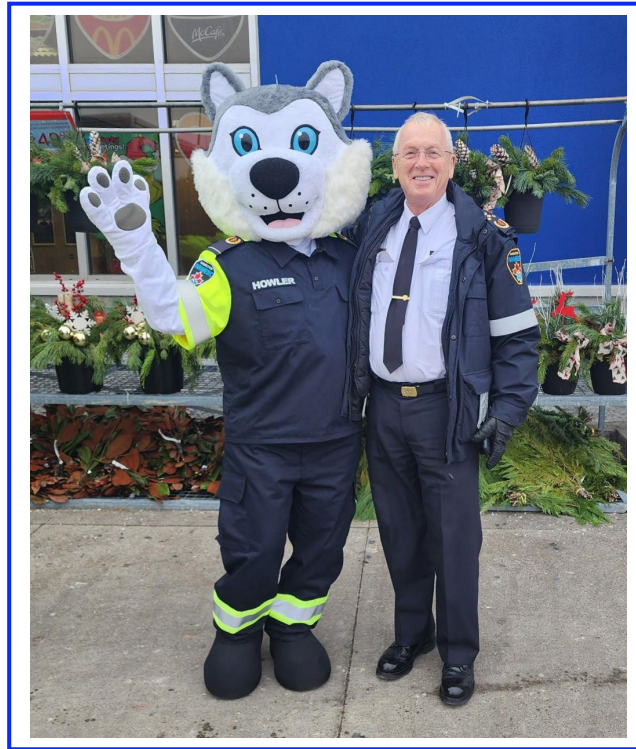


Hamilton Paramedic Service 2024 Annual Report



Introducing
the Hamilton Paramedic Service Mascot
Howler the Paramedic Husky



In 2024, HPS introduced the life-size version of the new mascot, Howler, initially launched in 2023 as a stuffed toy for paramedics to give to pediatric patients to comfort them.

The live Howler made an appearance at charitable events to help raise donations for the community.

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Message from the Chief



I am pleased to present the 2024 Annual Report highlighting our response performance, innovative initiatives and community engagement activities that occurred throughout the year.

The year was marked by some challenges including the City of Hamilton experiencing a cybersecurity incident that disrupted some of our IT systems. In addition, we experienced an increase in call volume which was at the upper end of the anticipated average increase reported in the HPS Master Plan.

During the response to the cybersecurity incident, our dedicated team of paramedics, Superintendents, logistic technicians, support staff and management worked diligently to ensure critical emergency services continued to be delivered and we continue to build back stronger. Moreover, while the number of emergency medical responses increased by almost 5% in 2024, our response time improved by 25 seconds from 2023 and we experienced just 2 code zeros, this is unprecedented in recent history.

2024 also brought some exciting new developments. HPS received approval from City Council to build a Central Reporting station of about 55,000 square feet out of which 20 vehicles will report. Renovations to our busy Station 30 began in 2024 including the installation of a prefabricated structure to house eight vehicles. All paramedics underwent training in innovative areas such as pre-hospital trauma life support and collaborative high reliability to enhance the well-being and safety of patients and medics. HPS also introduced innovative technology, mCAD, to access dispatch information from mobile devices.

We also introduced the life-size version of our mascot, Howler, who helped paramedics at charitable events where they volunteer their time to support the community. Paramedics also continued to recognize and celebrate the work of their peers with the HEART trophy awarded monthly to an outstanding paramedic. This 2024 Annual Report provides just a glimpse into some of these activities.

On a personal note, 2024 marked my 50th year in the field of paramedicine, and just last month I announced my plans to retire in August of 2025. While my career has seen many highlights, my time with HPS has been a tremendous experience with significant accomplishments. I am proud of what we have built together and the foundation we have set for continued success in the future.

I want to thank the Mayor, Council, the senior leadership team and General Manager of Healthy and Safe Communities Department for over a decade of support as we continually strive to ensure our growing service performs at optimal efficiency.

Above all, I want to convey my heartfelt gratitude to my entire team from the frontline to deputies. Your remarkable contributions have made a profound impact on the lives of many including my own. I could not have asked for a more exceptional team to work with and to conclude my career alongside. It has been my honour to serve you. Be sure to take care of yourselves and each other with the same dedication you show in serving our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Sanderson".

Michael Sanderson, Chief
Hamilton Paramedic Service

Service Overview

HPS Services



The Hamilton Paramedic Service (HPS) is the designated sole provider of paramedic services for the City of Hamilton serving over 569,000 residents in addition to those who visit Hamilton.

Operating out of 18 stations in urban and rural areas of the city, HPS provides pre-hospital advanced medical care, trauma care and the transport of patients from emergency incidents to health care facilities.

In addition, HPS provides a range of programs and services to promote the health of the community and proactively mitigate the demand on ambulance transports to hospitals. These include:

