



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2016 January 21

COLUMBIA SPORTSWEAR DONATIONS

Recommendation

It is recommended that Report No. 005-16 re “Columbia Sportswear donations” be received for information.

Key Points

- Columbia Sportswear Canada donated large amounts of surplus clothing to the MLHU.
- Some items required minor repairs and cleaning, which was covered by MLHU.
- The Emergency Management program plans to continue to support this extraordinary opportunity to clothe newcomers and at-risk clients.

Background

In 2015, the MLHU was approached by partners at Middlesex-London Emergency Medical Services (M-L EMS) to assist in the distribution of Columbia Sportswear Canada’s generous donation of clothing and footwear.

These items are deemed surplus by Columbia Sportswear, and may be season ends, returns, damaged goods, mislabeled or otherwise gently used.

Since the health unit’s programs and services assist the citizens of Middlesex County and the City of London who are in need, and that MLHU is well connected to other social support services, it was a logical fit. MLHU staff supports new immigrants, single parents and families with young children where the annual income may not ever allow them the luxuries of new coats or boots.

In the spring and fall, the CERV team (Community Emergency Response Volunteers) sorted and distributed approximately 500 fleece sweaters, 350 coats, 100 pairs of boots and numerous other clothing items. The Health Unit paid two newcomers to repair 75 zippers on coats and had to dry-clean 6 coats, which altogether cost about \$800.00. Attached as [Appendix A](#) is a photo of the materials and the set-up for distribution.

In addition to supporting some at-risk clients, MLHU also provided much needed items to:

- 1) Clients of the Social Services Department at Middlesex County
- 2) The Salvation Army for the Night-time street outreach program
- 3) Single boots were donated to Bio Ped for their amputee support program at Parkwood Hospital
- 4) St. Michaels Elementary and Roosevelt Public Schools received coats for many immigrant children
- 5) Disabled male residents in a Public Guardian/Trustee group home in Strathroy received coats, fleece and boots each

Columbia has another 40 large boxes of items to donate to MLHU and will likely have more in the future. This is an extraordinary opportunity to support people of this region who are touched by poverty.

Next Steps

MLHU will continue to cover the minor costs associated with this exercise, to a maximum of \$2,000.00 per year, using existing program dollars.

This report was prepared by Patricia Simone, Emergency Manager.



Christopher Mackie, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health