated that in order to access funding for the Domiciliary Hostel Program after December 31, 2006, CMSMs will be required to establish minimum standards for their local program and that the resultant standards must be included in 2007 funding agreements. The Ministry has recently hosted several domiciliary hostel policy framework consultation meetings to inform the development of a provincial program framework which is to be released in the Fall 2006.

Standards Development

The Region of Halton has developed these Domiciliary Hostel Standards in collaboration with current service providers. Those standards, guidelines and policies that are currently in place in selected CMSMs and the industry standards that have been drafted by the Ontario Homes for Special Needs Association have served as background to the development of Halton's Domiciliary Hostel Standards. A Glossary has been included in the Standards to assist in their interpretation, application and monitoring.

In particular, Halton's Domiciliary Hostel Standards were designed to:

- Ensure consistent basic resident services throughout the Halton service system
- Articulate an acceptable standard of service delivery
- Ensure that standards are results focused, observable and verifiable
- Ensure that the standards are attainable
- Reflect local needs and priorities

The standards also serve as a framework to be used to monitor purchased services and will therefore form part of the funding agreements between the Region and domiciliary

hostel operators. These standards apply not only to those beds subsidized under the Domiciliary Hostel Program, but also to those beds that are not subsidized.

The Region of Halton's Domiciliary Hostel Standards will be reviewed on a regular basis and may be amended from time to time as necessary.

Definition

For the purposes of these standards a domiciliary hostel shall be defined as any residence, rest home, retirement home or boarding and lodging home which, for a fee provides permanent housing, limited support to vulnerable adults with special needs, and 24-hour supervision.

A domiciliary hostel does not include:

- a) A residential facility which is licensed, approved or supervised under the *Nursing Homes Act, Homes for the Aged and Rest Homes Act, Homes for Special Care Act*, or under any other Act or authority;
- b) A residential facility which accommodates fewer than five persons;
- c) The incidental provision of room and/or board by homeowners; or,
- d) Group homes for rehabilitation of law offenders, drug or alcohol addiction, crisis facilities for women, or half-way houses.

Program Goals and Principles

The Ministry of Community and Social Services has proposed the following goals for the Domiciliary Hostel Program which the Region of Halton supports:

- Individual residents obtain a quality of life that supports healthy, safe living
- All residents receive appropriate, quality care
- 'In-house' supports and services are coordinated with community-based health and social services to ensure that residents receive the services they require
- The individual circumstances of residents are respected
- The Domiciliary Hostel Program is accountable to the individual, community and government

These goals have regard for the following administrative and service delivery principles proposed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services:

- Government, community and individuals have a shared responsibility for the housing of vulnerable adults living in their community
- Domiciliary hostel housing is intended to be permanent insofar as it continues to meet the resident's care needs
- As the service system manager, the Region of Halton has the authority to purchase domiciliary hostel services that best meet the community's needs
- Funding for the domiciliary hostel program is used for the purposes intended

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Community and Social Services are:

- To sign a service contract with the Region of Halton for the funding and delivery of the program
- To collect and evaluate quarterly reports
- To monitor provincial performance targets
- To ensure financial accountability
- To conduct compliance reviews of the Region of Halton

The provincially mandated roles and responsibilities of the Region of Halton are:

- To manage the Domiciliary Hostel Program
- To negotiate funding agreements with domiciliary hostel operators
- To review and/or verify the service level and financial information provided by operators and approve payments
- To set service standards

In addition, the Region of Halton has voluntarily assumed the following roles and responsibilities:

- To monitor and enforce compliance with funding agreements and standards
- To investigate complaints and take remedial action where required
- To establish serious occurrence reporting requirements
- To verify that all operators have obtained adequate insurance coverage
- To verify that annual inspections have been completed
- To verify that beds are appropriately occupied
- To provide mandatory and discretionary benefits to residents in accordance with the *Ontario Works Act*, its regulations and policy directives

The roles and responsibilities of domiciliary hostel operators are:

