



Administrative Report

Office of the Chief, Essex-Windsor EMS

To: Warden McNamara and Members of Essex County Council

From: Bruce Krauter
Chief, Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services

Date: Wednesday, April 06, 2022

Subject: Administering Funding to Operate an International Agri-Food Temporary Foreign Worker Isolation and Recovery Centre

Report #: 2022-0406-EMS-R02-BK

Purpose

To provide Essex County Council information on the historical operation of the International Agri-Food Temporary Foreign Worker (IAFTFW) Isolation and Recovery Centre (IRC). In addition, Administration is seeking approval of County Council to apply for and receive Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) funding to operate and administer the operation of the IAFTFW IRC.

Background

In the Summer of 2020, with the onset of the COVID crisis within the agricultural sector, the City of Windsor was approached to take the lead for the operation and administration of the IAFTFW IRC (IRC), previously managed by the Emergency Medical Assistance Team (EMAT) in collaboration with the Canadian Red Cross (CRC). At the initial onset of the crisis, the City was considered to have the greatest administrative capacity to oversee a complex project that required an immediate response to an emergency.

At the onset of the IRC operation a subgroup of community leaders came together and formed an Agri-food Incident Management System (IMS) Table to maintain the operation of the IRC and to manage the agri-food crisis across the region. The members of the IMS Table were and continue to be;

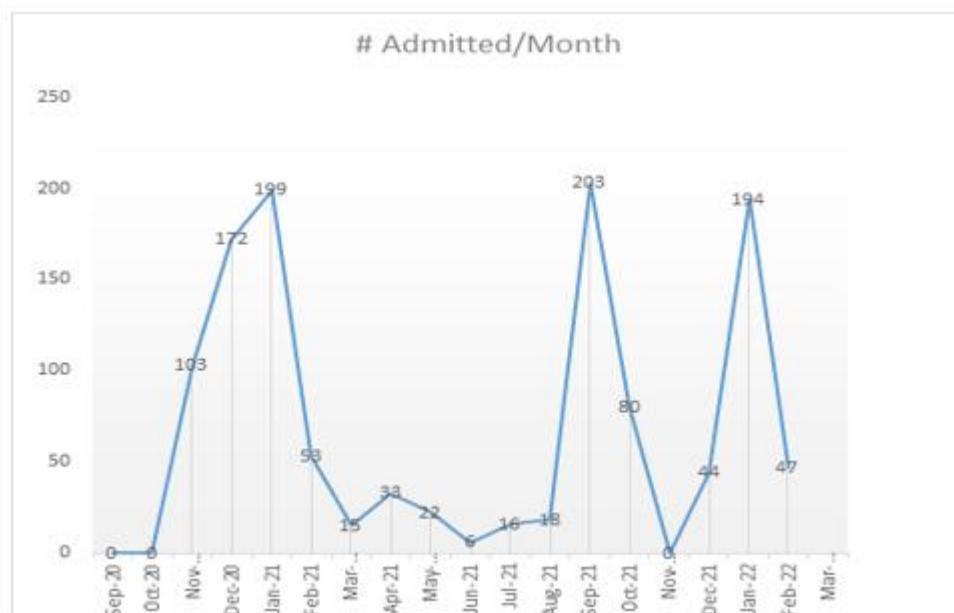
- Windsor Essex County Health Unit

- Essex Windsor EMS
- City of Windsor Social Services
- Windsor Fire and Rescue
- Erie Shores Health Care
- Windsor Regional Hospital
- Canadian Red Cross
- Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers (OGVG)

On an as needed basis the Municipality of Leamington, Town of Kingsville, CMHA and the Mexican Consulate participated in discussions over the past two (2) years. The members of the IMS Table became key partners on the historical and current operation of the IRC.

Over the past two years, the IRC evolved from a crisis response to a stable and successful administrative function. The City of Windsor, in collaboration with the IRC partners, established guidelines, policies, procedures and processes to maintain the continuity of the operation.

