

MEMORANDUM

To: Regional Chair Emmerson and Members of Regional Council

From: Katherine Chislett
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

Date: April 18, 2019

Re: Ontario Budget 2019 Impacts on York Region Paramedic Services

On April 11, 2019, the Ontario Government tabled the 2019 Budget entitled Protecting What Matters Most. There are several areas that may affect Community and Health Services. This memo provides information about specific impacts to Paramedic Services (also known as Land Ambulance Services), and additional background information about Paramedic Services.

Province intends streamline land ambulance dispatch services by integrating Ontario's 59 emergency health services operators

The province announced that it will:

- Streamline the way land ambulance dispatch services are delivered by better integrating Ontario's 59 emergency health services operators and 22 dispatch centres
- Explore new models of care and delivery for emergency health services

The province did not reference changes to the governance of municipal land ambulance services.

On April 15, it was announced through Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) intends to move from 52 ambulance services to 10 through restructuring.

In The Toronto Star article, on April 16, 2019, Health Minister Christine Elliott stated, the existing 52 land ambulance services will be consolidated into 10 regional hubs.

York Region was not notified or consulted on these changes, nor are we aware of any municipality being consulted. Information on how these changes will be implemented is not available.

York Region Paramedic Services is the third largest paramedic service in the province and serves approximately 8% of the provincial population

York Region paramedics respond to emergency medical calls, carry out assessments, deliver lifesaving treatment when needed, and stabilize, monitor and transport patients to where they will get continuing medical care. Its 493 full time equivalent professionals deliver emergency services from 21 response stations located throughout York Region, as well as proactive services in the community at locations such as emergency housing and seniors social housing buildings.

In 2018, York Region Paramedic Services:

- Responded to over 78,000 incidences ranging from major trauma (absence of breathing, pulse, cardiac arrest) to minor trauma (general pain, repeat visits)
- Provided health condition assessments and referrals to more than 1,400 individuals through proactive community paramedicine services
- Continued to exceed response time targets despite a 6.1 percent increase in demand

Paramedic Services has been integrated with York Region since 2000

In January 2000, York Region assumed responsibility for delivery of land ambulance services as a result of the provincial service realignment (downloading). York Region Emergency Medical Services (EMS) was created through amalgamation of six ambulance services that had previously operated in the Region.

Regional Council endorsed an integrated Advanced Life Support (ALS) program which introduced enhanced training for Primary Care Paramedics and training of Advanced Care Paramedics. Advanced Care Paramedics provide a broader scope of practice, including greater number of medications and medical procedures to ensure the high quality of care is provided to York Region residents by all paramedics

Funding for Paramedic Services is cost shared, with the Province providing up to 50%

In 2018, Paramedic Services' actual gross expenditures totaled \$82.1 million including departmental and corporate support costs. The net tax levy share was \$39.6 million.

Next Steps

Ontario Government has assured AMO that it will be working and collaborating with municipal governments and stakeholders as it looks at ambulance services and public health services. The Region will continue to engage with various sector tables to seek further information, and will report back to York Regional Council as appropriate.

Katherine Chislett
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

Bruce Macgregor
Chief Administrative Officer

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