



CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Hamilton Paramedic Service

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	September 9, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Single-Source Paramedic Service Linen Supply (HSC21029) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Cliff Eggleton (905) 546-2424 Ext. 7743
SUBMITTED BY:	Michael Sanderson Chief, Hamilton Paramedic Service Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- (a) That Council approve the single source procurement, pursuant to Procurement Policy #11 – Non-competitive Procurements, with Mohawk Medbuy Corporation for the supply, cleaning and replacement of linen blankets for the Hamilton Paramedic Service for a five-year period ending December 31, 2026; and,
- (b) That the Chief, Hamilton Paramedic Service, Healthy and Safe Communities Department or designate be authorized to negotiate, enter into and execute a Contract and any ancillary documents required to give effect thereto with Mohawk Medbuy Corporation, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Paramedics are required by Provincial Ambulance Equipment Standards to carry specific quantities of linen (blankets, sheets, pillowcases and towels) to be used in pre-hospital care.

The Hamilton Paramedic Service has obtained linen on a single-source basis from Mohawk Medbuy Corporation (previously Mohawk Shared Services Inc.) since 2000, with the most recent single-source authority having been granted through Report

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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CES16001 Single Source of Paramedic Services Linen Cleaning and Replacement, approved by Council on Jan18, 2016. Report CES16001 recommended renewal of the single-source arrangement for a further five-year term pursuant to Section 4.11(2) of the Procurement Policy By-law. Mohawk Medbuy Corp was formed in 2017 when Mohawk Shared Services Inc and Medbuy Corporation amalgamated to form a national, not-for-profit, shared services organization serving hundreds of Canadian hospitals and health care providers which helps to drive value, efficiencies and cost-savings on the supplies and services health care services uses. Mohawk Medbuy linen has provided a consistently high level of service for many years and offers specialized health-care sector linen services Cost of linen obtained through the Mohawk Medbuy linen contract is currently less than \$3.50 per ambulance transport.

Since Mohawk Medbuy serves both the local hospitals and Paramedic Services, a single supply chain facilitates the cost-effective and efficient replenishment of clean linen stocks and the safe collection, transportation, and cleaning of used linen, including contaminated materials.

Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 5

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: Mohawk Shared Services Inc. Costs (2016 – 2020):

Fiscal Year	Cost (\$K) *	Ambulance responses where a patient was carried	Cost per response
2016	188,185.49	49,610	\$3.79
2017	192,380.83	49,763	\$3.86
2018	210,960.84	51,763	\$3.96
2019	205,554.71	53,248	\$3.86
2020	157,864.03	48,412	\$3.26

*Full cost for the FY indicated, including linen purchase and replacement, use of stocking carts and soiled linen bins, pickup, laundering, processing, delivery and administration. Approximately 25% of linen stocks require replacement with new materials annually. Funding for this requirement is included in the annual Paramedic Service operating budget, with \$207,190 K being budgeted for 2021. Costing for this service is related to number of patients transported and the month of year, Hamilton

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Paramedic Service estimates \$950,000 K to be spent over the next 5 year period using historical numbers.

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Provincial Ambulance Equipment Standards require specific quantities of linen (blankets, sheets, pillowcases and towels) to be carried on each ambulance for use in pre-hospital patient care. Used and or contaminated linen must be collected after every patient use, then safely transported, cleaned, and restocked for re-use, Paramedics will replenish their linen immediately after each call at the hospital. Consistent, reliable linen supply is required around the clock, 365 days a year.

Historical best practice with almost all Ontario Paramedic Services has been to use the same linen service provider as is used by the hospitals in their catchment area to obtain reliable service while realizing both operational and financial efficiencies. Exceptions result from a few hospitals managing linen in-house, or establishing contracts which exclude non-hospital customers, thereby requiring affected Services to make alternative arrangements. A summary of linen arrangements at selected Ontario Paramedic Services may be found in Appendix “A” to Report HSC21029.