- To provide housing and services to residents in accordance with the funding agreement and standards
- To receive requests and referrals for placement
- To determine financial eligibility and personal suitability of potential residents
- To accept residents and to enter into Tenancy Agreements with residents
- To monitor financial eligibility and personal suitability of residents accepted for tenancy
- To link with appropriate community-based programs and services
- To issue the Personal Needs Allowance to residents
- To report serious occurrences to the Region of Halton and cooperate fully with any follow-up which is required
- To take remedial action regarding complaints as quickly and effectively as possible
- To provide the Region of Halton with financial information as stipulated in the funding agreement
- To cooperate with and report to the Region for the purposes of carrying out the Region's obligations with regard to the Domiciliary Hostel Program

STANDARD 1: GENERAL**1.1 Resident Screening / Eligibility Criteria**

- A) The operator shall take into consideration the following factors in approving eligibility for subsidy:
- The individual is at least eighteen years of age
 - The individual requires supervision in activities of daily living and whose care requirements do not exceed the ability of staff or the mandate of the hostel
 - The individual is a vulnerable adult with special needs
 - The individual is in receipt of OW, ODSP or has another source of income (e.g. Canada Pension Plan) which is less than the cost of care plus the Personal Needs Allowance (as calculated using the per diem rate payable and the amount of the Personal Needs Allowance established by the Ministry)
 - The individual has liquid assets that do not exceed the level permitted under ODSP

1.2 Program Delivery Model

- A) The Region of Halton's program delivery model is to purchase domiciliary hostel services from commercial or not-for-profit operators.

1.3 Referral / Intake Process

- A) It is the responsibility of the operator to assess an individual's appropriateness for residency in accordance with the eligibility criteria established by the Region of Halton including recent incidents of violence and assault.

STANDARD 2: HOSTEL ADMINISTRATION**2.1 Staffing / Supervision**

- A) The operator shall ensure that hostel staff and volunteers are supervised and shall ensure that staff and volunteers are capable of communicating clearly and effectively with residents, sustaining the emotional demands of their work, and providing safe and adequate services as set out in these Standards.
- B) The operator shall ensure that staff are scheduled to provide for the supervision, care and security of residents. Each operator's funding agreement will stipulate minimum staffing ratios that will be dictated by the physical and mental acuity of residents' needs and the physical structure and environment of the hostel.
- C) The operator shall ensure that kitchen and housekeeping staff are in attendance to provide for the preparation of meals and the general cleanliness of the hostel.

2.2 Staff and Volunteer Qualifications

- A) The operator shall hire staff and recruit volunteers with the qualifications, experience and ability for working with vulnerable individuals and shall obtain an acceptable Canadian Police Clearance Certificate from each staff member and volunteer prior to the commencement of their duties.
- B) The *Employment Standards Act and Regulations* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code* govern the operator and hostel staff.
- C) The operator shall ensure that written job descriptions describing responsibilities and scope of function are available for all staff and volunteer positions.
- D) The operator shall ensure that staff supervising residents or providing care and support to residents are at least eighteen years of age, are legally eligible to work in Canada, and have a level of education and/or experience in working with vulnerable adults.
- E) The operator shall ensure that all staff obtain First Aid and CPR certificates within their first year of employment and keep their certificates current thereafter.
- F) The operator shall ensure that at least one staff person directly involved with food preparation obtains a Food Handler certificate or provides evidence of similar training and relevant experience.
- G) The operator shall ensure that all staff and volunteers receive a copy of his/her job description, an orientation to his/her particular job, the hostel's policies and procedures, and the staff code of conduct.
- H) The Region of Halton recommends that all staff and volunteers have a pre-employment TB skin test and it is advisable that they be immunized against Hepatitis B.
- I) The Region of Halton strongly recommends that all staff and volunteers have an annual influenza vaccination.
- J) It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure that a staff member who has a communicable disease which might place residents and/or staff at risk shall not continue to report for work until he/she is free of the communicable disease.

