



---

**Hamilton Paramedic Service**

**Response to Ambulance Service Review Preliminary Draft Report**

**Ambulance Service Review Dates: Offsite concluded June 1, 2022**

**Ambulance Service Review Preliminary Draft Report Date: September 26, 2022**

---

October 12, 2022

**Hamilton Paramedic Service**  
**Response to September 26, 2022 Service Review Preliminary**  
**Draft Report**

**Background:**

As per Part V, Section 8 of the *Ambulance Act*, no person shall operate an ambulance service unless the person holds a certificate issued by the certifying authority. Further, the legislation states that the certifying authority will only issue a certificate if the person has successfully completed the certification process prescribed by the regulations.

The current Hamilton Paramedic Service certificate to operate an ambulance service expires on October 29, 2022. The legislation states a certificate shall be renewed by the certifying authority only if, before the expiry of the certificate, the operator successfully completes the certification process prescribed by the regulations. The certification process is entitled "Ambulance Service Review".

Hamilton Paramedic Service received preliminary notice from the Emergency Health Services Branch (EHSB) of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) that the Ambulance Service Review would be conducted virtually with a submission deadline of June 1, 2022. Prior to the review dates, Hamilton Paramedic Service received the "Team Checklist, Self-Assessment and Resource Tool" and commenced preparations.

On July 12, 2022, the Ambulance Service Review Team leader (A) conducted an "exit interview" virtually with Hamilton Paramedic Chief Michael Sanderson and senior members of the Paramedic Service management team. The meeting was positive, and the review team provided a general overview of the service review findings.

On September 26, 2022, the City of Hamilton received the draft "Ambulance Service Review Preliminary Draft Report" containing a detailed description of the service review observations. Accompanying correspondence from Ms. Michelle Johnson, Senior Manager, Inspections and Certifications provided the following introduction:

*"Congratulations on successfully meeting the legislated requirements for certification as a land ambulance operator in the Province of Ontario."*

*"Hamilton Paramedic Service is to be commended for its efforts in the following areas:*

- Preparation for the certification inspection*
- Quality Assurance/CQI"*

The MOHLTC advised that "opportunities for improvement" have been identified in the report as "observations" and requested a response to the report within 30 days.

The following is the formal Hamilton Paramedic Service response to the draft report.

**Overall Finding of the Service Review**

The City of Hamilton, and the men and women of Hamilton Paramedic Service, appreciate and respect the summary finding that the service they provide meets the requirements of the Ambulance Service Review Standards as outlined in the draft "Ambulance Service Review Preliminary Draft Report":

October 12, 2022

**Hamilton Paramedic Service**  
**Response to September 26, 2022 Service Review Preliminary**  
**Draft Report**

The Hamilton Paramedic Service would like to thank Aaron Lemieux for his professionalism and assistance during the virtual review process.

Hamilton Paramedic Service takes great pride in the delivery of quality patient care to the communities we serve. We therefore place great significance on the observations made during the virtual review process. We were pleased to receive various commendations through the report as confirmation from these observers that our corporate pillars of collective ownership, sensational service, and engaged empowered employees were fulfilled.

This statement is an accolade to the dedication and professionalism of the Paramedics, Supervisors, Managers and support staff employed by Hamilton Paramedic Service.

### **Response to Observations**

In the following sections, each of the observations will be listed in association with a response from Hamilton Paramedic Service (HPS).

#### **Observation 1 (Patient Care Devices and Conveyance Equipment Maintenance):**

*The Service Provider has a preventative maintenance program in place for conveyance equipment and patient care devices. All patient care devices requiring regular inspection and/or calibration (e.g. oxygen delivery systems, suction equipment, and defibrillator) were included within the Service Provider's Preventative Maintenance program. The service's oxygen testing equipment had not always been calibrated according to the manufacturer's specifications (no calibrations done in 2020 and 2021).*

**HPS Response:** As outlined in the observation, HPS takes pride in our preventative maintenance program and have taken the initiative to make this program, and its associated tracking, more robust. We acknowledge that record of calibration for the testing device was absent for the years 2020 and 2021. There was a record of calibration available for 2022 and we have ensured that the testing unit(s) are now being tracked for preventative maintenance schedules.

**ACTION:** HPS has corrected the deficiency and we have added the identified equipment to our Operative IQ system for scheduled maintenance cycles.

#### **Observation #2 (Employee Qualifications):**

*The Service Provider did not always report to the Field Office the Influenza Immunization status of each employee no later than directed by EHRAB each year (reports due in 2020, 2021 and 2022 were all sent late).*

**HPS Response:** HPS strives to meet the deadlines outlined by EHRAB in relation to the reporting requirements for Influenza Immunization status of our paramedic staff. The challenges HPS faces is in relation to when the EHRAB notification is received to when the

October 12, 2022

**Hamilton Paramedic Service**  
**Response to September 26, 2022 Service Review Preliminary**  
**Draft Report**

---

deadline is set to occur. Notifying 400+ staff and receiving their declarations is a time-consuming process that may be mitigated by having the EHRAB notification sent out earlier than the normal timelines.

**ACTION:** HPS will endeavour to meet future submission deadlines for Influenza Immunization status for each employee. Where a paramedic has not provided a response to the declaration it will be assumed that they have provided a negative response and we will report to the Ministry accordingly.

**Observation #3 (Service Provider Deployment Plan):**

*The Service Provider has provided a copy of their deployment plan to the Field Office suitable for implementation by the Communication Service. Documentation demonstrates the service does not always have sufficient staff at each level of qualification to meet their written deployment plan (service provider records showed down staffing occurred over various dates).*

**HPS Response:** HPS, as with other ambulance providers, faced many challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. The forefront of these challenges was staffing in response to Provincial mandates surrounding isolation, exposures, and symptomatic illness to name a few. Staffing continues to be a systemic issue with ambulance providers provincially and attempts are being made to mitigate this.

**ACTION:** HPS continues, on a yearly basis, to request additional ambulances/staff as part of the budgetary process with our City Council. HPS will continue to conduct yearly recruitments to fill vacancies and to meet any Council approved ambulance/staff additions.

**CONCLUSION**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this Draft Report. We would be pleased to meet to further discuss any issues, or to provide any required confirmation documentation, as needed to conclude the 2022 Ambulance Service Review Process.