In the Hamilton area, Mohawk Medbuy Corp provides linen services to all our local hospitals, and the Halton, Brant, Niagara, Guelph and Six Nations Paramedic Services. Linen used by multiple agencies throughout a wide geographic area is managed through a common system, with specific linen markings facilitating accurate usage-based cost attribution. Mohawk Medbuy provides clean linen supply carts and used linen collection bins at each hospital, constantly monitors usage, restocks supplies as necessary, and collects and safely transports used and contaminated linen for processing and laundering.

Specific procedures are observed in the handling of health care linen to ensure that there is no cross-contamination from patient to patient which was highlighted during the COVID 19 pandemic. Linen services provided by Mohawk Medbuy conform to Public Health Ontario’s Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections. Quality control over the past five years has been fully acceptable.

Mohawk Medbuy has full access to hospitals for performance of this service and is certified for the collection and transportation of hazardous materials associated with contaminated linen. The seamless management of contaminated or potentially contaminated materials is a value-added service that would be very difficult to supplant,

as additional staff, specific training, vehicle licensing, documentation, and specialized containment equipment is required.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Provincial Ambulance Equipment Standards detail the specific quantities and types of linen to be carried on board ambulances.

Public Health Ontario's Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections details the procedures to be observed in the handling and cleaning of linen used in health care, including that used by Paramedic Services.

Depending of the nature of contamination, transportation of contaminated linen may be subject to the provisions of the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Consultation with Procurement staff regarding the interpretation and application of Procurement policy and Consultation with Finance to verify financial information provided in this Report

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

As ambulance linen is uniquely marked and Medbuy Mohawk serves all our Cities hospitals and our Paramedic Service, the following operational efficiencies are achieved through an integrated linen system:

- A reliable supply of clean linen is available for immediate restock at hospitals, so crews do not have to use time returning to stations to replenish linen thereby allowing them to be available for reassignment from the hospital when their patient is offloaded.
- Paramedics may leave linen with the patient on transfer to the hospital bed and do not have to wait to recover the linen. Linen is processed through the same system the hospital uses, with costs attributed based on unique markings.
- Used and/or contaminated linen is left in designated containers at the hospital. Paramedic Service staff are not required to transport used linen or potentially hazardous contaminated materials.
- Mohawk Medbuy linen handles and processes linen in accordance with Public Health Ontario's Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections to ensure that there is no cross-contamination.
- Mohawk Medbuy has provided consistent, reliable service over a long period of time.

- Mohawk Medbuy non-profit structure, buying power and economy of scale provide service efficiency and cost effectiveness.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

The alternative to the recommended approach is to conduct a competitive procurement process for the Supply, Cleaning and Replacement of Paramedic Service Linen.

Pros: The advantage to this approach is that the best pricing for the required services would be confirmed.

Cons: As it is operationally essential for the pick-up of clean and drop-off of used linen to occur at hospitals, selection of a vendor other than Mohawk Medbuy would make it necessary for duplicate clean linen carts and used linen bins to be installed in each hospital location. Given the limited space available, it is unlikely that hospitals would support this duplication and participate with a separate linen system for paramedics.

Efficiency would be reduced if multiple suppliers were to be involved in linen supply, as additional time, staff, training and financial resources would be required to sort mixed dirty linen by supplier and return it to the appropriate supplier for processing.

Should an alternative vendor be selected, significant staff effort would be required to monitor stocking, ensure quality control and verify cost attribution. Additional staff and vehicle resources would be required to monitor stocks and collect, sort and deliver linen.

Financial Implications: Actual comparative costs can only be obtained through a competitive solicitation; however, Mohawk Medbuy Corp operates as a non-profit with a substantial established customer base in the health-care sector and has demonstrated operational efficiency and economies of scale. It is unlikely that a commercial vendor would be able to offer a competitive price, given that new stock would have to be acquired, an equivalent level of service provided, and profit generated.

Staffing Implications: Significant staff effort would be required to develop and evaluate a Request for Proposals and then manage implementation should an alternative vendor be successful. Additional staff and vehicle resources would be required to monitor stocks and collect, sort and deliver linen.

Legal Implications: There are no legal implications associated with this alternative.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Healthy and Safe Communities

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

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report HSC21029 – Linen Services for Selected Ontario Paramedic Services