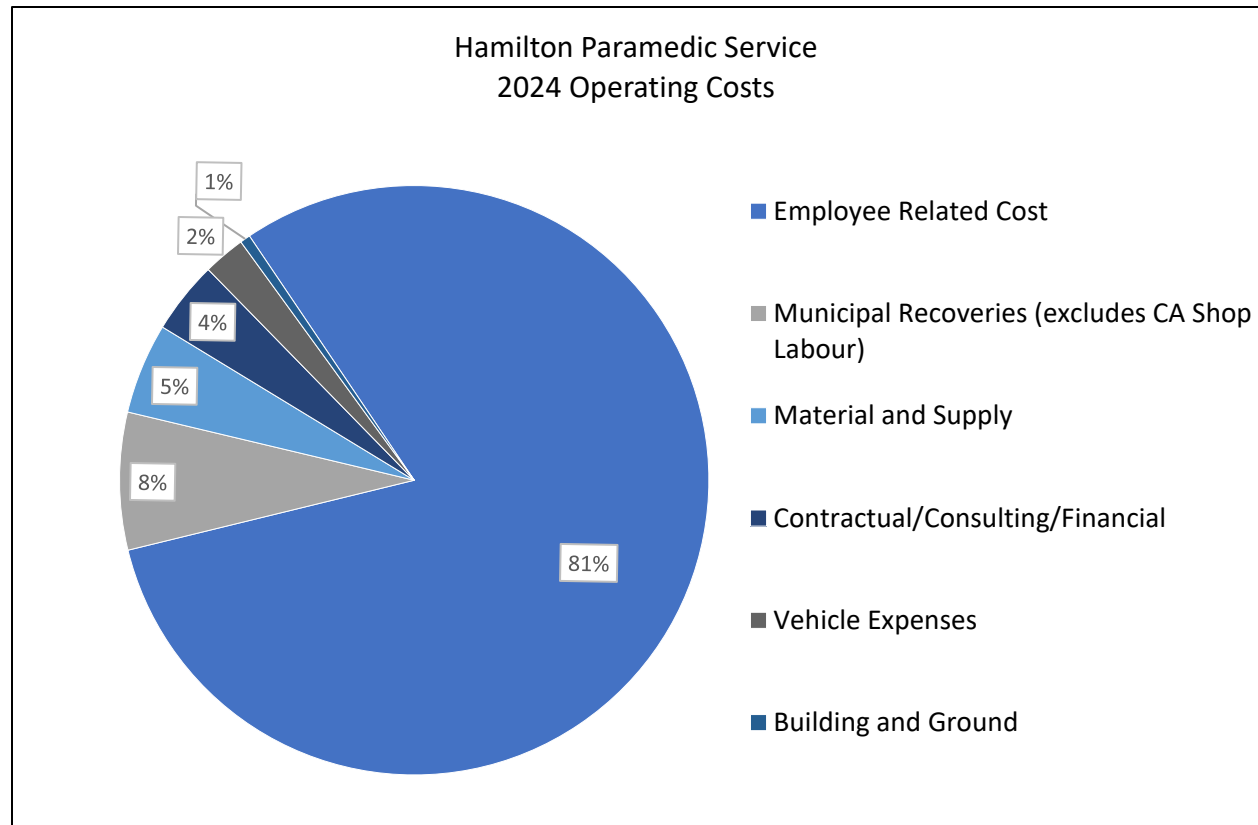
- Seniors' clinics
- Home visits / Remote patient monitoring
- Palliative support
- Long-term care wait list support
- Social Navigator Program
- Support for unhoused and encampment residents
- Mental health support
- Addiction support
- Point of care testing and wound imaging
- Mobile immunization
- Neonatal intensive care transfer
- Pediatric intensive care transfer
- Public access defibrillators
- Community and stakeholder engagement
- Community Engagement Paramedic Bike Unit (pictured above)
- Public education
- Continuing education and training of Hamilton paramedics
- Media and awareness campaigns
- Fundraising and support for local charities

HPS Finances

In 2024, HPS had an overall operating budget of \$81,472,000, however, 50% of direct land ambulance costs are funded by the Ministry of Health. In addition, the province provides 100% of funding for community paramedics, dedicated offload nursing, the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit ambulance and the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit ambulance.

The allocation of funds per each cost category and percentage of the overall budget is shown in the chart below.

2024 Operating Budget		
Category	\$	%
Employee Related Cost	65,698,350	81
Municipal Recoveries (excludes CA Shop Labour)	6,170,070	8
Material and Supply	3,962,880	5
Contractual/Consulting/Financial	3,289,050	4
Vehicle Expenses	1,890,240	2
Building and Ground	461,410	1
Total	81,472,000	100



HPS Structure

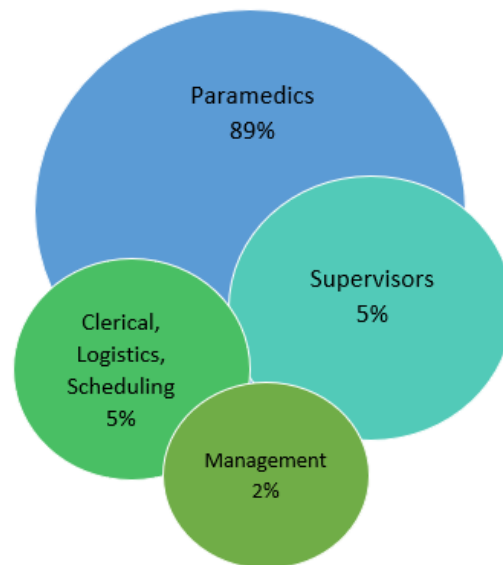
As an integral part of the health care system, HPS helps to promote the health and safety of Hamilton's residents and visitors through prevention, response and follow-up activities. HPS achieves this best by being situated within the Healthy and Safe Communities Department which enables collaboration with other divisions in the Department focused on similar outcomes for the community such as Hamilton Public Health Services, Long-Term Care facilities and the Hamilton Fire Department.

