

Municipality Of Chatham-Kent

Fire & Emergency Services

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Bob Crawford, Chief, Fire Paramedic Services
Date: June 15, 2018
Subject: Emergency Medical Services staffing

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

1. An additional “12 hours of service” be added to the current level of emergency medical services for the remainder of 2018 with an increase of \$312,237 to be recovered through the Ambulance Reserve in 2018.
2. This additional “12 hours of service” be brought forward by Administration to the new Council, as a base budget addition, for the remainder of the contract with Medavie for the following years:
 - i. \$696,080 in 2019,
 - ii. \$726,056 in 2020, and
 - iii. \$741,130 in 2021.

Background

Chatham-Kent Fire & Emergency Services (CK FES) continually monitors the provision of emergency medical services. Concerns have been noted by our service contractor, Medavie EMS Chatham-Kent Ontario (CK EMS), as demand for service increases and puts pressure on the ability to provide effective and efficient response to emergency calls for service.

In the 2018 budget, an additional ambulance purchase was approved to augment the existing fleet of ambulance vehicles. At the time, Administration advised that demands on service would be monitored and measured over a few months with a resulting report back to Council on how best to meet these increasing pressures. At that time it was made clear that Administration was considering all options including the recommendation to add new paramedics to the service.

Demand for paramedic services is a growing trend. Our demographic factors in Chatham-Kent such as aging population and complex chronic disease contribute to our pressures. Since 2012, CK FES has continued to monitor and evaluate other system strategies aimed at easing some of this pressure; examples include resource deployment changes, referring non-urgent patients to home and community care

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services, and the implementation of a community paramedic program which aids in managing patient care needs within the patient's residential setting.

The Erie St. Clair Local Health Integration Network (ESC LHIN) reports poorer health in our residents in comparison to the rest of Ontario, such as a higher than average population suffering from Congestive Heart Failure and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary disease (COPD). In order to respond to the pressures associated with these shifts, along with other system pressures, CK FES must review, plan and act to ensure the health care needs of residents continue to be met in the years ahead.

A shift in our experience with Code Zero occurrences is a serious concern. A Code Zero occurrence is an instance where there are three or less transport ambulances available to respond to emergency paramedic service requests within the municipality. The workload created from this operational challenge creates patient, public and paramedic provider impacts. Code Zero occurrences are a primary indicator that workload is excessive and the ability of CK EMS to respond is challenged.

Over the last five years, our Code Zero events increased by 254.9%, according to CK EMS data. The duration of these events has also increased, with the average length of time of time in this status at 1 hour and 29 minutes. This affects our ability to meet our performance response time. Since 2012, due to service pressure we have not met our 90th percentile response time benchmark of 14 minutes and 34 seconds.

In a May 8, 2017 Report to Council, an approval to adopt new response time performance targets was passed by Council. An emphasis was focused on improving the Sudden Cardiac Arrest and CTAS 1 and 2 targets, as these are the life-threatening responses that will make an impact on the survivability and outcome of the patients. Our current approved Sudden Cardiac Arrest Response Time Target is 6:00 minutes, 55% of the time. Our performance in 2017 fell short, with the annual percentage of 44.44%, with our current year-to-date performance in the Q1 (January to March) at 50%.

Comments

CK FES is dedicated to the key areas of strategic focus and critical success factors and we recommend that the greatest value to the community is to add sufficient staffing resources to provide an additional twelve hours of emergency medical services on a daily basis. CK FES will work in tandem with CK EMS in order to determine the optimal staffing that will ease some of the service pressures that are a daily reality in Chatham-Kent.

This "12 additional unit hours per day" will occur between 1400-0200hrs which is typically when the EMS system is seeing a higher demand for service. This will mean an additional 8760 staffing hours annually.

Areas of Strategic Focus and Critical Success Factors

The recommendation in this report supports the following areas of strategic focus:

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- Economic Prosperity:
Chatham-Kent is an innovative and thriving community with a diversified economy
- A Healthy and Safe Community:
Chatham-Kent is a healthy and safe community with sustainable population growth
- People and Culture:
Chatham-Kent is recognized as a culturally vibrant, dynamic, and creative community
- Environmental Sustainability:
Chatham-Kent is a community that is environmentally sustainable and promotes stewardship of our natural resources

The recommendation in this report supports the following critical success factors:

- Financial Sustainability:
The Corporation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent is financially sustainable
- Open, Transparent and Effective Governance:
The Corporation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent is open, transparent and effectively governed with efficient and bold, visionary leadership
- Has the potential to support all areas of strategic focus & critical success factors
- Neutral issues (does not support negatively or positively)

Consultation

CK FES has met with Medavie, locally with the CK EMS general manager and with their corporate senior administration to examine potential remedies to this increasing service pressure. The numbers shown below for the additional service were provided by Medavie.

Financial Implications

CK FES has worked closely with Finance and Budget to determine the impact to both base and supplementary budgets related to the increase in EMS staffing. The annual impact to the EMS base budget for the remaining term of the Medavie contract is noted in the table below.

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MEDAVIE CONTRACT	2018 (Aug - Dec)	2019	2020	2021
CURRENT COST	\$ 10,578,325	\$ 10,947,956	\$ 11,165,751	\$ 11,393,835
ADDITIONAL 12 HOURS	\$ 312,237	\$ 696,080	\$ 726,056	\$ 741,130
REVISED COST	\$ 10,890,562	\$ 11,644,036	\$ 11,891,807	\$ 12,134,965

The base budget increase is \$696,080 for the 2019 budget, the 2020 and 2021 budgets will only increase by the inflationary amounts indicated in the contracted amount for those years. The 2018 and 2019 provincial funding for the increase are subject to Ministry approval. Administration will work with the Ministry to try to mitigate the impact to the Municipal Budget, however there is a possibility that the Provincial 50% funding share for those years may need to be covered by the Municipality. In that case we will cover those amounts through reserves.

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