2.3 Staff and Volunteer Training

- A) The operator shall ensure that each staff member and volunteer is provided with opportunities and is encouraged to participate in workshops or seminars on topics relevant to his/her duties.

2.4 Staff and Volunteer Conduct

- A) The operator shall ensure a staff and volunteer code of conduct outlining professional behaviour is established, posted within the hostel's premises and adhered to.
- B) The operator shall ensure that harassment and abuse policies are established and adhered to by staff and volunteers.
- C) Staff and volunteers shall not conduct a physical search of any kind on a resident's person. He/she will consult with the police should there be reasonable suspicion of illegal or dangerous situations.

2.5 Resident Files

- A) Resident records shall be kept in a secure area and the operator respects confidentiality.
- B) Resident records shall include:
 - The name of the resident
 - Birth date, OHIP number, Social Insurance Number, ODSP number (if relevant)
 - Name and contact information for next of kin/guardian/power of attorney
 - Date of admission
 - Medical history
 - Known allergies and special dietary requirements
 - Medication prescribed
 - Name and contact information of physician
 - Safety/security risk assessment
 - Extent of resident's abilities to independently perform activities of daily living, type of assistance required and services to be provided
 - Hospital admissions during residency
 - Unusual or serious occurrences
 - Financial account/management details
 - Log of medical and other health related appointments
 - Staff notes pertaining to participation in in-house or community activities, changes in resident's condition, care provided, etc.
 - Correspondence sent to and from the operator with respect to the resident
 - Details of the resident's involvement with community agencies, professionals or advocates
 - Consent to Release Information (signed by the resident)
- C) The operator shall ensure that resident medical information is accessible to staff of the hostel.

2.6 Health and Safety

- A) The operator shall ensure that the interior and exterior premises are free from hazards to ensure the safety of residents, staff, volunteers and visitors.
- B) The operator shall ensure that policies and procedures are in place to promote the health and safety of residents, staff, volunteers and visitors in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.
- C) The operator shall ensure that the hostel complies with all applicable provisions of the Ontario Fire Code made under the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act*, the *Ontario Building Code*, the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, and local municipal property standard by-laws.
- D) The operator shall ensure that procedures for monthly fire drills are in place and that a log is maintained outlining same and that a full evacuation fire drill take place annually.
- E) The operator shall ensure a procedure, including the duties of staff and residents in accordance with the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act*, is established and followed when a fire alarm is called.
- F) The operator shall ensure that emergency evacuation procedures are posted in a conspicuous place within the hostel's premises. The operator shall ensure that all staff are trained in emergency evacuation of the hostel and in the use of fire extinguishers and all residents are informed of the evacuation plan when they become a resident or as soon thereafter as is practical.
- G) The operator shall ensure that a First Aid Kit is available on the hostel's premises and is located in a safe and easily accessible location to all staff. The First Aid Kit must be checked and updated after every use.
- H) The operator shall ensure that policies and procedures are in place to address communicable disease outbreaks and to ensure that universal precautions are followed at all times.
- I) The operator shall ensure that emergency phone numbers, police, fire department and ambulance, are posted near every telephone.
- J) The operator shall ensure that during periods of extreme heat, at minimum, air fans and sufficient drinking water are actively provided to residents. Where possible, a room with air conditioning is provided.
- K) The operator shall ensure that the hostel is maintained at an average temperature of 22 degrees Celsius (71.6 degrees Fahrenheit).

2.7 Suggestions and Complaints

- A) The operator shall ensure that policies and procedures are in place to manage written complaints regarding the hostel and its services and to respond to requests or suggestions made by a resident or a resident's representative.
- B) The operator shall respond, professionally and appropriately, and in a timely fashion, to all written requests, suggestions and complaints. The operator shall ensure that confidentiality is respected at all times. Records of written requests, suggestions and complaints are kept on file and include the date received, the feedback and the date it was provided to the complainant, the actions taken to resolve the issues and the follow-up required.
- C) The operator will inform the Region of Halton of any written or verbal complaints received and the proposed resolution of the complaint within 24 hours of receiving the complaint or if on the weekend, on the next business day. The Region of Halton will follow-up with the operator within three business days to ensure the successful resolution of the complaint.

