



Staff Report to Council - for Information

Title: 2024 Deployment Review Update

From: Steve Schaus, Director/Chief, Paramedic Services

Date: September 5, 2024

Report Number: PAR-2024-008

Report Purpose:

That the Paramedic Service Deployment Review Update Report be received; and

That staff include the recommendations as detailed in the Deployment Review Update during annual budget deliberations for County Council consideration.

Report Summary:

A ten (10) year Deployment Review Plan was done in 2020 with growth estimated at 5.3% per year. During January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2023, 12 - 15% growth per year was experienced. Given the substantial variance it was crucial for paramedic services to conduct a mid-point review to be responsive to this growth over the next five (5) years.

Background/Analysis:

The Paramedic Services Deployment Review Update was completed to ensure paramedic services can still meet Bruce County's growing demand and sustain current service levels up to 2029.

The Deployment Review provides us with a process to review and confirm we are meeting our obligation under the Ambulance Act R.S.O. 1990, that every upper-tier municipality (UTM) is responsible for ensuring the proper provision of land ambulance service in the municipality. To fulfill obligations for the delivery service, each paramedic service must create deployment plans to direct the dispatch centre on how to utilize their ambulance resources in responding to requests for service. It further helps with our Canadian Triage Acuity Scale (CTAS) Response Time Performance Plan under Ontario Regulation 257/00 under the Ambulance Act states that:

- 23.(2) No later than October 1 in each year after 2011, every upper-tier municipality and every delivery agent responsible under the Act for ensuring the proper provision of land ambulance services shall establish, for land ambulance service operators selected by the upper-tier municipality or delivery agent, in accordance with the Act, a performance plan for the next calendar year respecting response times. O. Reg. 267/08, s. 1 (2); O. Reg. 368/10, s. 1 (1).

Throughout 2022 - 2023 higher call volumes were experienced than what was predicted in the original report completed in 2020. There have been several factors impacting call volume since the 2020 Deployment Review was completed including population growth along the shoreline, hospital ER closures during nights, and offload delays, which are normally seen in urban centers which impact our service delivery. There has also been the introduction of some mitigating factors including the development of Community Paramedicine, and CT scanners being installed in a few of our local hospitals. These additions have kept our ambulances available to meet the 911 demand. The geography of the County and the unpredictability of when calls come into the 911 system are challenges that the service faces. Introducing the second ambulance in Saugeen Shores starting in January of 2024 has benefitted our service from the onset. We tend to have multiple calls come in shortly after each other and having the second vehicle here helps keep our response time down. This also helps keep our vehicle movement down, providing standby in this area and keeping vehicles in their own area providing better overall County coverage.

Paramedic Services engaged Operational Research in Health (ORH) to analyze our past few years call data and compare it to future demand modeling to have evidence-based guidance for decision making currently and in future years.

Operational Research in Health (ORH) completed our first comprehensive ten (10) year Deployment Review in 2020 at the beginning of COVID 19. ORH assists emergency services around the world, including several in Ontario, to optimize resource use and respond in the most effective and efficient way.

Attached - Staff from ORH will provide council with a slide presentation highlighting the Deployment Review.

Recommendations

2024: Sauble Beach 10:00 - 22:00 rear round

2025: No Changes

2026: Sauble Beach add a night shift 4 FTE

2027: Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation (24/7) coverage - Separate and distinct from Bruce County Service Agreement with the Ministry of Health.

2028: Port Elgin add night shift 4 FTE

2029: No Changes

Paramedic Services senior staff will monitor performance achieved over the next five (5) years, the County may wish to make alterations to this phased approach should demand increase or performance fluctuate from the projected levels. Staff would bring recommendations to council should any of these conditions occur.

Staff also consulted with the Ministry of Health and Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

Staffing increases based on the recommendations in the report will be brought forward in applicable years for budget considerations.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

Staff consulted with Corporate Services, Human Resources, and Government Relations

Link to Strategic Goals and Objectives:

Working towards 1.1.1 and 4.2 in the Bruce County Saugeen Anishnaabek Reconciliation Pathway and Action Plan

Community and Partnerships - Build a strong and inclusive community

Growth and Innovation - Promote responsible growth

Link to Departmental Plan Goals and Objectives, if any:

Service Excellence

Approved for Submission:

Christine MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments: