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Season's Greetings



It is our hope that this newsletter finds all of you enjoying the Holiday Season with your families and friends. We wish you good health and happiness and thank you for your support over this past year.

The year 2002 was a year of accomplishments, and the year 2003 promises to be a year of positive changes. Our staff will continue to work hard to ensure good service to all residents within our housing communities.

In closing I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a very Happy Holiday on behalf of the staff.



Sylvia Patterson
Director of Housing and
Residential Services

Energy Rebate - Household Appliances

The Ministry of Finance is offering a program to claim a Retail Sales Tax rebate on some new household appliances (e.g. refrigerators, washers) purchased after November 25, 2002. The rebate applies to appliances that are purchased, rented or leased.

You can find out more program information through the Ministry's web site www.trd.fin.gov.on.ca or by calling 1-800-263-7965. ❖

Update of Activities

With one full year of program administration "under our belts", it's probably fair to say we have all been getting familiar with the new relationship.

With advice from provider's, we have covered a lot of significant and new ground such as:

- ▶ Service Agreement
- ▶ Local Policies - Absence from Unit
- Internal Review
- ▶ Wait List software development and installation
- ▶ Environmental mould training
- ▶ RGI calculation training and manual development
- ▶ Social Housing Rent Supplement Agreement

In 2003 there will be a number of other areas that we want to pursue or resolve:

- ▶ Occupancy Standards policy
- ▶ In-situ Market Rent Household policy
- ▶ More RGI training and support
- ▶ Technical support options to providers
- ▶ On-line Wait List options
- ▶ New and Improved Housing Directory
- ▶ Asset Limit policy

We know there is a lot of work ahead and 2003 promises to be as active as 2002 was.

We appreciate that many providers are concerned about the uncertainty surrounding the Province's new funding model. Be assured that providers required to use the new model will have the opportunity to review and discuss the funding impact before any decisions are made. It is in our mutual interest to ensure the new model works for all. ❖

Update on Benchmarks and Funding Levels

Benchmark operating costs and revenues continue to be reviewed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) and are scheduled to be released to Service Managers in the spring of 2003. With the uncertainty of the impact on housing providers, we encourage all housing providers to operate within their current funded operating costs and to consider any impact the implementation of benchmarks might have.

Once benchmarks have been determined, the Regional Municipality of York will provide training and manuals on the new funding formula. In the meantime, the 2002 and 2003 operating subsidies will be considered interim benchmarks and the subsidies are reworked by the Region into the new funding formula as required in the *Social Housing Reform Act 2000*. ❖

Capital Reserve Investment Program

Legislation requires most housing providers to participate in the capital reserve fund investment program. Federal unilateral providers that are exempt from mandatory participation may volunteer to take part. To help inform housing providers about this investment program, the Social Housing Services Corporation (SHSC) is conducting information sessions across the province. During the December session in York Region, SHSC announced that the launch date is anticipated for early January 2003 and an information package will be issued to housing providers prior to the launch.

Thank you to those providers who attended the session. ❖

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