



REPORT TO COUNCIL

To: **Mayor and Councillors**

Subject: Support for Implementation of a Universal Public
National Pharmacare Program

File #: 0400.40

Doc #:

From: Kelly Kenney
Corporate Officer

Date: February 26, 2020

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT City Council direct staff to send a letter to the Minister of Health Canada calling on the Federal Government to work with the provinces and territories to develop and implement a Universal Public National Pharmacare program.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of any implications to the City in supporting the call from the City of Port Moody for implementation by the Federal Government of a Universal Public National Pharmacare Program.

POLICY:

N/A

COMMENTS/ANALYSIS:

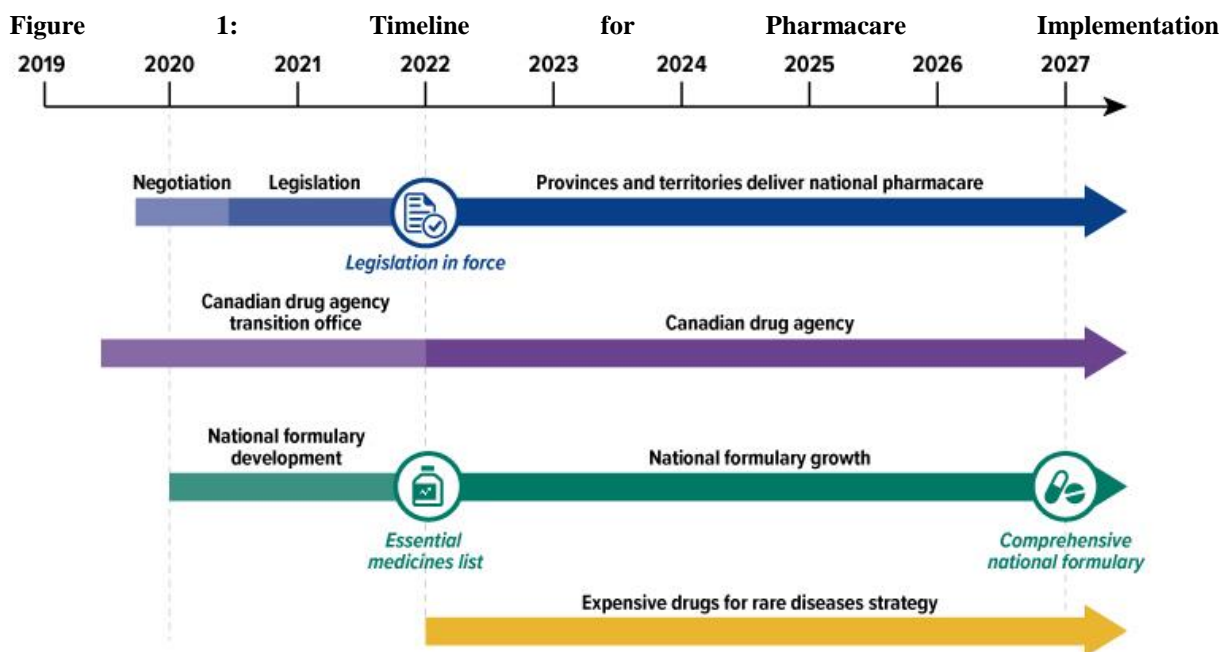
At its February 24, 2020 Regular Council meeting, Council considered correspondence from the City of Port Moody requesting the City of Langley support their call for the Federal Government to work with the provinces and territories to develop and implement a Universal Public National Pharmacare Program by writing to the Minister of Health in this regard (Attachment 1).

Council subsequently passed the following resolution:

THAT the request from the Mayor of the City of Port Moody that the City of Langley support Port Moody's call to the Federal Government to work with the provinces and territories to develop and implement a Universal Public National Pharmacare program be referred to staff to investigate and report back to Council on any implications to the City in supporting the call for this program.

Staff researched the origins of the resolution prepared by the City of Port Moody and determined that it was based on a previous resolution submitted by the City of Victoria to the 2016 UBCM Convention which was subsequently endorsed by the UBCM. The Resolution and the Provincial Response are included as attachment 2 to this report.

In 2018, the Federal Government launched the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare, which spent 12 months studying Canadian and international models of pharmacare and published its final report in June 2019. The Council concluded that the best plan for Canada is to organize prescription drug coverage the way universal health care is set up and recommended the federal government work with provincial and territorial governments and stakeholders to establish universal, single-payer, public pharmacare in Canada. The Council proposed a stepwise approach to implementation and provided the following timeline:



A timeline beginning in 2019 and extending to 2027 that illustrates the phased approach of pharmacare. There are four arrows representing the different aspects of pharmacare that will evolve over time.

- *The first arrow represents the delivery of national pharmacare. Between the end of 2019 and mid-2020, the federal and provincial/territorial governments would negotiate various aspects of pharmacare. Then, from mid-2020 to 2022, legislation would be drafted. Legislation would be introduced in 2022.*
- *From 2022 onwards, provinces and territories would deliver national pharmacare based on the results of the negotiations and legislation.*
- *The second arrow shows development of the Canadian drug agency. From 2019 to 2022, there would be a Canadian drug agency transition office. From 2022 onwards, the Canadian drug agency would be fully established.*
- *The third arrow shows formulary development and growth. From 2020 to 2022, a national formulary would be developed. In 2022, an essential medicines list would be established. From 2022 to 2027, the national formulary would grow. In 2027, a comprehensive national formulary would be completed.*
- *The final arrow shows a national strategy for expensive drugs for rare diseases, starting in 2022 onwards.*

Given the timeline indicated, it would appear that the first phase of implementation hasn't yet been initiated, which would appear to be the impetus for the City of Port Moody's resolution urging the Federal Government to make implementation of this program a priority and to initiate phase 1 of the proposed implementation plan.

The City of Port Moody's resolution lists several benefits to be derived by municipalities either directly or indirectly by having a National Pharmacare Program, including;

- would lower costs to businesses by over \$8 billion per year, providing Canadian companies competitive advantages in international trade; these gains can be achieved with little or no increase in public investment;
- municipal government expenses for employee benefits would be significantly reduced by a National Pharmacare Program;
- national prescription drug formulary would support better quality prescribing, including reducing dangerous and inappropriate prescribing to Canadian seniors.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the City supports the City of Port Moody's request to write to the Minister of Health Canada calling on the Federal Government to work with the provinces and territories to develop and implement a Universal Public National Pharmacare program.

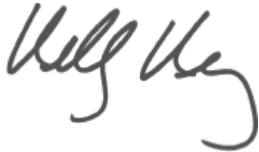
BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES:

Receive for information the correspondence dated February 4, 2020 from the City of Port Moody regarding the request to support their call for the Federal Government to implement a Universal Public National Pharmacare Program.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kelly Kenney
Corporate Officer

Attachments:

1. Correspondence from City of Port Moody dated February 4, 2020
2. 2016 UBCM Resolution and Response from Province – National Pharmacare Program

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S COMMENTS:

I support the recommendation.



Francis Cheung, P. Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer