



# **Corporate** NO: R088

# **Report** COUNCIL DATE: April 23, 2001

## **REGULAR COUNCIL**

**TO: Mayor & Council** DATE: **April 11, 2001**

**FROM: City Solicitor** FILE: **0023-13680**  
**0023-001; 8000-001**

**SUBJECT: Regulation of Pharmacies Dispensing Methadone**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council:

1. Approve the amendments to Surrey Business License By-law, 1999, No. 13680 attached as Appendix "A" to this report (the "Proposed Amendments"); and
2. Instruct the City Clerk to prepare and introduce a by-law incorporating the Proposed Amendments.

## **INTENT**

The purpose of this report is to provide for Council's consideration, amendments dealing with the dispensing of methadone by pharmacies.

## **DISCUSSION**

At its meeting of February 26, 2001, Council requested that the Mayor write a letter to the Provincial Ministry of Health, Provincial Ministry of Children and Families and the College of Pharmacists addressing their concerns regarding the dispensing of methadone and requesting that the Pharmacists Code of Ethics be reviewed and changed to discontinue the practice of pharmacists giving cash rebates to their methadone prescription clients. Council also requested that the Surrey Business License By-law, 1999, No. 13680 (the "Business License By-law") be amended to prohibit the giving of cash rebates to methadone prescription clients.

The Proposed Amendments incorporate the amendments requested by Council.

We also advise that on March 28, 2001 Pharmacare announced the introduction of a new methadone maintenance payment program. Effective May 1, pharmacies dispensing methadone will have the option of enrolling in a new payment program for the drug. Under the terms of the program, participating pharmacies must agree to bill patients only the amounts compensated by Pharmacare and to offer clients no cash incentives or other inducements. However, pharmacies have the option of not participating in this new payment program. Therefore, it is recommended that the Proposed Amendments be adopted to regulate all pharmacies, regardless of whether they choose to participate in Pharmacare's new methadone maintenance payment program.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Proposed Amendments prohibit pharmacies from offering clients a cash incentive or other inducement for dispensing methadone.

**CRAIG MacFARLANE**

City Solicitor

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