

March 19, 2021

Re: Enhancing Cooling in Long-Term Care Homes and Infection Prevention and Control Minor Capital Program Funding 2021-22

Dear Long-Term Care Home Licensees:

This letter is further to the recent communication from the Honourable Dr. Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Long-Term Care, informing you of up to \$61,373,400 in new one-time funding for the Infection Prevention and Control Minor Capital Program in 2021-22 (IPAC Minor Capital Program). This program supports long-term care (LTC) homes in completing urgent minor capital upgrades and improvements directly linked to improved infection prevention and control (IPAC) practices for the safety of their residents, staff and families. In 2021-22 the IPAC Minor Capital Program is targeted to ensuring air conditioning systems are in place in LTC homes by summer 2021.

The Ministry of Long-Term Care (ministry) has proposed regulatory amendments that would enhance cooling requirements in LTC homes to improve the safety and comfort of LTC residents. Proposed amendments include a requirement for air conditioning or mechanical cooling in designated cooling areas, a refined regulatory approach that clarifies requirements for licensees to better protect residents from heat-related concerns and specific procedures to protect residents from unacceptably high temperatures. If approved, the proposed amendments are targeted to come into effect on May 15, 2021. In addition, it is strongly encouraged that air conditioning or mechanical cooling be operational in all common areas and residents' rooms by summer 2021.

Infrastructure Ontario Support

Infrastructure Ontario (IO) has been engaged by the ministry to provide technical expertise and air conditioning/mechanical cooling options for LTC homes. IO and its service providers are coordinating a supply chain of air conditioning/mechanical cooling units that will be available for delivery and installation prior to the 2021 summer season. The sourcing information will include options for cooling solutions and established benchmark pricing. A formal communication regarding the various air conditioning/mechanical cooling options and pricing will be distributed to LTC homes via the MLTC portal. LTC homes can email IOLTCSupport@cbre.com for questions and information regarding access to sourcing and contact information of trusted industry suppliers.

Funding Approach

Funding under the IPAC-Minor Capital Program will be a one-time fund effective from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 and received as a single payment. All homes will receive a base allocation of \$50,000 as well as a per-bed allotment. The per-bed allotment will provide older homes with a higher amount of support to address the minor capital of older facilities. As such, older homes (with bed classifications of B, C or upgraded D) will receive \$600 per bed, and newer homes (with bed classifications of New, A, or D-retrofit) will receive \$254 per bed.

If a LTC home has interim/temporary beds and it also has B, C or D-upgraded bed classifications, each of the interim/temporary bed will receive \$600; if a LTC home has interim/temporary beds and it also has New, A bed or D-retrofit classifications, each of the interim/temporary bed will receive \$254.

The following examples demonstrate how the IPAC-minor capital funding allocations are calculated:

Home A: 50 beds with B, C or D-upgraded bed classifications:

- \$50,000 base + \$30,000 (50 beds x \$600/bed) = **\$80,000**

Home B: 50 beds with New or A bed classifications:

- \$50,000 base + \$12,700 (50 beds x \$254/bed) = **\$62,700**

Expenditure Eligibility Criteria

Details of the expenditure eligibility criteria, as well as terms and conditions for the IPAC-Minor Capital program for the April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 funding year are set out below.

This letter constitutes the Applicable Ministry Policy Document in respect of the IPAC-Minor Capital program for the April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 funding year under Schedule A of the Letter of Agreement for Ministry Direct Funding to Long-Term Care Homes (Direct Funding Agreement, or DFA) between each long-term care operator and the ministry.

Eligible IPAC-Minor Capital expenditures are outlined in the following list:

1. Minor Adjustments to Support Distancing:

- Renovations to support improved distancing of residents (e.g., partitions, doors, etc.).

2. Ventilation/AC Systems:

- Assessments, repairs, upgrades and filters for HVAC systems to improve air quality, remove/prevent the development of mold, and enhance infection control. This includes expenditures for purchasing, installing, upgrading, or repairing air conditioning (including all similar mechanical cooling systems) in common areas, including designated cooling areas, and in resident rooms.

3. Furnishings/Small Equipment:

- Repairs to and/or replacement of damaged furniture and equipment, which can be difficult to adequately clean/sanitize.