Reporting to the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department, the Paramedic Chief is responsible to lead the planning and operationalization of HPS which is comprised of four sections with the following responsibilities:

- Office of the Chief
 - Organizational oversight, strategic direction, budget management and stakeholder partnerships
- Operations Section
 - Response performance, deployment and resource utilization
- Logistics Section
 - Equipment and supplies procurement, maintenance and asset management, scheduling, corporate PPE oversight
- Performance and Development Section
 - Regulatory compliance, quality improvement, community engagement, continuing education and training, employee wellness and safety

A total of 406 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions made up the HPS workforce in 2024. Approximately 89% of staff are paramedics with 15% Advanced Care Paramedics. While paramedics provide direct services to the community, supervisors, logistics technicians, schedulers, clerical staff and management provide a variety of supportive, educational and regulatory functions to meet Ministry of Health mandates. HPS workforce breaks down as follows:

Position	FTEs	
	Full-time	Part-time
Total Paramedics	357	25
Primary Care	302	24
Advanced Care	55	1
Supervisors	22	-
Clerical, Logistics & Scheduling Staff	19	-
Management	8	-

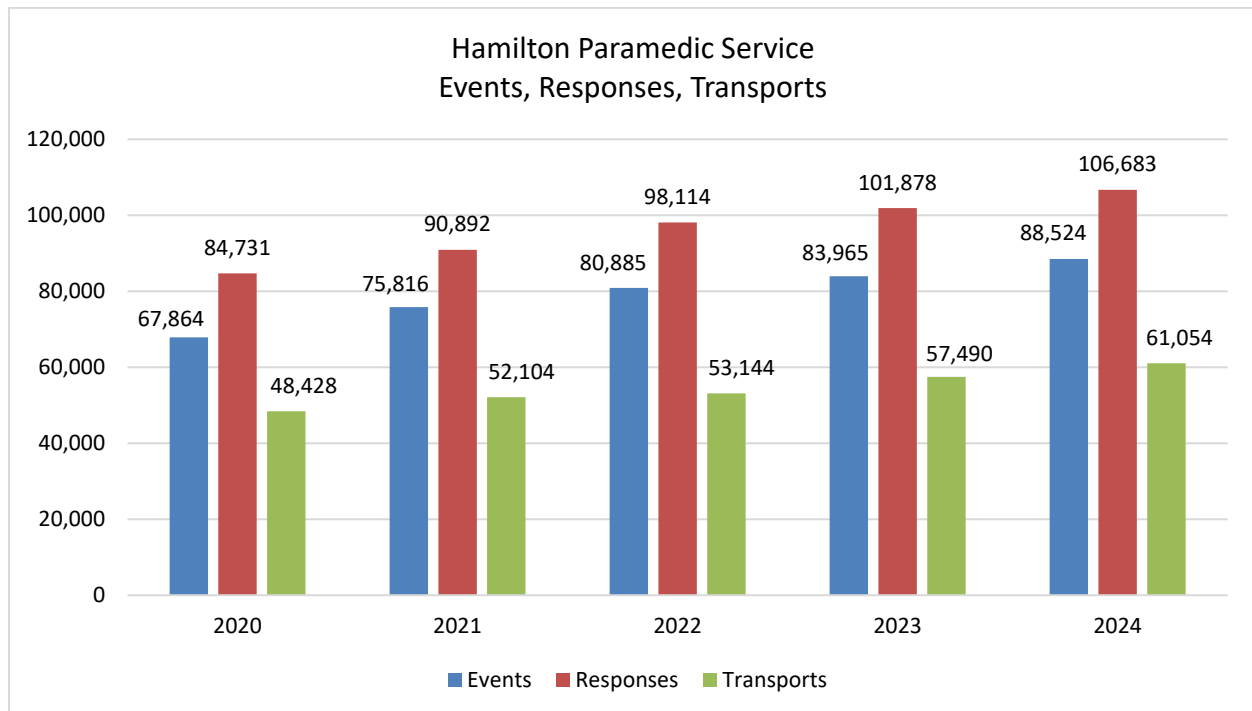


Performance Overview

At a Glance: Events, Responses, Transports

The following graph shows the total number of events, responses, and transports respectively, for the past five years from 2020 to 2024.

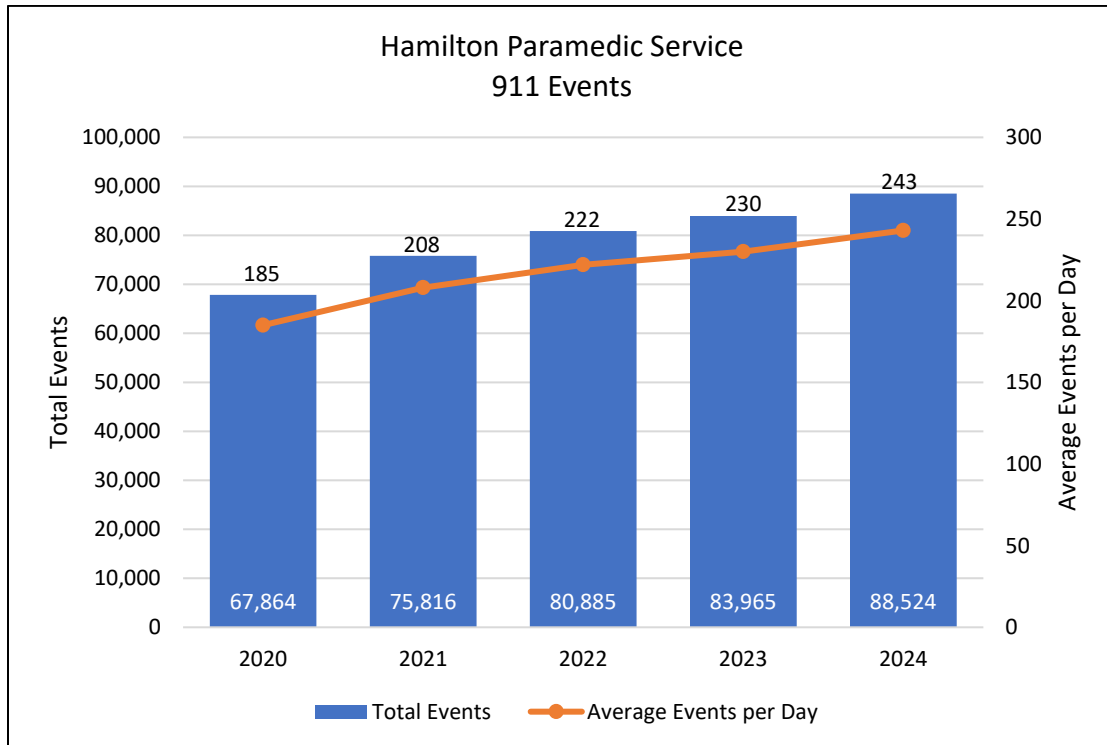
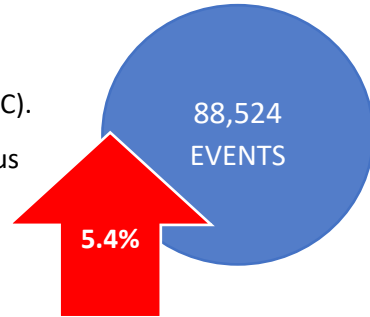
HPS experiences an increase in service demands each year. As projected in the HPS 10-year Master Plan, the number of events, responses and patients transported to hospital have all increased in 2024 from previous years. However, the increase is at the highest end of the range for average increase per year forecasted in the HPS Master Plan.



