

**Municipality Of Chatham-Kent**  
**Chief Administrative Office**  
**Fire and Emergency Services**  
**Information Report**

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Chris Case, Fire Chief  
**Date:** July 20, 2020  
**Subject:** EMS COVID-19 Temporary Service Level Adjustment - Extension

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**This report is for the information of Council.**

**Recommendation**

Since the commencement of the COVID-19 pandemic, the demands both clinically and logistically for Paramedic Services have grown, and as a result, a service level adjustment was implemented. Operational Supervisors transitioned from working as part of a two-member crew on an ambulance to working in an emergency response vehicle.

It is recommended that an extension be applied to the current level of service, as Medavie EMS Chatham-Kent Ontario (MEMSCKO) continue operating with four operational supervisors in support vehicles to provide supporting clinical care and paramedic operations in Chatham-Kent.

The timeframe for this service level adjustment would be for an additional one month with the ability to request an additional extension based on the state of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Background**

MEMSCKO currently operate under a service agreement and the level of service is set by Chatham-Kent Council. Since 2012, MEMSCKO, in partnership with the Municipality of Chatham-Kent have evaluated and implemented numerous system strategies to respond to various demands as they arise.

As the COVID-19 pandemic and provincial state of emergency continues, MEMSCKO demands, both clinically and logistically, continue to tax their operational leadership team and overall pre-hospital system. This pandemic continues to present MEMSCKO

with some unique and new challenges for clinical responses, safety preparation, logistical structure, and quality assurance.

Still maintaining a comprehensive focus of public safety, pre-hospital patient care, and paramedic safety, they continue to require a level of frontline support to meet the objective of an efficient and effective land ambulance operation.

Having MEMSCKO Operational Supervisors transitioned to an operational support role has allowed them to respond to major incidents to provide scene oversight, and to provide medical response to low acuity patient calls. When ambulance availability is reduced, they continue to perform administrative and supportive duties in an appropriate fashion.

Completion of COVID-19 personal protective equipment audits, support of staff during high-stress calls, liaising with hospital staff and communication staff to clear offload delays, and supporting senior management staff and the COVID-19 response plan, are all examples of benefits incurred with the operational leadership team adjustment.

### **Comments**

Due to direct impacts from COVID-19 and in the best interest of public safety, pre-hospital patient care, and paramedic safety, an increased level of frontline support was required to meet the service level objectives of EMS.

As a result, Operational Supervisors have been transitioned from working as part of a two-member crew on an ambulance to working in an emergency response vehicle. The Operational Supervisors are available to respond to major incidents to provide scene oversight, and available to provide medical response to low acuity patient calls. Furthermore, when ambulance availability is reduced, the Operational Supervisor would also be available to perform administrative and supportive duties increased from COVID-19.

The Operational Supervisor shift will be backfilled by a primary care paramedic. No additional ambulances have been added to the fleet as part of the COVID-19 increase but rather a support vehicle to assist the existing ambulances on duty.

### **Consultation**

CKFES was in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and Matt Torrance on this matter.

### **Financial Implications**

The impact of the COVID-19 service level increase will be \$40,000.00 per month. This increase will occur until the provincial emergency declaration ends or it is reevaluated after 90 days.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has been notified of this financial impact. The *Ontario Action Plan: Responding to Covid-19* announcement released on March 25, 2020 indicated an additional \$80 million to be allocated to ambulance and paramedic services across Ontario. At the time of writing there is no confirmation of funding to Chatham-Kent.

Covid-19 impacts to Chatham-Kent are being tracked and will be reported to Council in the future for funding options.

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Attachment(s):

None

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