2.8 Confidentiality

- A) The operator shall assist the Region to comply with its obligations under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA) with respect to the collection, use, disclosure, and storage of each resident's personal information and the operator shall comply with applicable privacy legislation.
- B) The operator shall ensure that a resident's personal information is only disclosed with a signed consent from the resident or their legal representative. Exceptions to this Standard may be made only in cases of life and death, if a resident is threatening harm to his/her self or to someone else, or if so ordered by a court.

2.9 Personal Needs Allowance and Other Financial Resources of the Resident

- A) The personal needs allowance is intended for the purchase of personal products such as clothing or cigarettes. It is not intended for the purchase of necessary items of personal care which should be provided by the operator (soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, shampoo, razor, deodorant).
- B) Residents are responsible for the management of their personal needs allowance and other financial resources.
- C) The operator may assist in managing a resident's personal needs benefit and/or other financial resources upon the signed consent of the resident or their legal representative. In such instances, the operator shall establish a written policy to manage such money. The written policy must, at minimum, include the keeping of a ledger or receipt book indicating the amount and date monies were issued

to the resident. Each disbursement to the resident must be signed by the resident and the staff member making the disbursement.

- D) The operator will not 'pool' any portion of the resident's personal needs benefit or other financial resources of the resident unless that resident will receive direct benefit from the 'pooled' funds. For example, a resident will not be asked to contribute a portion of his/her personal needs allowance towards the cost of a special event unless the resident willingly wishes to participate in that event.

2.10 Tenant Protection Act

- A) The operator shall enter into a written tenancy agreement with each resident who is admitted to the hostel. The agreement shall be signed by the resident, retained in the resident's records and a copy provided to the resident in accordance with the *Tenant Protection Act*.

2.11 Serious Occurrence Reporting

- A) The operator shall ensure that every occurrence of accidents or injuries where a health professional is involved, alleged abuse of residents or staff, police intervention, communicable disease, or fire, is reported to the Region of Halton within 24 hours of the occurrence or if on the weekend, on the next business day.

2.12 Inspections

- A) The operator shall ensure that at least once a year, there is a successful inspection of:
 - The hostel conducted by fire officials
 - The hostel conducted by public health officials
 - Heating equipment and chimneys by a qualified equipment supplier
 - Fire extinguishers, hose and standpipe equipment by a qualified fire equipment supplier
- B) The operator shall ensure that a copy of all of the above successful annual inspection reports is provided to the Region of Halton.
- C) The operator shall ensure that at least once a month an inspection of fire extinguishers, hose and standpipe equipment is completed by hostel staff.

2.13 Insurance

- A) The operator shall obtain and maintain in full force and effect general liability insurance acceptable to the Region in an amount of not less than TWO MILLION DOLLARS (\$2,000,000) per occurrence in respect of the services provided. The insurance policy shall:

- Include an endorsement certifying the The Regional Municipality of Halton has been included as an additional insured;
 - Contain a cross-liability clause or endorsement;
 - Contain a clause including liability arising out of the contract or Agreement;
 - Include under the definition of insured, any volunteer worker of any Insured or Additional Insured, while performing their duties for or in association with the Named Insured; and
 - An endorsement to the effect that the policy or policies will not be altered, cancelled or allowed to lapse without THIRTY (30) days advance notice to the Region.
- B) The operator shall annually submit copies of proof of the existence and maintenance of such a policy to the Region of Halton.

STANDARD 3: ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Residence

- A) The operator shall provide a residential living environment which promotes and enhances the quality of life for residents and which complies with all relevant health and safety standards.
- B) The operator shall maintain the premises, its furnishings and equipment in a safe and clean condition and in a good state of repair.
- C) The operator shall ensure that access to stairwells and exits are free from obstruction and flammable materials as required by legislation/fire code regulations.
- D) The operator shall ensure that elevators are maintained, inspected and display valid licenses.