Events

An event is generated every time 911 is called for paramedic assistance through dispatch, the Central Ambulance Communications Centre (CACC).

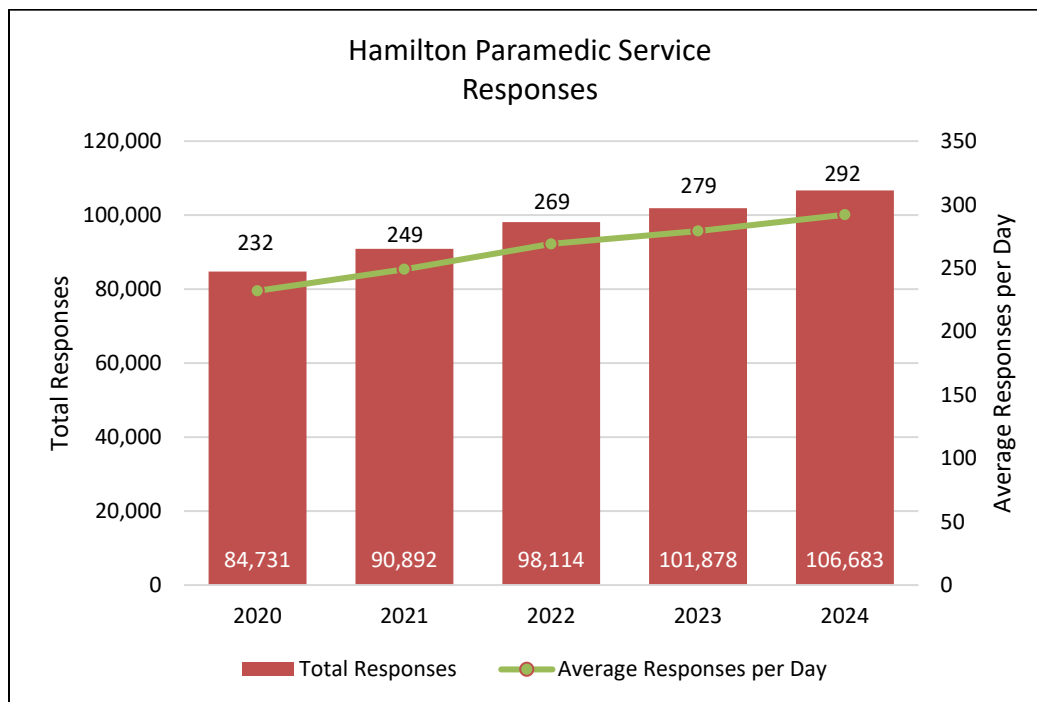
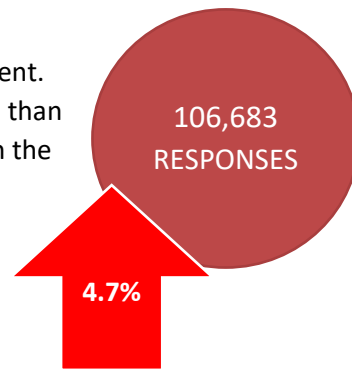
In 2024, HPS experienced a larger number of 911 events than in previous years with 88,524 events, an average of 243 events per day and an increase of over 5% from 2023.



Responses

Responses are the number of paramedic vehicles that are sent to an event. This number is higher than the number of events as there may be more than one vehicle required to manage an emergency incident. For example, in the event of a motor vehicle collisions or a complex medical emergency, multiple paramedic vehicles may be required to respond.

In 2024, HPS had a total of 106,683 responses with a daily average of 292 responses, an increase of almost 5% from 2023.



