




Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

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| TO: | Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee |
| COMMITTEE DATE: | August 17, 2023 |
| SUBJECT/REPORT NO: | Hamilton Paramedic Service Resident Survey 2023 Findings (HSC23049) (City Wide) |
| WARD(S) AFFECTED: | City Wide |
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| SIGNATURE: |  |

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not Applicable

INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

In March 2023, the Hamilton Paramedic Service conducted a resident survey as a follow up to the 2018 survey that informed the development of the 10-year Master Plan. Similar to the survey conducted in 2018, the most recent iteration sought to collect residents' opinions, expectations and priorities related to services, programs, and performance.

Results from the Hamilton Paramedic Service Resident survey 2023 (attached as Appendix "A") will be utilized to update the Hamilton Paramedic Service Master Plan (2022-2031) and for ongoing continuous improvement activities. In addition, this survey's findings will contribute to the development of the Asset Management Plan led by Corporate Asset Management.

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.

METHODOLOGY

Randomized telephone surveys carried out by a third-party vendor collected 550 responses. The phone surveys were conducted to ensure all wards in Hamilton were fairly represented by the survey sample.

To supplement the telephone data, an online version of the survey posted on Engage Hamilton garnered 200 responses.

The findings of the statistically representative sample of Hamilton's population collected from the phone survey should not be compared to the online survey findings which are subject to self-selection bias and one respondent can submit multiple surveys.

KEY FINDINGS

The findings highlighted below focus solely on the telephone survey responses as they most accurately represent Hamilton's population.

- 93% of respondents rate services provided by Hamilton Paramedic Service as good, very good or excellent
 - The proportion of respondents who rate services as excellent, significantly increased from 25% in 2018 to 36% in 2023
- For life-threatening emergencies, the majority of respondents feel that paramedics should arrive in less than five minutes (33%) or between five to seven minutes (33%)
- Over half (55%) of respondents have not heard of any of the community paramedic programs and services provided by the Hamilton Paramedic Service's Mobile Integrated Health
- The majority (73%) of respondents feel it is very important to allocate tax dollars to increase the number of ambulances and paramedics for a timelier response
- 35% of respondents would not feel comfortable using a public Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) to assist someone in cardiac arrest
- The majority (78%) of respondents indicated that it is very or moderately important that the cultural beliefs and values of patients/clients are considered when paramedics deliver patient care

ACTIONS

Some of the survey's findings have confirmed work that is currently underway or is planned in the short term as identified in the Hamilton Paramedic Service Master Plan. Other actions will be added to Master Plan as it is updated.

- Response Times and Resources

Hamilton residents responding to the survey indicated they wanted a timelier paramedic response supported by the allocation of tax dollars to increase resources. Similarly, a recent Abacus Data survey conducted in April 2023 (attached as Appendix “B”) of over 3,000 Canadians, reported that 36% believed paramedic response times are a major problem, this is an increase of 15% from 2021.

The Master Plan describes reducing offload delays and adding ambulances during peak demand hours to ensure more ambulances are available to respond to emergencies in a timely manner.

Collaborative efforts with the hospitals have resulted in a significant decrease in the time paramedics spend in offload delay in 2023. In the first 20 weeks of 2022, 13,365 hours were spent in offload delay, compared to only 9,274 hours for the same period in 2023. This equates to an additional 4,091 hours that ambulances are available for emergency response over last year.

In March 2023, Council approved the operating budget with the addition of seven 12-hour shifts, including vehicles, staffing, and equipment. Staffing of these additional ambulances is progressing through the summer and into the fall as our recruitment and retention activities develop.

- Mobile Integrated Health Program

Hamilton Paramedic Service’s community paramedicine program, or Mobile Integrated Health is a transformative healthcare initiative designed to bring comprehensive medical services directly to individuals in their homes and communities. This program aims to improve health outcomes, reduce hospital readmissions, and enhance the overall well-being of residents.

Mobile Integrated Health has expanded in recent years and includes the Community Paramedic Program, the Social Navigator Program, the Remote Patient Monitoring Program, CP@Clinic, and the Mobile Immunization and Testing Team. It has gained increased recognition and demand for its services among community organizations as is evident by over 2,100 referrals of clients to the program in 2022.

However, results of the recent resident survey show that there is very little awareness about Mobile Integrated Health among Hamilton’s residents. Those who were aware of the program rated it highly. When Canadian respondents of the Abacus Data survey were given a description of community paramedicine,

most either strongly (44%) or somewhat (39%) supported the model. The Hamilton Paramedic Service Resident Survey results clearly illustrate there is work to be done in Hamilton to better promote the Mobile Integrated Health program and its benefits to the community. This will be added as an objective to the updated Master Plan.

- Use of Public AEDs

More than one in three survey respondents reported not feeling comfortable using the public AED to help someone in cardiac arrest. Medical evidence shows that when an AED and CPR are administered immediately, often by a bystander, the chance of survival from sudden cardiac arrest is substantially improved by up to 75%.

The Hamilton Paramedic Service Master Plan identifies the establishment of a Cardiac Safe City program in 2025 with a full-time dedicated resource to lead the program. The focus of the program is to increase the number of AED in public spaces; promote awareness; provide education and training to the public on the use of AEDs, performing CPR and first aid; and monitor and report on outcomes. Work will be underway in 2024 to develop this program and plan for implementation in 2025.

- Culturally Competent Care

Most survey respondents felt it was important for paramedics to provide culturally appropriate care. This aligns with the findings of the Royal Roads University research paper completed in 2022 that examined cultural competency in paramedicine at the provincial and local levels. The majority (89%) of Hamilton paramedics who responded to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that a patient's cultural beliefs and values should be considered when delivering care. Moreover, 87% sometimes or always look for ways to adapt care to the patient's cultural preferences.

Focusing efforts on equity, diversity and inclusion and increasing cultural competency throughout the service is identified as an objective of the Master Plan with a range of activities already underway and many more planned in the coming years. Such work will be further developed and is ongoing as it becomes embedded in the everyday business of all aspects of the service.

The Hamilton Paramedic Service Resident Survey 2023 shows that residents of Hamilton value paramedic services and trust paramedics to provide healthcare treatment (77%). They believe it is important that paramedics provide outreach care to

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the vulnerable population (88%). Residents also feel that paramedics have an important role to play in providing the public with information and education about health and safety (87%) matters. They indicated that response times can be improved, and it is very important to allocate tax dollars for more ambulances (73%) and to update technology and medical equipment (81%).

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report HSC23049: Hamilton Paramedic Service Resident Survey 2023 – Summary Report

Appendix “B” to Report HSC23049: Abacus Data Survey Report June 2023