3.2 Bedrooms

- A) The operator will not permit any resident to occupy for sleeping purposes any space in the domiciliary hostel used as a lobby, hallway, closet, bathroom, stairway, cellar, furnace or utility room.
- B) The operator shall ensure that each bedroom is comfortable for sleeping and engaging in quiet activities. Residents shall be free to decorate their rooms and hang wall adornments to their own taste unless such adornments are offensive to others sharing the room or pose a safety hazard.
- C) The operator shall ensure that each bedroom accommodates a maximum of four residents.

- D) The operator shall ensure that resident's beds are placed such that no part of the bed is closer than 76 cm (30 inches) to another bed.
- E) The operator shall ensure that all bedrooms contain at least one window capable of being opened directly to the outside.
- F) The operator shall ensure that each resident is provided with a bed, mattress, a bedside table, lamp, and a towel rack (towel rack to be available in the bedroom or bathroom). All of these items must be clean and in good repair.
- G) The operator shall ensure that mattresses have a minimum width of 91.44 cm (36 inches) and are safe, sanitary and in good repair. Where possible, mattresses are covered with a flame-retardant and moisture-retardant material.
- H) The operator shall ensure that each resident is provided with a separate clothes closet or private personal space for the storage of personal effects.
- I) The operator will allow residents to have their own radio, television, clock or computer in their bedroom in keeping with safety requirements and the house rules.
- J) The operator shall ensure that bedroom doors are lockable from the inside (at the request of the resident) and the operator shall have an access key to each room for use in an emergency situation and/or for cleaning.
- K) Staff shall not enter a resident's bedroom without knocking first and asking permission to enter unless there is an emergency where the resident's or another resident's safety is in question.
- L) The operator shall ensure that residents shall have access to their bedrooms at all times.

3.3 Washrooms / Sanitary Facilities

- A) The operator shall ensure that the number of sanitary facilities are, at least:
 - One (1) washbasin and one (1) flush toilet for every six (6) residents and
 - One (1) bathtub or shower for every twelve (12) residents
- B) The operator shall provide at least one wash basin and toilet shall be provided on each floor that is used by residents.
- C) The operator shall ensure that each toilet and each bathtub have at least one grab bar or similar device of a type that will ensure the safety of residents.
- D) The operator shall ensure that each bathtub/shower stall is furnished with slip resistant material that adheres to the bottom of the tub/shower stall.

- E) The operator shall ensure that each washroom, bathroom, shower/bath has a lock, which can be easily released from the outside in case of an emergency.
- F) The operator shall ensure that where one or more residents are confined to wheelchairs, there is at least one accessible washroom, toilet and shower.
- G) The operator shall ensure that washrooms are equipped with an adequate supply of common toiletries such as toilet tissue and soap.
- H) The operator shall ensure that sanitary facilities are equipped with receptacles of durable construction that can be easily cleaned, to hold either used towels, other soiled linen, or waste materials.
- I) The operator shall ensure that shared and public washroom fixtures are cleaned and sanitized at least once each day and/or more frequently if necessary. Private bathroom fixtures must be cleaned and sanitized at least once per week.

3.4 Kitchen

- A) The operator shall ensure that all food storage, preparation and service areas meet the requirements of the Food Premises Regulations under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*.
- B) The operator shall ensure that hand washing facilities are designated and equipped with soap in a dispenser and with single service towels in a dispenser.
- C) The operator shall ensure that all food is stored on racks or shelves that are not less than 15 cm above the floor.
- D) The operator shall ensure that the kitchen is maintained in a clean and sanitary manner at all times.

3.5 Dining Room

- A) The operator shall ensure that an eating area is available to residents that is large enough to accommodate at least 50% of the residents at one time.

3.6 Common Areas

- A) The operator shall provide an indoor communal area that permits residents to gather together for the purpose of recreation, crafts, games and conversation.
- B) The operator shall ensure that an outside area is provided for residents and that it is maintained in a safe and sanitary condition.
- C) The operator shall ensure that furniture in common areas is clean and in good condition.