Top 10 Patient Problems by Dispatch Category 2024	% of Call Responses
Fall	14
Dyspnea (shortness of breath)	13
Ischemic (obstruction of blood flow)	9
Unknown	7
Unconscious	7
Abdominal/Pelvic/Perineal/Rectal Pain	6
Unwell	3
Motor Vehicle Collision	3
Behaviour/Psychiatric	3
Diabetic Emergency	3

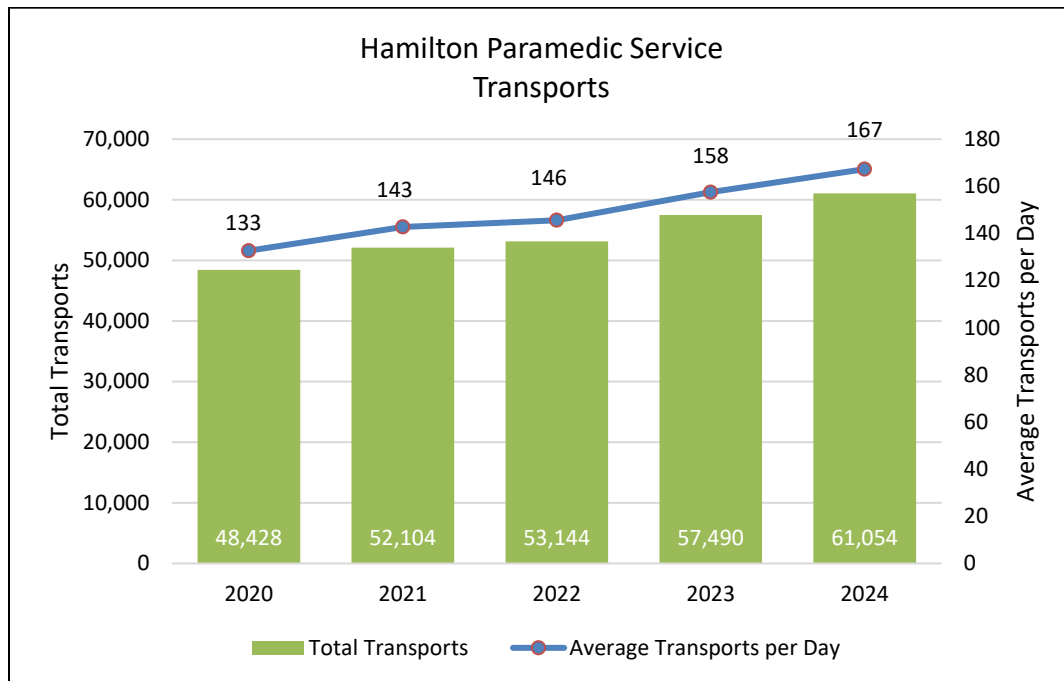
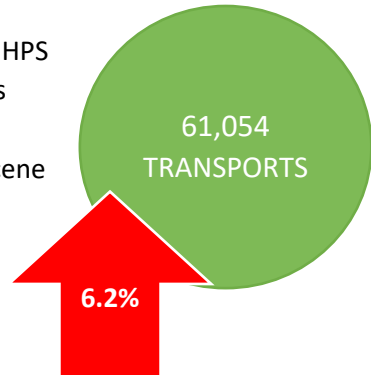
Patient Problems

This table lists the top ten reasons an ambulance was dispatched for medical assistance in 2024.

Transports

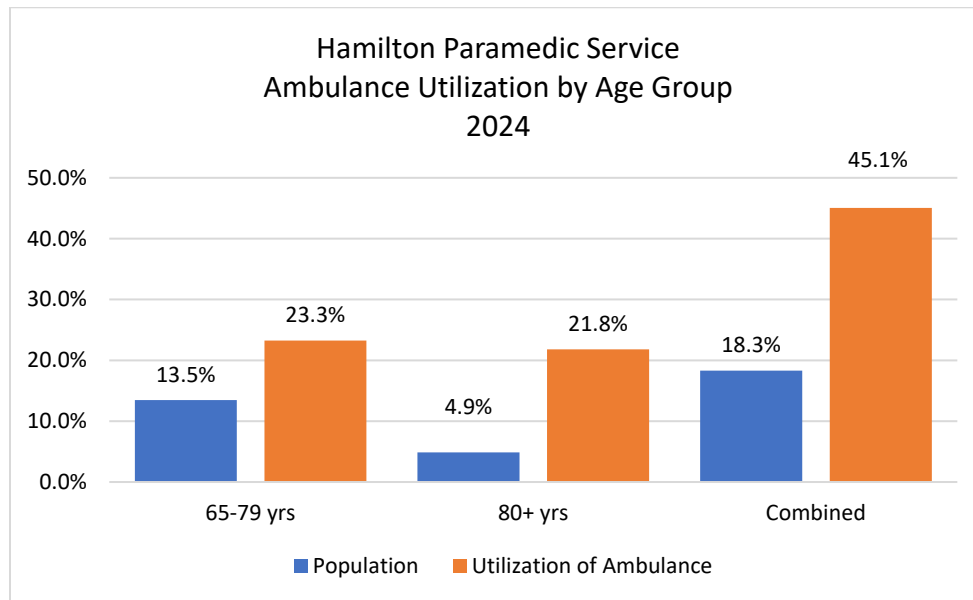
Transports refers to the number patients transported to hospitals by an HPS ambulance. This number is typically lower than the number of events, as some patients decline transport to hospital or are found not to require hospital services as determined through an assessment conducted on scene by the paramedics.

HPS transported a total of 61,054 patients in 2024, an average of 167 patients transported every day and an increase in over 6% from 2023.



Patient Age

As identified in the HPS Master Plan, individuals above the age of 65 are the most frequent users of ambulance services. People over 65 years old comprise 18% of the population of Hamilton, however, they accounted for 45% of HPS patients in 2024. Individuals aged 80 years and older make up a smaller percentage of Hamilton's population (4.9%) but their utilization of ambulance services in 2024 was significantly higher (21.8%). Statistics Canada projects that the over 65 age group will become a larger percentage of the population over the next 20 years. As noted in the HPS Master Plan, this is a causative factor in the increasing demand for HPS services.



