

THE CORPORATION OF THE  
**CITY OF WHITE ROCK**  
CORPORATE REPORT



**DATE:** May 10, 2021

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Guillermo Ferrero, Chief Administrative Officer

**SUBJECT:** Regional Model for Mobile Crisis Response Car Program and Proposed Charges for RCMP Attendance at Hospitals

---

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT Council endorse:

1. The following resolutions a) and b) and that they be sent to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) to submit a request for the province to provide a Regional Model Mobile Crises Response Car Program and enable invoicing for required officer attendance at hospitals in accordance with the *Mental Health Act* for consideration:

**a) REQUEST FOR A REGIONAL MODEL FOR MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE CAR PROGRAM** CITY OF WHITE ROCK (Sponsor)

WHEREAS a Mobile Crisis Response Car Program has been in place for some municipalities for decades and has been well received;

AND WHEREAS an integrated robust health care regional model would have value, eliminating jurisdictional policy lines (based on municipal boundaries) for a regional model that follows Health Authority boundaries:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the province to provide an integrated health care regional model for a Mobile Crisis Response Car Program.

**b) PROPOSED CHARGES TO HEALTH AUTHORITIES FOR RCMP ATTENDANCE AT HOSPITALS** CITY OF WHITE ROCK (Sponsor)

WHEREAS the RCMP are required under the *Mental Health Act* (MHA) to remain at the hospital with a person that has been apprehended under the MHA until they can be presented to a physician;

AND WHEREAS wait times can range from two and one-half (2.5) hours to six (6) hours during which time a person suffering from a mental health condition is in the custody of the police, contributing to further stigmatization, and preventing the police officer from taking any other emergency calls for the provision of their services:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the province to endorse a provision where the municipalities can invoice the Health Authority for wait times more than 30 minutes, like the BC Ambulance Services (in 15-minute increments over 30 minutes).

2. Correspondence to the Province of British Columbia and the Health Authorities requesting the following:
    - i. The funding / expansion of the Health Authorities nurse portion of a Mobile Crisis Response Car Program (similar to the “Car 67” utilized by the City of Surrey) to White Rock and other Municipalities in need; and
    - ii. Provide authorization for invoicing in any instance where RCMP officers are required to wait over 30 minutes to present an apprehended / distressed person to a physician (in accordance with the *Mental Health Act*).
  3. The City of White Rock will send a letter to UBCM and the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA) seeking their support, including a resolution of support, from their members on the two (2) resolutions; and
  4. The City of White Rock will send a letter to all Metro Vancouver Municipalities seeking their support on the two (2) resolutions.
- 

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Mobile Crisis Response Car Program (Surrey’s Car 67 Program)**

The City is requesting the provincial government to expand their funding for an integrated robust regional health care model for a Mobile Crisis Response Car Program. The City of Surrey has a program (“Car 67”) that addresses this need for their municipality that does not expand past their municipal boundary.

The program model is comprised of a police officer and a mental health practitioner team as there is often a need for nursing services to be provided and assigned when patients/ persons in distress or in need of medical care are brought to the attention of the RCMP and hospitalization is required. Currently, the *Mental Health Authority* (MHA) requires the police to remain in attendance at a hospital with the person in need until they are in the care of a physician. A Regional Mobile Crisis Response Car Program would be more effective for both the police and health care authorities as many apprehensions could be avoided if a mental health practitioner was available to conduct an on scene assessment, as it would often avoid the need to defer to the emergency powers under the MHA.

### **Billing for Officer Waits at Hospitals on MHA Apprehensions**

The City is requesting a further consideration by the province to permit municipalities to charge the Health Authorities in circumstances when an officer is required to remain at the hospital with an individual in need where it was determined that the care of a physician in accordance with the MHA was required.

In response to often long hospital wait times, whereby an officer is unable to attend to other duties as a result, it is requested that billing for this service be permitted for any time exceeding 30 minutes, similar to the BC Ambulance Services (in 15-minute increments over 30 minutes).

## **INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

Community safety is a priority for the City of White Rock. The City of White Rock contracts with the Province of British Columbia for the provision of RCMP police services.

The White Rock RCMP responds to approximately 500 calls for service annually where mental health is the primary factor. Approximately 190 of these calls annually are for assessments under

the MHA and in approximately 130 of these calls a person is apprehended under the MHA to be transported to the hospital. Police are required under the MHA to remain at the hospital with the person until they can be presented to a physician. Wait times at hospitals can range from two and one-half (2.5) to six (6) hours during which time a person suffering from a mental health condition is in the custody of police. While in attendance with the person in need, the officer is precluded from taking any other emergency calls for the provision of their services.

It is further noted that there is a stigmatization and a perception of criminalization when a person is in police custody, and in many circumstances, this is not the case, as they are there for mental health needs and not criminal misconduct.

The Province of BC, the Fraser Health Authority (FHA) and the Surrey RCMP provide a “Car 67” program whereby a Mobile Crises Response Unit provides advanced crisis intervention, risk assessments and referrals to mental health and/ or victim services to either divert or pre-screen persons who are in distress. It is understood that the “Car 67” concept would require additional resources in order to cover White Rock and other Municipalities facing such challenges.

This program should it be expanded regionally, would reduce the number of persons being required to be taken to the hospital, which in turn will provide better care for the person in need and assist to reduce overburdened hospital emergency rooms.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The City of White Rock would contribute financially and/or with a rotational police resource, to staff the car for this program.

An example as to how the White Rock RCMP are currently impacted by this issue, with approximately 130 calls related to persons experiencing mental health issues, at an average of 4 hours of an officer’s time required per call, 520 hours equates to 43 days (12 hr./shift).

With a regional program there will still be circumstances where police officers are required to remain with a person in need until they are in the care of a physician. The ability to charge for the time an officer is required to remain at the hospital would provide some funding to help alleviate staff workload / backlog.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

### **COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

### **INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS**

Endorsed by the White Rock RCMP.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

Community: Manage the delivery of City Services efficiently and effectively.

**OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES**

The following options are available for Council consideration:

**Regional Mobile Crisis Response Cars Program**

1. Council endorse supporting a request to the province to provide an integrated health care regional model for a Mobile Crisis Response Car Program.

**Billing for Officer Waits at Hospitals on MHA Apprehensions**

2. Council endorse supporting a request to the province to permit the billing of the FHA/ Health Authorities for wait times by police longer than 30 minutes while with apprehended or persons in need as required by the MHA until they are in the care of a physician, similar to the BC Ambulance Services (in 15-minute increments over 30 minutes).
3. Council receive the information without further action.

**CONCLUSION**

Community safety is a priority for the City of White Rock. The Province of BC, FHA and the Surrey RCMP deliver a “Car 67” program whereby a Mobile Crises Response Unit provides advanced crisis intervention, risk assessments and referrals to mental health and/ or victim services to either divert or pre-screen persons who are in distress. The “Car 67” program requires additional resources to cover White Rock and other Municipalities facing increased challenges. A Regional program that crosses over municipal boundaries would be beneficial.

In circumstances when officers are required to wait with persons in need, under the MHA, for any time longer than 30 minutes, a provision whereby municipalities can bill for that time, would be fair and appropriate, as they are taken away from other emergency services duties. The billing would be a similar practice to the BC Ambulance Services (in 15-minute increments over 30 minutes). Having the ability to bill for this time, would produce funding to alleviate some workload / backlog caused by an officer inability to perform other duties.

Respectfully submitted,



Guillermo Ferrero  
Chief Administrative Officer