




INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	February 27, 2025
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Hamilton Paramedic Service Employee Well-Being Survey Findings (HSC25001) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not Applicable

INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

The Hamilton Paramedic Service Master Plan (2022-2031) has as an objective (29d) to, “enhance employee health and wellness activities through further development of mental health supports and Peer Support Activities.”

To achieve this objective, in July 2023, a Superintendent of Employee Wellness position was established to focus on developing a program to support and improve the well-being of the paramedic service workforce.

As a first step toward developing this program, in Q4 of 2023, the Employee Wellness Superintendent conducted a survey of frontline paramedics and superintendents to gauge the status of their well-being and garner input into ways to address challenges to wellness.

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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Following the cyber incident in February 2024, survey data were retrieved, and findings were compiled into a report shared with paramedic management in the fall of 2024. Survey results, which are highlighted below, have been used to identify activities to promote employees' health. As outlined below, some of these activities have already been implemented.

METHODOLOGY

The survey tool was created in-house specifically for Hamilton paramedics and superintendents. A link to the online survey was shared with employees during a wellness session of mandatory Professional Development Days in Q4 of 2023.

Paramedics and superintendents were given time during the session to voluntarily complete the survey. Responses were anonymous.

In total, 350 people completed the survey, which was just over 81 percent of Hamilton's paramedic-superintendent workforce at the time it was administered.

KEY FINDINGS

- Just over half of the respondents identified as male (55%), 35% of respondents identified with an equity-seeking group, 40% had less than 5 years in paramedicine, and the largest age category was that of 35 to 44 years (30%).
- Most respondents agreed that they maintain a good work-life balance (62%), can handle the stressors of the job (79%), feel supported by their work peers (64%), and enjoy their job (75%).
- The majority of respondents reported being in good or fair mental health (79%), physical health (81%), overall well-being (85%) and resilient (79%) in the 30 days prior to completing the survey.
- In the 12 months preceding the survey, fatigue/burnout was the most common impact to work-related well-being experienced by respondents in the workplace (37%), while anxiety was the most common impact experienced both personally and, in the workplace (37%).
- 38% of respondents used support services available through work. 88% of service users rated the Hamilton Paramedic Peer support team as a good or excellent resource, and 87% rated external mental health care specialists as good or excellent. The support services with the highest poor ratings were shift

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relief after difficult calls (49%), paramedic fitness facilities (45%) and EFAP Homewood Health (37%).

- Therapy dogs was the most preferred activity to support well-being in the workplace selected by 207 respondents, followed by exercise classes (144 respondents), meditation/yoga (138 respondents), and nutrition/cooking classes (131 respondents).

ACTIONS

The survey findings have led to the implementation of activities in 2024 aimed at supporting and enhancing frontline employee health and wellness.

- Employee Well-Being Survey results discussion with frontline employees (February to March)
- St. John's Therapy Dog visits to stations and training facility (April)
- Family night for families of new paramedics to learn about the service and how to provide mental health support to their loved one (May)
- Horticultural Therapy at the paramedic community garden (May and June)
- Cooking classes led by a paramedic in training facility kitchen (June)
- External violence against paramedic survey (September to December)

The Hamilton Paramedic Service Employee Well-Being Survey findings show that most of the frontline employees reporting being healthy and well at the time of the survey. However, areas for improvement were also identified such as addressing occupational burnout and improving services including relieving paramedics following a traumatic call. Several activities aimed at enhancing wellness were recommended by employees, some of which were implemented this year, with plans to continue the most requested activities such as therapy dogs and cooking classes while introducing additional activities in 2025 such as sports-related family events.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" to Report HSC25001: Hamilton Paramedic Service Employee Well-Being Survey 2023 – Summary Report