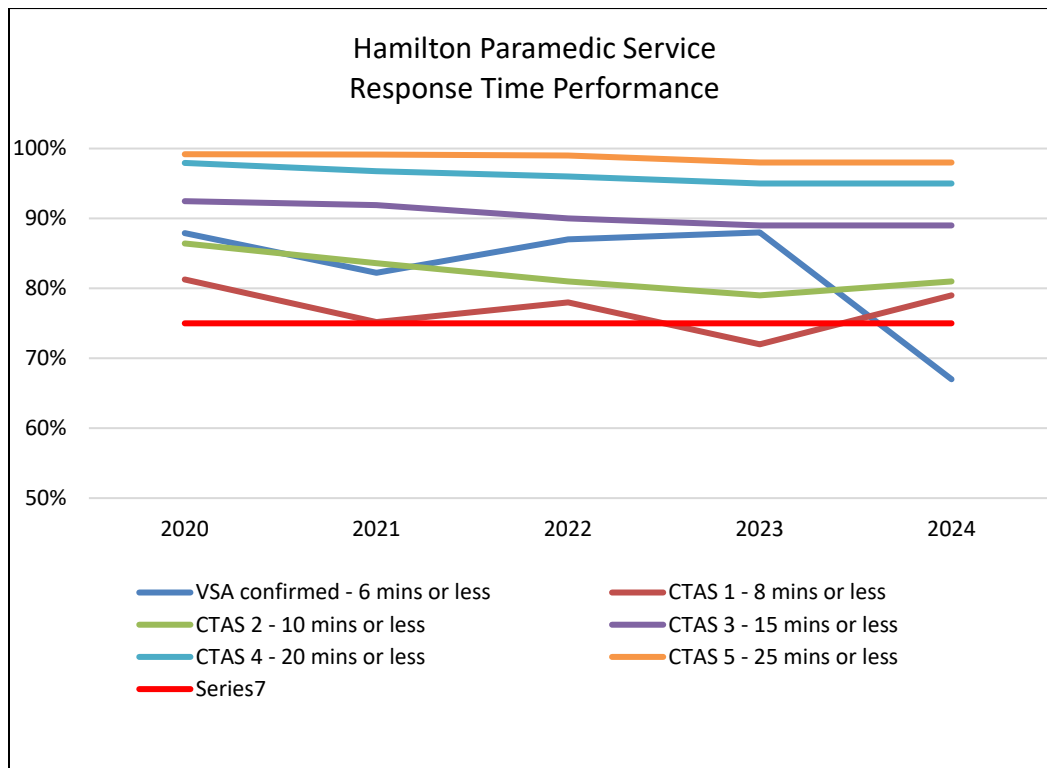
Response Time Compliance

The *Ambulance Act of Ontario* requires that every paramedic operator in Ontario is responsible to establish and publicly report on response time performance. The City of Hamilton and the Ministry of Health approved target response times based on the Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale (CTAS). CTAS is a triage system that prioritizes patient care by severity of the injury or illness. HPS is expected to achieve the target times in each CTAS category at least 75% of the time.

With ongoing and significant increases in demand for service experienced in 2024, HPS surpassed the standard for achieving the target times for each CTAS category except one, as shown below.

CTAS Category	Acuity Level	Target Time	Standard % of Time Target Time to be Achieved	% of Time HPS Achieved Target Time
Vital Signs Absent	VSA Confirmed	6 minutes	75	67
1	Resuscitation	8 minutes	75	79
2	Emergent	10 minutes	75	81
3	Urgent	15 minutes	75	89
4	Less Urgent	20 minutes	75	95
5	Non-Urgent	25 minutes	75	98

In 2024, the only category that did not meet the standard response time was VSA Confirmed with response time of up to 6 minutes occurring 67% of the time falling short of the response time standard of 75% of the time (as indicated below by the red line in the chart below).

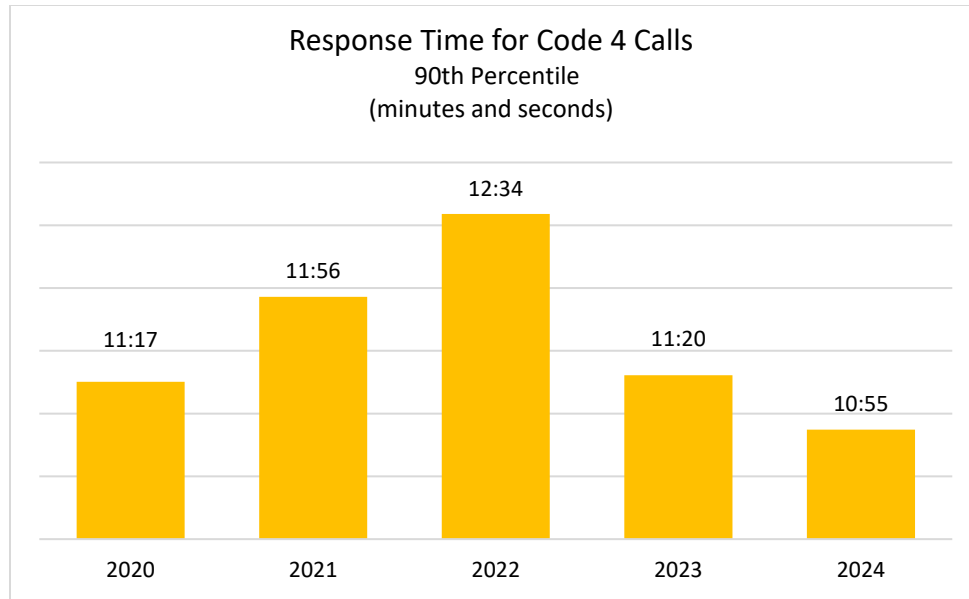


Emergency Response Time

When a call is dispatched, a priority code is given based on level of urgency. A Code 4 call is the top priority indicating a life-threatening emergency requiring immediate response. The target time to have an ambulance on the scene of calls dispatched as life-threatening is within 10 minutes, 90 percent of the time.

