

Staff Report for Decision

DATE OF MEETING 2024-MAY-15

AUTHORED BY KATHY GONZALES, MANAGER, AQUATICS
DARCIE OSBORNE, DIRECTOR RECREATION & CULTURE

SUBJECT COMMUNITY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT GRANTS SOCIAL
PRESCRIBING PILOT

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To obtain Council approval for a Community Program Development Grant (the “Grant”).

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve the request from the Nanaimo Division of Family Practice for a Community Program Development Grant in the amount of \$6,120 to assist in funding their Social Prescribing pilot program.

BACKGROUND

The intent of the Community Program Development Grant is to assist community groups in developing new or expanded programs that provide increased opportunities for residents to participate and connect with community, and to enhance residents’ exposure to a variety of experiences.

The Grant is intended as seed funding to help get new programs and events off the ground, or to expand existing programs with the hope that the programs become self-sustaining. It is not intended to be long-term operational funding or funding for capital expenditures. A total budget of \$15,000 is available through this fund with applications accepted annually by deadlines of November 1 for spring/summer programs, and May 1 for fall/winter programs, or as funds remain available. This is the first application for 2024 funds that meets the Grant criteria and no funds have been allocated to date.

DISCUSSION

Social Prescribing initiated in the UK and is a means for health and community practitioners to come together and identify when a person has health-related social needs. Social prescribing connects the individual to non-clinical supports and services within the community by co-producing a social prescription. The prescription provides guidance and introduction to social activities, ultimately leading the individual down the path to improved health and wellbeing while strengthening community connections.

Recreation and Culture staff have been working with Nanaimo Division of Family Practice, Island Health and Vancouver Island University to co-produce a social prescribing pilot in Nanaimo. This pilot project is multi disciplinary and aligns with the City of Nanaimo’s upstream approach to community safety and wellbeing. The intent is to increase wellness and connection for seniors who have been experiencing lack of social interaction and / or isolation.

The program will utilise two link workers (Recreation Therapists), who will base out of Bowen Park Complex (Harbour City Seniors), to connect seniors with a social prescription provided by a medical practitioner to community / recreation based social activities.

Nanaimo Division of Family Practice and Island Health have hired and funded one link worker and the other was hired by Nanaimo Family Life and funded by United Way.

The application from the Division of Family Practice for the Social Prescribing pilot program (Attachment A) was reviewed by staff and successfully meets all evaluation criteria for the Community Program Development Grant (Attachment B). The application was received prior to the acceptance deadline of 2024-MAY-01 for the intake period for 2024 Fall/Winter programs.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Each year, a total of \$15,000 is allotted for the Community Program Development Grant fund. This is the first application to successfully meet the criteria for 2024 funds thus far.

ORGANIZATION	PROGRAM	REQUEST	RECOMMENDED
Nanaimo Division of Family Practice	Social Prescribing	\$6,120	\$6,120
Total Available			\$8,880 (will remain in grant fund)

OPTIONS

- That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve the request from the Nanaimo Division of Family Practice for a Community Program Development Grant in the amount of \$6,210 to assist in funding the Social Prescribing pilot program.
 - The advantages of this option: Aligns with City Plan: Nanaimo Reimagined C3.1.10 as the program meets the goal of helping isolated seniors participate in recreation programs for social and physical benefits.
 - The disadvantages of this option: None identified.
 - Financial Implications: A balance of \$8,880 would remain for funding future Community Program Development Grant applications.
- That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council deny the Community Program Development Grant application from the Nanaimo Division of Family Practice.
 - The advantages of this option: The requested grant funds of \$6,120 would remain available for a future Grant application.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Isolated seniors may not be able to access recreation services to support their physical and mental health.
 - Financial Implications: The balance of \$15,000 would remain for future Community Program Development Grant application funding for the remainder of 2024. |

SUMMARY POINTS

- Funding of \$15,000 is allocated yearly for Community Program Development Grants.

- The application from the Nanaimo Division of Family Practice to assist with funding the Social Prescribing Program successfully meets the Grant criteria.
- A balance of \$8,880 would remain in the 2024 Community Program Development Grant fund if the application is approved

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A: Nanaimo Division of Family Practice Grant Application

ATTACHMENT B: Nanaimo Division of Family Practice Grant Evaluation Checklist

Submitted by:

Kathy Gonzales
Manager, Aquatics

Concurrence by:

Darcie Osborne
Director, Recreation & Culture

Wendy Fulla
Director, Finance

Laura Mercer
General Manager, Corporate Services

Richard Harding
General Manager Community Services,
Deputy CAO

Dale Lindsay
CAO