

# Plan in works to provide better addiction services

By **HOWARD MOZEL**  
Special to *The Champion*

Access to addiction treatment programs is about to improve dramatically if the Halton-Peel District Health Council has its way.

In its just-released 'Halton-Peel Addiction Treatment Plan for Integrated Services', the group advocates several initiatives to better allow individuals entry into programs in order for them to receive help expeditiously.

According to health council senior planner Ron Wray, the streamlining would include the creation of a toll-free line as a single point of entry to ensure those in need are "plugged directly" into the system. An immediate assessment could then be carried out followed by routing to the most appropriate program.

"You can make a phone call from Toronto to reserve a hotel in Hong Kong through a call centre in New Brunswick," said Oakville Mayor Ann Mulvale, chair of the health council addiction committee. "While meeting the needs of a person with an addiction problem is obviously more challenging than booking a room, the bottom line should be the same — good customer service."

District health councils across Ontario were asked by the Ministry of Health last year to develop local plans for re-organizing services. The resulting local plan reported that in general, funding was being allocated where it's best needed. Problems were found, however, with how people are able to access and move between programs. It found that access is especially problematic for the homeless, seniors, ethno-cultural communities and those with histories of sexual/physical abuse and mental illness.

"Former clients and health and social professionals told us that it's difficult enough facing up to an addiction problem without being bounced around or refused service," said Mr. Wray, adding that Halton's programs were more integrated than those in Peel.

Those with concurrent disorders — mental illness and substance abuse for example — may be in parallel programs when a fully integrated approach is far more effective, said Mr. Wray.

"This creates a more seamless intervention," he said. The health council plan also calls for the development of neighbourhood teams with active outreach services to be placed in each of Halton-Peel's seven municipalities. The ensuing creation of common policies and approaches would help make sure clients

access the most effective services. The 1-800 line, for instance, would link callers directly to the appropriate team.

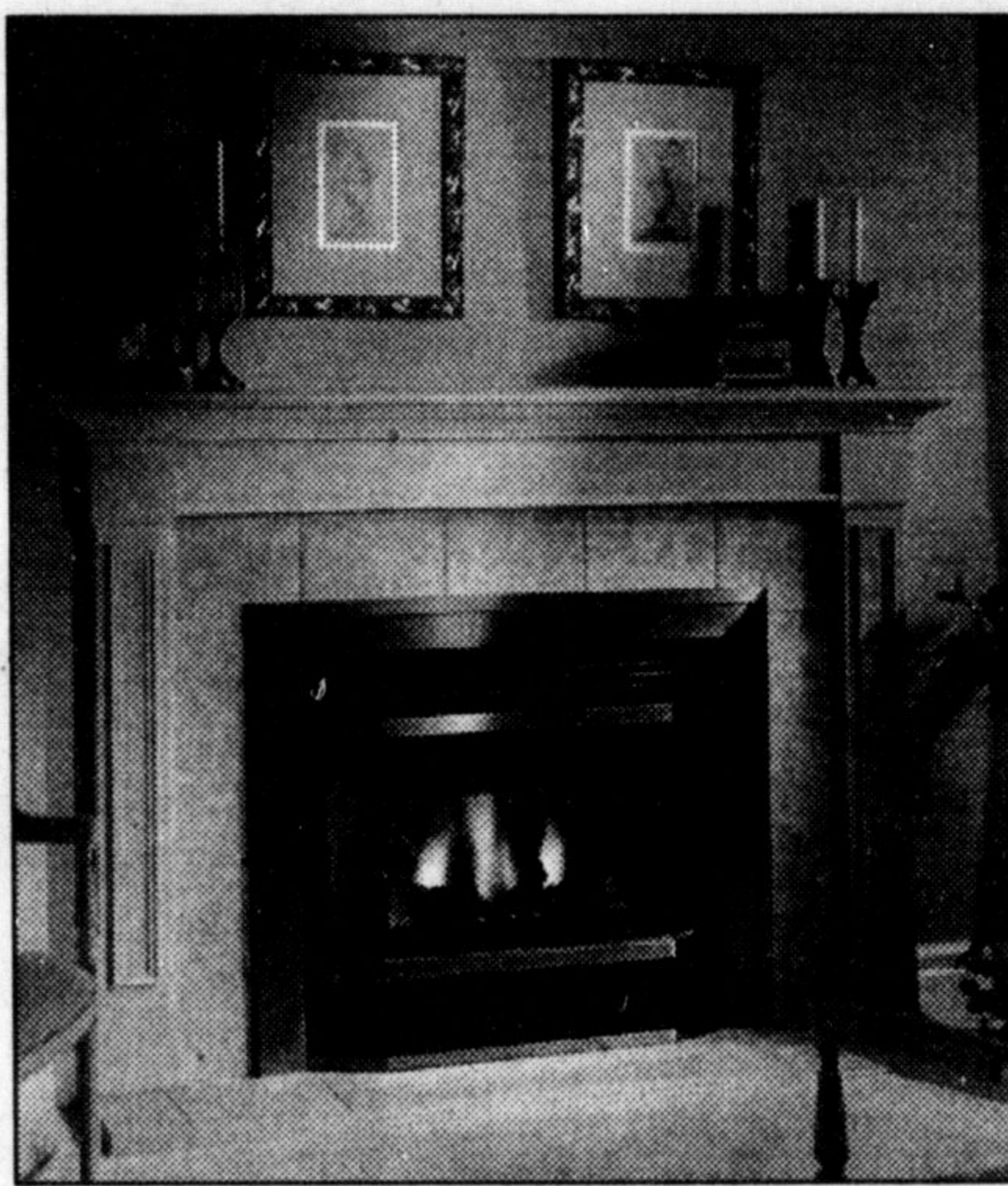
This system, which Mr. Wray said he hoped to have running by year's end, would also help professionals compile one waiting list for service, whereas now a person could be on more than one.

Mr. Wray explained it has yet to be determined whether a local number will be established or whether a partnership will be created using a provincial number — hopefully with some ministry

financial backing. "Halton-Peel will be one of the most efficient in the province."

Speaking of funding, Mr. Wray said Halton-Peel is among the lowest-funded districts in Ontario with estimates suggesting the regions received \$7.96 per capita in 1996 while the provincial average was \$12.70 per capita. The health council report states that an investment of at least \$4 million is needed just to match the 1996 average.

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### Participant

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tel. (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Buddies (must be 19 years or older)

Write the names of two non-smoking friends who you will see on a regular basis and who can support your quitting efforts and confirm that you have not smoked during the contest period.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tel. (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tel. (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_



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2. Sex:  F  M
3. Last year of school completed:  
 high school  community college  
 university  other
4. Number of cigarettes smoked a day  
 1-5  6-10  11-20  
 more than 20
5. Have you tried to quit before?  
 Yes  No
6. How many years have you smoked? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How did you first learn about the contest?  
 relative/friend  pharmacy  web site  
 supermarket  T.V. - which station(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 radio - which station(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 newspaper - which paper(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 other(s): \_\_\_\_\_
8. Since January 17, 2000 how many times did you hear about the CONTEST in the media (radio, television, newspaper)?  
 never  1-2 times  3-10 times  
 11-20 times  more than 20 times
9. Since January 17, 2000 how many times did you hear about SMOKING (other than the contest) in the media?  
 never  once or twice  3-10 times  
 11-20 times  more than 20 times

#### Personal Information

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 Halton Council on Smoking or Health  
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Or fax to: (905) 825-8588

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