4. Water systems/Plumbing:

- Repairs to plumbing to ensure hot water and cleaning chemical supply for improved sanitation.

5. Building envelope, concrete repairs:

- Room modifications to rooms to enhance physical distancing and increase resident safety.

6. Cleaning/Sanitation supplies:

- Replacing steam cleaners, floor machines, carpet cleaners and other cleaning equipment in poor state of repair.

7. Other expenditures:

- Expenditures designed to help equip homes to prevent the spread of infection may be considered at the ministry's discretion through requests submitted to ltc.info@ontario.ca.

To support the government's air conditioning priority for LTC homes, funding under the IPAC-Minor Capital program for the April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 funding year is subject to the following additional condition:

Additional Condition for 21/22 Funding Year: For homes that do not have air conditioning (including all similar mechanical cooling systems) serving all common areas and resident rooms, funding under the IPAC-Minor Capital Program for the April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 funding year may be used only toward purchasing, installing, upgrading or repairing air conditioning to serve such areas, unless structural limitations prevent it. Only when all common areas and resident rooms in the home are served by air conditioning may funding under the IPAC-Minor Capital Program for the 2021-22 funding year be used for other eligible IPAC-Minor Capital expenditures as set out above. "Common areas" generally include all resident accessible areas in the home (such as a library, TV lounge, lobby, recreational rooms, dining areas, etc.) but do not include hallways, stairwells, elevators, public access washrooms. "Resident rooms" refer to rooms with one or more resident beds. This additional condition applies except where otherwise permitted in writing by the ministry.

Eligibility, Reporting and Accountability

A survey on the current state of cooling in LTC homes was recently sent to the sector in March 2021. The survey results will identify the homes that do not have cooling in common areas and/or resident rooms. A follow-up survey will be administered in late May 2021 (once the amendments to the regulation come into effect, subject to applicable approvals) to homes that reported that they do not have full air conditioning or mechanical cooling systems in the March 2021 survey. This follow-up survey will provide a status of cooling in LTC homes prior to summer 2021.

The ministry will also be collecting information near the end of the fiscal year on the use of funds such as the amount of funding spent, the amount of funding used specifically for mechanical cooling in common areas and resident rooms, and on improvements of the use of cooling systems. Homes will also be asked to provide attestations to the ministry on the use of the IPAC-Minor Capital fund for cooling in common areas and resident rooms with any exceptions approved by the ministry.

Eligible long-term care homes are those homes whose licensee is party to a Letter of Agreement for Ministry Direct Funding to Long-Term Care Homes (DFA) with the Ministry of Long-Term Care.

Long-Term Care Licensees must report expenditures pertaining to their IPAC-Minor Capital expenses on a separate line in Section I of the licensee's audited Long-Term Care Home Annual Report for a defined 12-month period, in accordance with the form and manner set out in the *"Long-Term Care Home Annual Report Technical Instructions and Guidelines"*.

Reporting of expenditures will be separate for the periods April 1 – December 31 2021 and January 1 – March 31 2022. The sum of the expenditures reported for both periods in LTCH Annual Reports will be reconciled against the funding for the fiscal year and any unspent funds in 2021-22 will be recovered as part of the subsequent reconciliation.

As a reminder, it is the responsibility of each operator to meet the requirements found in O. Reg 79/10 and, in particular, section 305 and the corresponding "Operator Guidelines" that informs requirements for carrying out any alterations, renovations or other work that may substantially disturb or inconvenience residents of the home, together with applicable requirements under any other relevant legislation, agreements or policies.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact the ministry by e-mail at LTC.Info@ontario.ca.

Thank you for your continued service and dedication in support of our government's commitment to transforming long-term care in Ontario, particularly during this unprecedented time, as we work together to implement enhanced measures to increase the comfort of residents and staff in time for the summer months.

Sincerely,



Sheila Bristo
Assistant Deputy Minister
Long-Term Care Operations Division
Ministry of Long-Term Care

C:

Richard Steele, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Long-Term Care
Donna Duncan, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Long-Term Care Home Association
Lisa Levin, Chief Executive Officer, Advantage Ontario
Monika Turner, Director of Policy, Association of Municipalities Ontario
Donna Cripps, Transitional Regional Lead (Central), Ontario Health
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