



July 23, 2024

TO: Public Health Agency of Canada
Intersectional Action Fund
cgc.solicitations-csc@phac-aspc.gc.ca

RE: Performing Arts Lodge, Toronto: funding application for StayWell Project

To Whom It May Concern,

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association is pleased to offer this letter of support for PAL Toronto's request for funding to study how its current health service coordination model can complement and/or extend mechanisms for delivering various health services to horizontal Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) in the St. Lawrence neighbourhood in downtown Toronto.

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association (SLNA) is a non-profit Association of residents in the St. Lawrence area of the City of Toronto, an area bounded by Queen Street East south to the rail corridor and from Yonge Street east to Parliament Street, which has served the neighbourhood and its over 35,000 residents since 1983.

St. Lawrence is a mixed-income, ethnically diverse residential and commercial community adjoining the Central Business District and is home to a growing number of residential buildings defined as vertical NORCs, one of which is PAL Toronto. A number of these vertical NORCs are in various stages of developing and delivering internal NORC specific programs and services to their individual residents. A few of the more advanced are beginning to explore how to add more external services to their offerings, in particular medical services.

It is hoped that the StayWell Project proposed by PAL Toronto will lead to an important conclusion, namely that an existing vertical health services model (such as PAL Toronto's) can successfully be scaled horizontally in a high density and diverse neighbourhood. In addition, it is anticipated that the study will provide direction for developing best practices for health service coordination in horizontal NORCs, leading to improved community health and well-being through informed policy, cooperation and coordinated action, all at lower overall cost.

A research project such as is being proposed by PAL Toronto can bring numerous additional benefits to the St. Lawrence community – home to a high percentage of seniors – and by extension to similar communities in other parts of the City and beyond. Benefits such as:

1. **Enhancing equity and community engagement:** the results of surveys on wellbeing and evaluation processes can strengthen equity and diversity considerations in policy and service development, ensuring that specific health needs of NORC residents can be identified and addressed, promoting more equitable overall community health;

2. **Building and strengthening partnerships:** developing common objectives, roles, responsibilities among intersectoral partners using PAL's existing service delivery model as a framework, together with collaborative reporting and evaluation processes using UHN's research framework supports coordinated action; collaboration which can address issues faced more broadly by NORC communities and lead to improved health outcomes through better service integration and resource allocation;
3. **Completing representative exploratory studies:** conducting exploratory studies and reporting on potential healthy public policies in the St Lawrence Neighbourhood can lead to significant positive health implications on a broader scale. A proactive approach can inform policy decisions, leading to healthier community environments and more "preventive" approaches.

SLNA thanks PAL Toronto for its initiative in defining this Project and the resulting potential opportunity for our community.

The SLNA's strength is its voice. An advocate for responsible development and preservation of heritage, the SLNA promotes a sense of community, encourages participation in events and celebrations and champions our neighbourhood's interests by building relationships with local businesses, institutions and with all levels of government.

The Board of Directors of SLNA believes that this project can result in an acceleration of service definition and delivery to NORCs in the neighbourhood, whole heartedly endorses PAL Toronto's request for funding and will be most appreciative of a favourable response from the Public Health Agency of Canada's Intersectional Action Fund.

Sincerely,



p.p.

Board of Directors
St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association

cc: PAL Toronto:
David Plant

NORC Innovation Centre at UHN:
Jen Recknagel

SLNA Board of Directors:

Ms. Loretta Allen
Mr. S. Linton

Ms. N Fung
Ms. S. McMillan

Mr. K. Jackson
Ms. T. Tenenbaum