In 2024, response to calls dispatched as a life-threatening emergency (Code 4) was 10 minutes and 55 seconds at the 90th percentile. This represents the period from when dispatch assigns the call to paramedics until paramedics arrive on scene. Despite the increase in call volume from 2023, the response time for 2024 improved by 25 seconds, the quickest response time compared to previous years.





Offload Delays

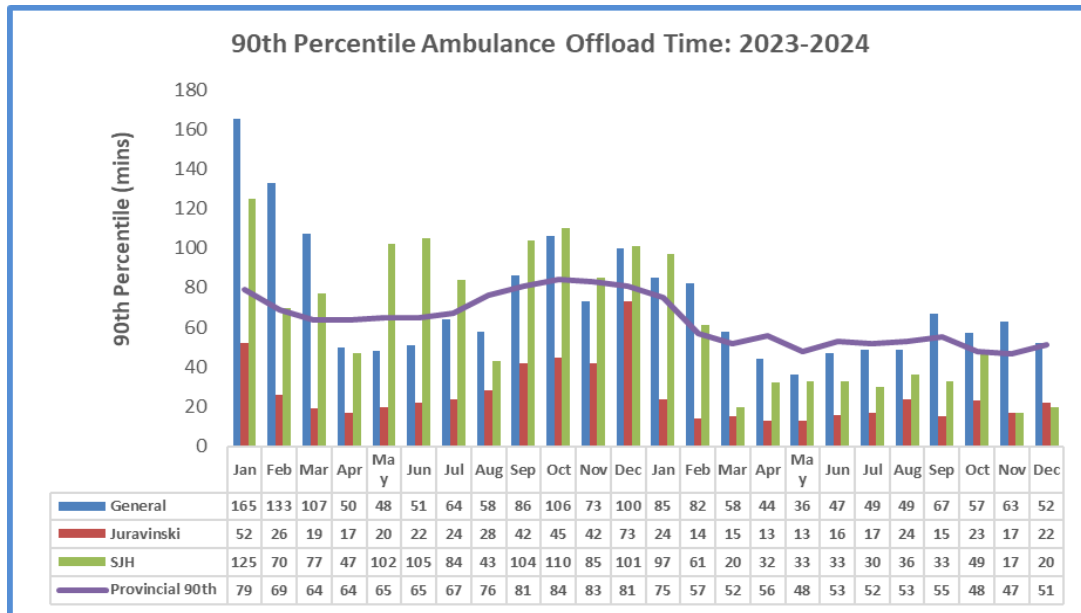
An offload delay occurs when the hospital does not accept responsibility for the care of a patient from paramedics within 30 minutes of the ambulance arriving at the Emergency Department. The provincial government standard stipulates that transfer of care (TOC) of patients should occur within 30 minutes 90% of the time.

Paramedics are required to remain with and care for the patient until the hospital is ready to accept the responsibility for their care.



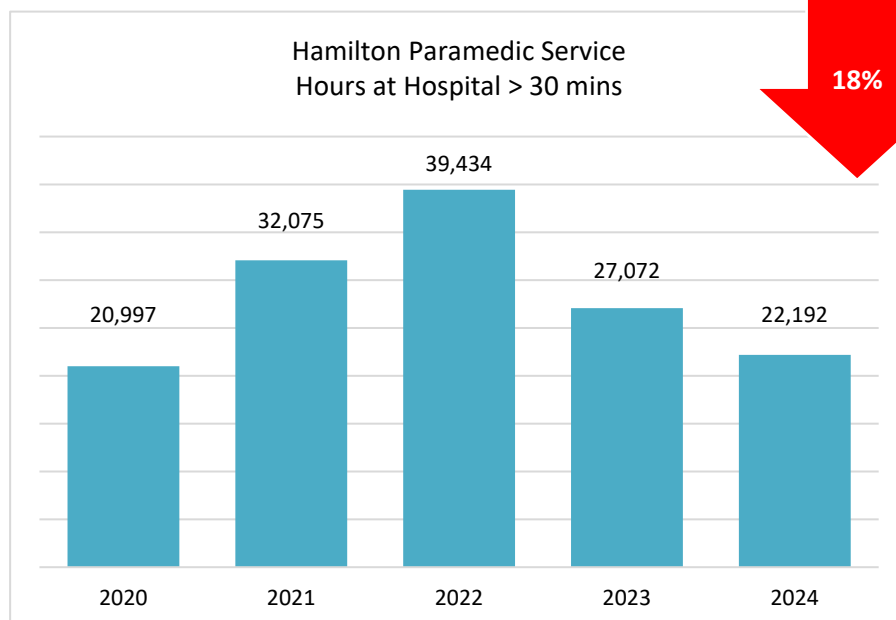
As a result of ongoing system pressures, hospitals in Hamilton have struggled to meet the provincial target of accepting the patient within 30 minutes of paramedic arrival. Thus, the City of Hamilton and Hamilton hospitals have implemented interim targets with the goal of transferring the care of the patient to the hospital within 60 minutes, 90% of the time and within 120 minutes, 100% of the time.

