

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA CARLETON
 MUNICIPALITÉ RÉGIONALE D'OTTAWA CARLETON

REPORT
 RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf. Your File/V/Réf.	RC
DATE	08 October 1997
TO/DEST.	Co-ordinator Community Services Committee
FROM/EXP.	Medical Officer of Health Health Department
SUBJECT/OBJET	REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL - OBSTETRICAL SERVICES

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council authorize the Health Department to bid on the contract to provide Obstetrical Services on behalf of the Ottawa-Carleton Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) for a 12 month period commencing April 1, 1998.

BACKGROUND

The Home Care Program has historically been responsible for providing obstetrical services to high risk families. This contracted service provided clinical nursing services to mothers and babies who have been discharged early from the hospital and who require some on-going professional care in the home.

The Health Department traditionally chose to provide these services internally as opposed to contracting these services out to the private sector because of the significant interaction and overlap between the Obstetrical Services Program and other pre-natal and post-partum services offered by the Department under the *Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines* set by the Ministry of Health. The Child & Adolescent Division of the Health Department has provided these obstetrical services for the past 15 years and has recovered the cost of these services from the Ministry of Health through the Home Care Program.

**ADDITIONAL ITEM 8
 COMMUNITY SERVICES AGENDA, 16 OCTOBER 1997**

The transfer of the Home Care Program from the Health Department to the CCAC took place on April 1, 1997. One of the provisions of this transfer was that the existing service provider for obstetrical services would continue their contract with the CCAC for up to an additional year following the transition. The current contract between the Health Department and the Ottawa-Carleton Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) will expire at the end of March, 1998.

The CCAC has recently released a Request for Proposal for Obstetrical Services for an 12 month period commencing April 1, 1998 and the Health Department has been invited to submit a proposal to continue providing these services.

The Request for Proposal process consists of two steps. Step 1 was a pre-qualification process which took place during August and September, 1997 of this year. Step 2 consists of collecting formal bids from a short list of pre-qualified service providers.

The Health Department was successful in passing the pre-qualification phase and is now seeking approval to make a formal bid for services during Step 2 of the Request for Proposal process.

DISCUSSION

Newborns are the most vulnerable members of our community. The provision of obstetrical services to new mothers is essential to ensure that both mothers and infants are not exposed to potentially life-threatening risks in the first few months following the birth of the child.

The Health Department currently offers a three-tier approach to providing services to mothers and infants:

- The CCAC funds the Obstetrical Services Program which provides clinical services to patients who have been discharged from hospital. The nursing services offered through this program allows the client to be discharged earlier from hospital while ensuring that essential care is provided (e.g. dressing for C-sections).
- The Health Department funds its own Post-Partum Program which provides follow-up for all mothers of babies following discharge from a hospital to ensure that no further medical problems arise (this could result in a referral to the CCAC for obstetrical services). Portions of this program fall under the Mandatory Standards established by the Ministry of Health.
- The Health Department is in the process of working with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services to establish a Healthy Babies/Healthy Children Family Visitor Program which will provide non-professional support to new, inexperienced mothers who lack the necessary life skills and community connections to provide proper care for their infants.

The existing obstetrical services program provided by the Health Department offers additional value to new mothers in that the obstetrical nurses currently have full access to the other services offered by the Department that focus on the health of the infant or mother from the pre-natal period to the post-partum period. Examples include: breastfeeding clinics, "You and Your Baby"

clinics, nutrition programs, etc. The nurses can also provide referrals to other programs and services offered by our community partners.

This relationship between the CCAC as contractor and the Health Department as service provider works well at present. Maintaining the service under the Health Department avoids service duplication whereby a separate nurse from the post-partum program is required to contact clients of the obstetrical services program.

Hospitals are continuing to release maternity patients much earlier than they have in the past in order to achieve cost savings under the province's hospital restructuring program. This generates additional clients in both the obstetrical services program and the post-partum program. Keeping the obstetrical services program and the post-partum program under the Health Department would continue to ensure the well-being of all new mothers and infants within Ottawa-Carleton

The Department is seeking approval to participate in Phase 2 of the Request for Proposal. A separate report would follow should the Health Department be the successful bidder for these services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Health Department recovers funds from the CCAC to cover the costs of providing obstetrical services to the clients and funds a portion of this program to cover the services that are provided on behalf of the post-partum program. Early hospital discharge is resulting in a substantial increase in the number of obstetrical services clients referred to the Department by the CCAC as well as an increase in home visits under the Health Department's post-partum program. This trend is expected to continue through the life of the next contract.

If the Health Department is unsuccessful in continuing the contract for obstetrical services for the CCAC, the cost of the post-partum program will increase due to the loss of the cost sharing opportunities with the CCAC on home visits.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

No public consultation was held on this issue.

Approved by
Robert A. Cushman, MD, MBA, FRCPC