



# PROVINCIAL CONSULTATION: MODERNIZING EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES

Presented to  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Presented by  
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# PURPOSE

## To provide

- Rationale for York Region Paramedic Services support for the Province's proposed direction
- The 5 key challenges identified by the Ministry and York Region experience
- York Region's experience and perspectives on key challenges identified by the Ministry

# SUPPORT FOR THE MINISTRY'S DIRECTION

- We support the Ministry's proposed direction to modernize emergency health services by
  - Modernizing dispatch
  - Positioning Paramedic Services as part of the healthcare system by providing "out-of-hospital" care
  - Permitting alternative destinations
  - Protecting paramedic mental health
- We previously advised the Ministry of critical actions required to support the proposed changes to the Ambulance Act
- The Ministry should be encouraged to keep moving forward with improvements

# THE FIVE KEY CHALLENGES

The Discussion Paper seeks feedback on 5 key challenges

1. Outdated dispatch technology
2. Lengthy offload times and delays in transporting medically stable patients
3. Lack of coordination between emergency health services partners
4. Need for innovations that improve care
5. Health equity - access to services across regions and communities needs improvement and needs to be more culturally sensitive

# 1. MODERNIZING DISPATCH IS ESSENTIAL TO ADDRESSING HALLWAY HEALTH CARE AND MUST BE DONE FIRST

## OUR EXPERIENCE

- Difficulties with communication via the radio network
- Paramedics had to manually input data to navigate 911 responses
- Over-responding
- Inefficient use of resources
- Provincial investments in new dispatch technologies
- Mobile data application to connect dispatch to in-vehicle tables and smart phones

## ADVICE

- Modernize dispatch technology and the triage algorithm before making any other changes to the system as the top priority
- Improvements to dispatch will mitigate many of the other challenges identified, and will address concerns with responsiveness and efficiency in the system and save money in the long run. These improvements are foundational to the strategy of “right time, right place”

## 2. PARTNER WITH HOSPITALS & ENABLE NEW MODELS OF CARE TO IMPROVE AMBULANCE AVAILABILITY & REDUCE OFFLOAD DELAYS

### OUR EXPERIENCE

- Partnership/MOU with hospitals and dedicated offload funding to reduce offload delays
- Require regulations or directives to treat and release/refer patients to more appropriate community supports
- Hospitals use 9-1-1 for stable transports due to lack of more appropriate resources

### ADVICE

- Continue dedicated offload nurse funding
- Embed incentives with local partners (hospitals) to minimize transfer of care times
- Continue to move on changes set out in Ambulance Act to enable new models of care and transport to alternative destinations
- Provide alternate transport for medically stable patients such as specialty or accessibility taxis

### 3.TREATING PARAMEDIC SERVICES AS A HEALTHCARE PARTNER WILL IMPROVE COORDINATION AND RESULT IN BETTER PATIENT OUTCOMES

#### OUR EXPERIENCE

- Paramedics are starting to become better integrated into the local health care system
- We have established local partnership tables to improve coordination such as Tri-hospital Working Group, Palliative Care Program, Hospital to Home Program

#### ADVICE

Fully integrate Paramedic Services into the health care system by:

- Implementing legislation so that medical records and outcome data can be shared with Paramedic Services, in certain circumstances
- Considering self-regulation for Paramedics
- Ensuring Paramedic Services are partners in all Ontario Health Teams across the province
- Formalize role of paramedics to provide outside of hospital care (e.g. community paramedicine)



# 4. SCALE UP LOCALLY DEVELOPED INNOVATIONS THAT IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

## OUR EXPERIENCE

Increasing call volumes due to:

- Diverse population with varying needs
- Changing communities / health inequities
- Mental health, addictions
- Growing seniors population
- Development of innovative Community Paramedicine programs to improve care
- Participate on Rapid Response Table/Community Support Rounds
- Collaboration with Public Health on data for the opioid crisis

## ADVICE

- Scale up locally developed Community Paramedicine programs with a common vision of reducing hallway health care across the Province with sustained funding
- Work with hospitals and Ontario Health Teams to create a shared vision of keeping paramedics in the community, not hospitals
- Move forward on provincial commitment to create a mental health and addictions hub in York Region