Since the summer of 2020 there have been various locations or venues for the IRC due to demand and volume. The success of the operation is the consistency of processes for the operations, the partnerships in operations and the secure funding stream from PHAC. As of March 2020, the IRC has accommodated over 1,200 workers. The graph below reflects the monthly usage of the IRC from September 2020 to March 2022.



Discussion

The City of Windsor has been the administrator of the Safe Voluntary Isolation Sites Program (SVISP) funding, provided through PHAC from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022. PHAC announced in February 2022 that funding would be available for the April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023 fiscal year for the continuance of the IAFTFW IRC. On February 14, 2022 Windsor City Council directed Windsor Administration to complete its role as the administrator of the IRC on June 30, 2022.

The City of Windsor has an amended PHAC agreement extending the timeframe for the 2021/2022 funding until June 30, 2022. This extension will allow a new entity to be identified, apply for the 2022/2023 PHAC funding and transition into the IRC administrator role by July 1, 2022. The PHAC funding currently covers all expenses related to the operations and support of the IRC except medical oversight. Medical support and oversight has and would continue to be under the direction of ESHC, EWEMS and WRH, at no additional cost.

The operation of the IRC can be broken into three (3) components and by the organizations responsible;

1. Administrator: Municipal organization due to PHAC requirements
2. Humanitarian comforts (hotel, food, recreation): Canadian Red Cross
3. Medical oversight: ESHC/WRH/EWEMS

The Administrator receives the funding and arranges a contract with the Canadian Red Cross. Canadian Red Cross then enters into contracts with a hotel and meal provider. Canadian Red Cross also arranges for staff to oversee client support for meals, recreation and support while on site.

Medical oversight completes regular visits during a client stay to complete health checks, manage symptoms and provide any other medical support. This service is under medical directives of WRH and staffing is provided by either ESHC, EWEMS or a combination of both organizations.

The Administrator organizes the operations and maintains all records of attendance and finances. The Canadian Red Cross contract is monitored for performance as well as the client referral and discharges, as directed by WECHU.

The entire operation expenses and staffing is encompassed within the PHAC funding framework. It has been the experience of the City of Windsor and the communication from both PHAC and OMAFRA that all expenses and costing would not fall onto a municipal budget tax base. It is expected that this experience would continue for the 2022/2023 fiscal year.

Although the IRC may currently be unoccupied, it can be expected that over the course of the next year the services would be required to accommodate or isolate agricultural workers. Although the majority of the workers have originated from the areas of Kingsville and Leamington, the international agri-food worker impacts all areas of Windsor and Essex County. From farms to greenhouses, from processing plants to residences, each Municipality, Town or City is touched by this population. The need for a IAFTFW IRC is required and should continue into 2023.

Financial Implications

The current and anticipated PHAC funding agreement would cover all costs and expenses to administer and oversee the operation an IRC.

Consultations

The following persons or organizations have been consulted in the preparation of this report:

- Mike Galloway, Essex County CAO
- Mary Birch, Director Legislative Services/Clerk
- Jeannie Diamond Francis, Manager of Community Services
- Sandra Zwiers, Director of Financial Services/Treasurer
- David Sundin, County of Essex Solicitor
- Jelena Payne, City of Windsor Human and Health Services
- Chief Steven Laforet, Windsor Fire and Rescue
- Mary Ellen Bernard, City of Windsor, Manager, Social Policy and Planning
- OMAFRA
- PHAC

Recommendation

That Essex County Council authorize:

- 1) Essex County Administration to apply for and receive Public Health Agency of Canada PHAC funding to take any and all necessary steps for the County to operate and administer the operation of an International Agri-Food Temporary Farm Worker Isolation and Recovery Centre, including retaining any additional staff and/or subcontractors that may be required; and

- 2) The Warden and the Clerk to execute any necessary applications, documents, and/or agreements to give effect to the authorization to Essex County Administration above.

Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,

Bruce Krauter

Bruce Krauter, Chief, Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services

Concurred With,

Mike Galloway

Mike Galloway, MBA, CMO, Chief Administrative Officer