3.7 Disabled Access

- A) The operator shall not admit a person dependent on a wheelchair, walker or scooter unless the hostel is accessible to the mobility aid.
- B) The operator shall ensure that each resident's physical disability or functional limitations (e.g. vision or hearing loss) is able to be fully accommodated.
- C) Operators shall monitor and report on the demand for physically or functionally accessible accommodation.

3.8 Furnishings

- A) The operator shall ensure that all household items are of a type, quality and quantity adequate to the needs of the residents and in keeping with a home-like atmosphere.

3.9 Garbage

- A) The operator shall ensure that rubbish and garbage is stored in receptacles that are covered with tight fitting lids, that are insect and rodent proof, and that are watertight.

3.10 Television

- A) The operator shall provide at least one television for resident's use in the common area.

3.11 Telephones

- A) The operator shall ensure that a residential on-site pay telephone for local calls is available in the hostel for the use of residents.

3.12 Water

- A) The operator shall ensure the hostel water supply system meets the residents' needs for potable water and for hot water.
- B) The operator shall ensure that water used by residents does not exceed 49°C (120°F) and shall be controlled by a device, inaccessible to residents, that regulates the temperature.

3.13 Lighting

- A) The operator shall ensure that the levels of illumination required under the *Ontario Building Code* and the *Ontario Fire Code* are maintained during all hours of operation.

- B) The operator shall ensure that all lighting equipment provides illumination for the use of all indoor and outdoor spaces, including all hallways, stairways, landings, ramps and at all entrances and exits (including the exterior of the front and back doors) to ensure the safety of residents, staff, volunteers and visitors.

3.14 Ventilation

- A) The operator shall ensure that every room is ventilated by natural or mechanical means and is designed and installed in accordance with the *Ontario Building Code* so as to remove excess heat, humidity and odors.

3.15 Windows

- A) The operator shall ensure that all operable windows have an attached screen in proper working order and appropriate window coverings to provide privacy and prevent the entry of flies and other pests.

3.16 Smoking Areas

- A) The operator shall ensure that all smoking areas are in compliance with the *Smoke Free Ontario Act*.

STANDARD 4: RESIDENT SERVICES

4.1 General

- A) Residents are responsible, as far as possible, to maintain their personal well-being and to participate in decision making about their personal care and health needs. The operator shall ensure that assistance with activities of daily living and 24-hour supervision are provided.
- B) The operator shall ensure that the following services are available however need not be provided directly by the operator:
- transportation to medical appointments and appointments with other health care professionals
 - assistance with personal shopping
- C) Either within the domiciliary hostel or by referral to community resources, the operator shall provide opportunities and encourages resident participation in leisure, entertainment, recreational, educational and employment activities, spiritual or religious observances, or other programs according to the resident's personal interests or preferences.
- D) Hostel staff shall provide residents with personal guidance, information and advice.

- E) The operator shall provide a bulletin board to post notices of in-house and community events, evacuation procedures, etc.

4.2 Menus and Nutrition

- A) The operator shall ensure that menus are planned at least one week in advance and are posted in a conspicuous place within the hostel.
- B) The operator shall ensure that residents are encouraged to participate in menu planning, food purchase and meal preparation as is practical and as desired by the residents.
- C) The operator shall ensure that menus are planned to provide balanced nutrition, variety from each of the food groups according to *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating*, and include alternate choices at each meal.
- D) The operator shall ensure that the menu offers a main meal including a hot entrée served at noon time or in the evening.
- E) The operator shall arrange for a medical or nutritional assessment for residents who appear to be undernourished, underweight or overweight.