## 5. BUILD KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY OF PARAMEDIC SERVICES TO IMPROVE HEALTH EQUITY AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

### OUR EXPERIENCE

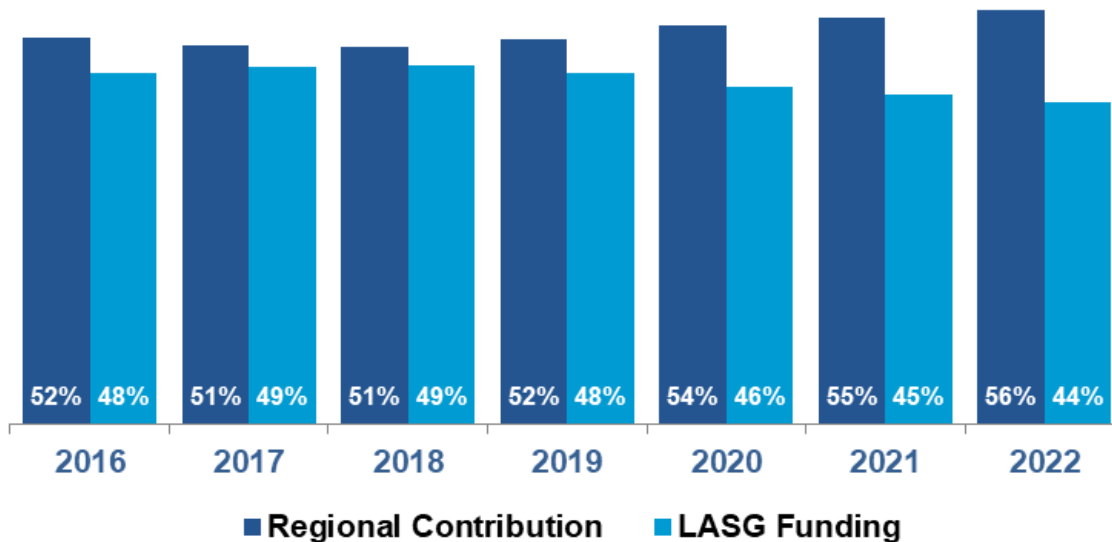
- Council committed to a York Region Inclusion Charter
- More than 5,000 York Region residents identify as Indigenous, with 193 living on-reserve
- Many rural areas, particularly in the north and east
- Top 2 non-official languages are Cantonese and Mandarin
- Georgina Island has unique access to Paramedic Services
- Paramedic Stations are strategically placed across rural and urban areas for optimal response
- Provide referrals to services
- Provide interpretation services

### ADVICE

- Enhance role of Community Paramedicine
- Increase workforce knowledge and capacity to serve Indigenous people
- Consider how service could be improved for people who do not speak an official language
- Make investments to improve service access and quality in rural areas

