



Hamilton

CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Hamilton Paramedic Service

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	June 20, 2019
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Funding for Neonatal Intensive Care (NICU) Transport Ambulance (HSC19021) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Michael Sanderson (905) 546-2424 Ext.7741
SUBMITTED BY:	Paul Johnson General Manager Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department, or his designate, be authorized and directed to execute an Inter-Facility Transport Funding Agreement and any ancillary and/or renewal agreements between the City of Hamilton and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor;
- (b) That the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department, or his designate, be authorized to accept one-time funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care:
 - i. Funding in the amount of up to \$272,345 to cover 100% of the purchase costs of one (1) additional ambulance, including all related and ancillary equipment, for the operation of a dedicated inter-facility transport ambulance;
 - ii. One-time funding in the amount of up to \$1,133,677 to cover 100% of all staffing wage and benefit costs of a dedicated inter-facility transport ambulance for the period January 1 through December 31, 2019; and,
- (c) That the Hamilton Paramedic Service (HPS) complement be increased by 10.0 full-time equivalent paramedic positions to cover all staffing and absence backfill requirements for the dedicated inter-facility transport ambulance.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC), in conjunction with McMaster Children's Hospital, has requested that the Hamilton Paramedic Service, operated by the City of Hamilton, provide a dedicated ambulance resource to support their neo-natal intensive care medical outreach team.

The MOHLTC, through an Inter-Facility Transfer funding agreement proposes to fund 100% of the required capital equipment and staffing costs of this dedicated ambulance resource, with such agreement to be extended from year to year as mutually agreed.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial:

Financial staff were involved in the development and costing of all aspects of a preliminary 2018 proposal and the November 2019 operating proposal.

The MOHLTC is providing 100% funding for the capital and staffing costs of the dedicated transport vehicle. There is no net levy impact.

Staffing:

The equivalent of ten (10) full time staff are required to provide the dedicated ambulance coverage 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 52 weeks of the year, inclusive of all related backfill costs.

Legal:

The proposed agreement as received from the MOHLTC has been reviewed by legal staff and is in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Hamilton Health Sciences McMaster Children's Hospital (MCH) operates a 47 bed, tertiary level, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). This NICU is the referral centre for a catchment area of 2.2 million and 27,000 births. The closest adjoining similar NICU programs are located in London and in Toronto. An outreach program, and medical transport team, is operated by the MCH to enable the highest level of assessment, stabilization, and treatment at various outlying hospitals and to then provide care of the patient during transport by ambulance from the referring hospital back to MCH.

The process for several years when an outreach is required for the MCH transport team and related equipment to be transported from MCH to the referring hospital, to stabilize

the patient at the referring hospital, and when the patient is ready for transport back to MCH is for a local ambulance to be assigned to bring the medical team, equipment, and patient back to MCH for a higher level of care.

In accordance with the *Ambulance Act*, the core legislated operating responsibility for the City of Hamilton is to provide the required resources for the provision of emergency land ambulance service to meet the needs of the residents and visitors to the City of Hamilton. Accordingly, our ambulance deployment plan, and our current staffing level, has not provided HPS resources at City of Hamilton expense to pick up a medical team and equipment at MCH, take them to an out of town referring hospital, wait for the medical team at the referring hospital, or to return the medical team, equipment and patient from the out of town referring hospital back to MCH. Such purpose is outside the core funding responsibility of the City of Hamilton.

With an interest on the part of MCH and the MOHLTC to improve the operational capacity of the MCH medical team, the HPS has been contacted several times over the past few years to discuss options for the provision of a dedicated land ambulance resource, operated by the City of Hamilton, for the purpose of transporting medical teams and equipment to the sending hospitals, await the team and patient readiness to return to MCH, and to then transport the patient, team, and equipment back to MCH.

Our expressed position with the MOHLTC and MCH has been that provision of a dedicated ambulance resource to support the MCH operations, and in support of various referral hospital needs, would require 100% funding from either MCH or the MOHLTC.

On October 11, 2018, the MOHLTC convened a teleconference to discuss the potential for implementation of a dedicated ambulance resource in support of the NICU needs.

Subsequent to the October teleconference on November 19 a request for an implementation plan was received from the MOHLTC South West Field Office. An implementation plan was provided in response to this request providing for the addition of one ambulance and the required paramedic staff to provide Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Transport Team transport support 24 hours per day, 365 days of the year.

The proposed implementation of the program for the 2019 calendar year included a one-time capital support in the amount of approximately \$272,345 and staffing wage and benefit costs in the amount of \$1,133,677. For the operating years after 2019 inflationary wage cost increases will be required.

The MOHLTC responded to this on April 5, 2019, with a confidential and embargoed agreement for the provision of the requested dedicated inter-facility transport ambulance in support of the MCH NICU outreach program. That embargo has now been lifted and we are able to bring this report forward for approval. Initiation of the project is possible

within four to six weeks of confirmation of available funding and agreement on the operational aspects of this additional resource

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to the *Ambulance Act* (the Act) the City of Hamilton is the “Designated Delivery Agent (DDA) for all land ambulance services provided in the City of Hamilton. This service is known, and operated under Certificate 718, as the Hamilton Paramedic Service (HPS). The HPS is the sole ambulance provider for the entire City of Hamilton, an area of approximately 1,117 square kilometres and a population of approximately 537,000 people.

In accordance with the Act, the Regulations pursuant to the Act, and the various Directives and Standards pursuant to both the Act and the Regulations, the City of Hamilton, in part;

- Determines the level of land ambulance service required to provide an appropriate level of service to the public within the City of Hamilton; and
- Funds the cost of land ambulance service required to meet the needs of the public; and
- Receives a conditional grant from the Province of Ontario as subsidy for the cost of provision of land ambulance service; and
- Ensures their provision of land ambulance service meets the standards required by the Province of Ontario to achieve and to maintain certification; and
- Ensures the plan provided to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) Central Ambulance Communications Centre (CACC) for the deployment of the land ambulance resources it provides is approved in the manner designated by the MOHLTC.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Consultation has occurred with McMaster Children’s Hospital and with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care over the past 20 months to identify their needs and to develop a solution.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The need to support the MCH outreach team activities in responding to out of town referral hospitals and returning these critical patients to a higher level of care is apparent. The proposed agreement provides the capacity to support these needs without negatively impacting City of Hamilton taxpayers.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None applicable

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ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Healthy and Safe Communities

Hamilton is a safe and supportive city where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

Our People and Performance

Hamiltonians have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None