4.3 Meals and Snacks

- A) The operator shall serve meals which are appetizing and prepared at the correct temperature and time.
- B) The operator shall ensure that residents are served a minimum of three meals per day and nourishing snacks and beverages.
- C) The operator shall ensure that the time intervals between each meal are regular but flexible in response to other household routines and activities.
- D) The operator shall ensure that meals will meet the special dietary needs of residents requiring a diet for treatment or maintenance of good health.
- E) The operator shall ensure that upon advance notice, a meal is set aside or a bag/box lunch is prepared for residents who are absent during a meal period to attend school, treatment, employment or other activity.

4.4 Personal Mail

- A) The operator shall ensure that all mail received and sent by residents is unopened.
- B) The operator shall ensure that all residents have the right to open their mail in private.

4.5 Housekeeping and Laundry

- A) The operator shall maintain a clean and safe environment at all times and ensure that written housekeeping assignments and/or routines are in place.
- B) The operator shall ensure that all furniture including couches, chairs and tables are cleaned and dusted at least once per week and household equipment is kept in safe working order.
- C) The operator shall assume the cost of laundry and linen supplies.
- D) The operator shall ensure there are sufficient linen supplies to ensure that bed linen is changed once per week and/or more frequently as required.
- E) The operator shall provide a quantity and quality of linen and bedding to ensure the comfort of residents.
- F) The operator shall provide each resident with a towel and face cloth which will be changed at minimum once per week.
- G) The operator shall collect and launder residents' personal clothing at least once per week at no cost to the resident.
- H) The operator shall provide residents with access to a washing machine, laundry soap, dryer, iron and ironing board (at no fee to the resident) should the resident wish to attend to his/her own personal laundry.
- I) The operator shall ensure that laundry rooms are separated by construction from any food preparation or storage areas.

4.6 Clothing and Personal Care Items

- A) Operators shall assist residents to obtain a suitable quantity of clean, weather appropriate clothing (at no expense to the operator).
- B) The operator shall ensure that each resident (at no expense to the resident) is supplied with the personal care items specific to his/her needs such as soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, razor, deodorant and shampoo.
- C) Where a resident's refusal to attend to their personal care infringes upon the rights of other residents, the operator shall discuss this matter with the resident in private and in a manner which at all times respects the resident's rights and dignity.
- D) The operator shall ensure that clothing and personal care items are not shared.

4.7 House Rules and Resident Rights

- A) The operator shall ensure that the fundamental human rights of residents are respected at all times including the right to privacy, confidentiality of personal records, the right to have opinions heard and to be included, to the greatest extent possible, when any decisions are made which affect their lives.
- B) The operator agrees that each resident has the right to be represented by a substitute decision maker should they so choose.
- C) Upon admission, or shortly thereafter, the operator shall provide all residents with written information outlining house rules and a copy of the residents' rights and responsibilities.
- D) The operator shall agree that each resident may have visitors at the hostel as long as the visitors do not interfere with the privacy and rights of other residents or the usual operation of the hostel.
- E) Where it is in the best interests of the resident to receive support and/or assistance with their personal care or activities of daily living from an external third party, the operator shall cooperate fully in ensuring that such support and/or assistance is made available.
- F) The operator shall make every effort to provide a private space, when requested by the resident, for private telephone calls or private visits with lawyers, doctors, advocates, friends or family.
- G) The operator shall not confine or restrain a resident by means of a time out room, binding or by chemical means.
- H) The operator shall encourage resident participation in regular house meetings to discuss the operation of the hostel, to plan menus and house events, etc.

4.8 Recreational Activities

- A) The operator shall encourage residents to initiate and participate in both their own residential and community sponsored recreational events.
- B) Each operator shall provide a weekly minimum of at least one structured period of recreation within their hostel.

4.9 Medical

- A) The operator shall ensure that all residents have access to a physician or to a walk-in clinic.
- B) The operator shall ensure that all resident doctor, specialist, psychiatric or health care appointments are documented in the resident's file.

- C) The operator shall allow health care and/or support professionals access to residents within the hostel and shall cooperate fully with such professionals.