# COMMIT TO FUNDING 50% OF ACTUAL COSTS

## Our Experience



### Advice:

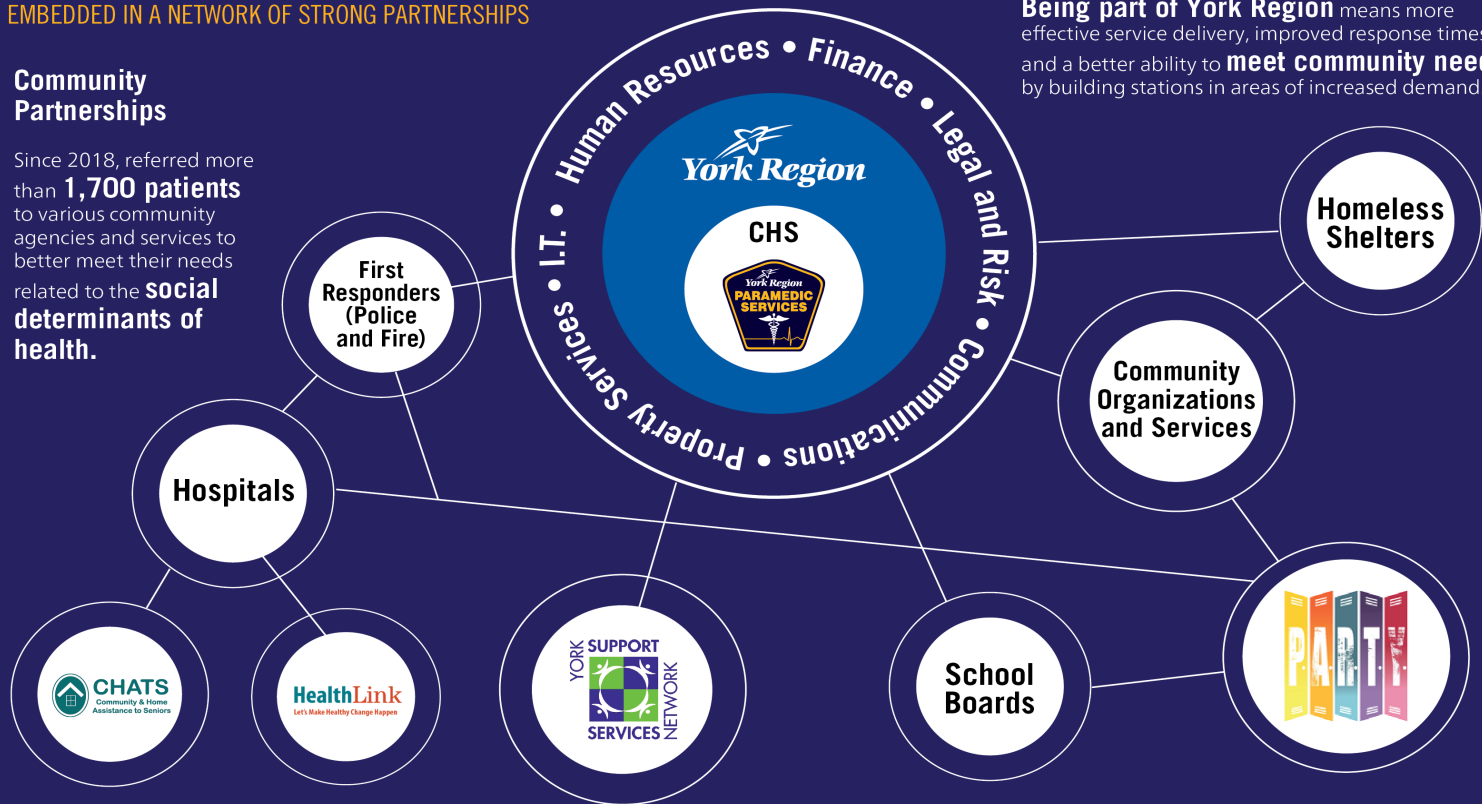
- Commit to funding 50% of actual costs
- Find savings through efficiencies and innovations rather than underfunding

# MAINTAIN EXISTING BOUNDARIES FOR YORK REGION PARAMEDIC SERVICES

## York Region Paramedic Services: EMBEDDED IN A NETWORK OF STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

### Community Partnerships

Since 2018, referred more than **1,700 patients** to various community agencies and services to better meet their needs related to the **social determinants of health**.



Being part of York Region means more effective service delivery, improved response times and a better ability to **meet community needs** by building stations in areas of increased demand.

Partnerships with York Regional Police, local fire services and York Region District School Board to offer **health and safety classes at the Community Safety Village** to students in Kindergarten to Grade 5.

Partnerships with community programs like the **P.A.R.T.Y. program**, York Region hospitals and other first responders to educate students about the impact poor choices can have behind the wheel.



# IN CLOSING

- We support the Ministry's proposed direction to modernize emergency health services by
  - Modernizing dispatch
  - Positioning Paramedic Services as part of the healthcare system by providing "out-of-hospital" care
  - Permitting alternate destinations
  - Protecting paramedic mental health
- We must maintain existing boundaries for York Region Paramedic Services to continue to provide seamless Paramedic response and integrated emergency care with our partners across all nine municipalities and beyond
- Province must commit to funding 50% of actual costs of Paramedic Services
- If the Province acts on our advice, it will help the Region to achieve its strategic priority to support community health, safety and wellbeing and will help the Province achieve the goal of ending hallway healthcare