4.10 Medication Management

- A) The operator shall ensure that all prescription drugs to be managed by the operator are:
- kept in one or more locked drug cabinets
 - made available only to those residents for whom and in the manner in which they have been prescribed by a physician
 - provided directly to residents with an accurate amount of liquid
 - needles/sharps/syringes/vials/ampoules are to be disposed of in a bio-hazardous container immediately after use
 - needles and syringes are not capped but placed immediately into a bio-hazardous container
 - bio-hazardous containers are disposed of according to guidelines for toxic waste
 - unused or out-dated medications are returned to the pharmacist supplier
 - universal precautions procedures are followed
- B) The operator shall ensure that over the counter medication is kept in a safe location available only to designated staff (e.g. should not be kept in resident's rooms).

Glossary

This glossary is intended to provide a clear understanding of some of the key words and terms used in the Domiciliary Hostel Standards and as understood by the Region of Halton and the operators.

Canada Pension Plan (CPP): Disability or survivor benefits available to the resident as a result of the resident's or the resident's spouse's contributions to the Canada Pension Plan.

Communicable Diseases: Illnesses caused by microorganisms and transmitted from an infected person to another person. Some diseases are passed on by direct or indirect contact with infected persons or with their excretions. Such diseases include diphtheria, measles, mumps, whooping cough, influenza, scarlet fever and small pox.

Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM): Municipalities and District Social Services Administration Boards to which the Province of Ontario has devolved responsibility for the management and delivery of Ontario Works, child care, and social housing. Some CMSMs are also responsible for land ambulance and public health.

Domiciliary Hostel Program: A discretionary program managed by CMSMs that provides permanent accommodation, limited services to vulnerable adults with special needs, and 24-hour supervision.

Funding Agreement: A mutually and legally binding understanding between the Region of Halton and the operator as to their respective rights and obligations.

Liquid Assets: Assets that are readily converted to cash including bank accounts, guaranteed investment certificates, bonds, stocks. Other assets such as funds held in trust, insurance policies and retirement savings plans may or may not be considered as 'liquid' depending upon the terms specified.

Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP): Under the authority of the Ontario Disability Support Program Act income support is provided for people with disabilities and employment support is provided for people with disabilities who want to work. All applicants are assessed to identify whether they are persons with disabilities and whether they meet the financial criteria of the Program.

Ontario Homes for Special Needs Association: A voluntary not-for-profit association established in 1997 by the owners/operators of residential care facilities that provide services under the Domiciliary Hostel and Homes for Special Care Programs.

Ontario Works (OW): Under the authority of the *Ontario Works Act*, temporary employment and financial assistance is provided to people in financial needs including single people, couples with and without children, and sole support parents.

Operator: The owner, corporation or Board of Directors under agreement with the Region of Halton.

Resident: Any vulnerable adult with special needs, tenant or client who is residing in a domiciliary hostel

Resident's Representative: A person who assists the resident in expressing his or her wishes and in understanding his or her rights. A representative may be a family member or friend designated by the resident or a legally designated trustee appointed under the *Substitute Decisions Act*.

Service System Manager: A CMSM with responsibility for local service system planning, resource allocation and reallocation, accountability and quality assurance as designated by the Province of Ontario. The Region of Halton has been so designated by the Province of Ontario for the purposes of social assistance, social housing, homelessness, child care, public health, land ambulance, etc.

Staff: The operator of a domiciliary hostel or their employees.

Universal Precautions: The standard preventative measures to be taken by those in contact with persons affected by a communicable disease to avoid contracting or transmitting the disease. Staff and volunteers must avoid all contact with moist body substances by the use of personal protective equipment (e.g. non-porous gloves) and work practices. Universal precautions apply to blood, all body fluids, secretions and excretions, non-intact skin, and mucous membranes. Careful handling and disposal of sharp medical instruments such as hypodermic needles are also included in universal precautions.

Vulnerable Adults with Special Needs: Any individual experiencing mental illness, substance abuse issues, developmental delays, cognitive impairment, organic/acquired brain injury, and/or who are frail elderly. The majority of residents of domiciliary hostel programs in the Region of Halton are experiencing chronic mental illness.