As illustrated in the chart below, there were improvements in all three target time categories in 2024 compared to 2023. In 2024, Juravinski Hospital was below the target time of taking over care of patients within 30 minutes for all 12 months of the year. St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton Hospital took over the care of patients from paramedics within 60 minutes for 10 months in 2024, 4 months of which were within 30 minutes. Transfer of care at the Hamilton General Hospital occurred within 60 minutes for 10 months in 2024.



In 2024, HPS and the City of Hamilton formally recognized the Juravinski Hospital Emergency Department team for leading the way to reduce offload delays.

In 2024, paramedics spent a total of 22,192 hours in excess of 30 minutes in hospital Emergency Departments. This represents a second year of improvement, with an 18% decrease or 4,880 fewer hours of paramedics waiting at hospitals over 30 minutes compared to 2023.



18%

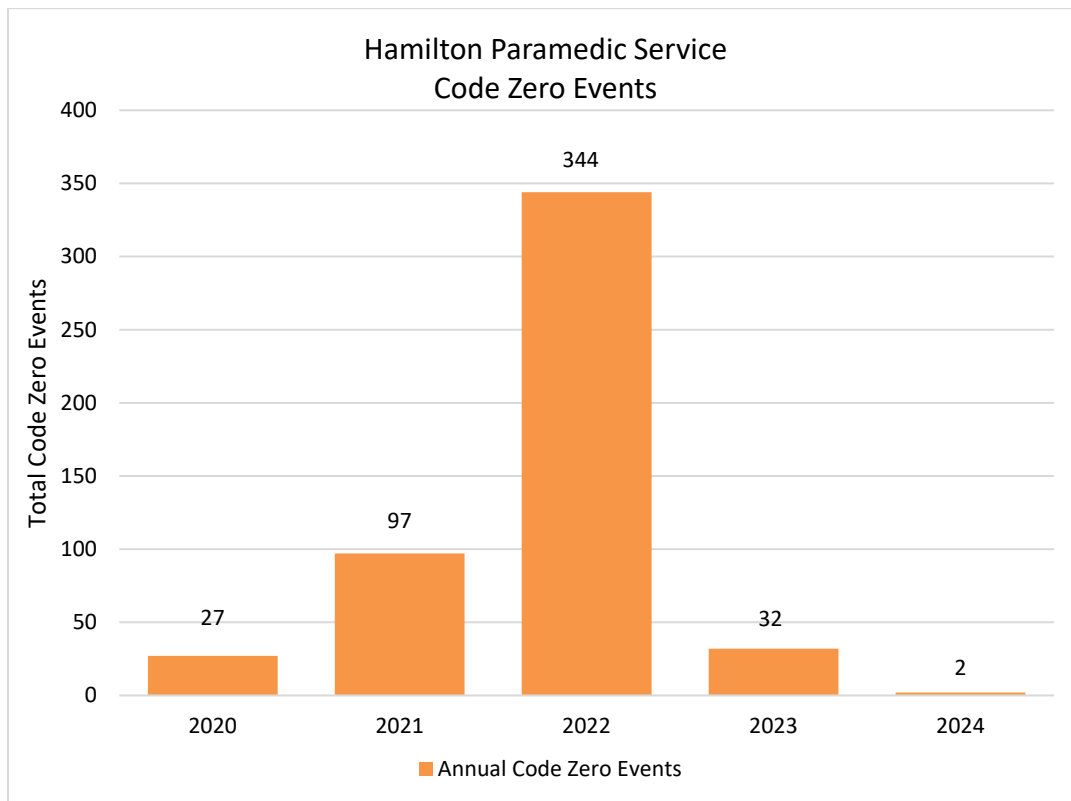
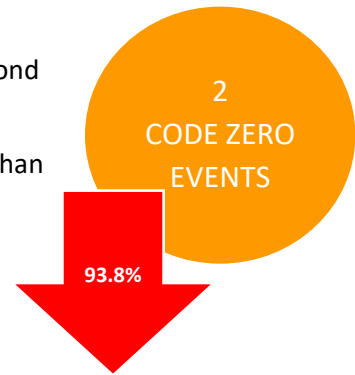
22,192
hours at
hospitals
>30 mins

Code Zero Events

A code zero event is when there is one or less ambulance available to respond to emergencies in the community.

Long offload delays, particularly when there are 10 or more delays longer than 2 hours in one day, are the major cause of code zero events. When a code zero event occurs, lower acuity calls are queued, higher acuity calls have lengthened response times, and ambulances from neighbouring municipalities are assigned to respond to emergency calls in Hamilton.

In 2024, there were a total of 2 code zero events in Hamilton that occurred in January and lasted less than 10 minutes. This is the second year of significant decreases in code zero events and a decrease of approximately 94% and 30 hours from 2023. This lowest reported number of code zero events in over 15 years.



The reduction in offload delay times and code zero events amid increasing demands for service can be attributed to collaborative efforts with hospital partners to optimize offload processes utilizing continuous improvement strategies and the addition of resources dedicated to offloading.

Mobile Integrated Health



In addition to emergency response and pre-hospital care, HPS also provides comprehensive medical services directly to individuals in their homes and communities. The Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) unit consists of specially trained paramedics who provide on-site advanced medical assessments, treatment, and coordination of care to address various health concerns. By offering proactive and preventive care, MIH aims to improve health outcomes, reduce hospital readmissions, and enhance the overall well-being of residents in Hamilton.

The MIH Program includes the Community Paramedic (CP) @Clinic program, the CP@Home program which includes Remote Patient Monitoring, and the Social Navigator Program. These programs are described in the following pages.

Social Navigator Program/Rapid Intervention and Support Team

The Social Navigator Program (SNP) is a collaboration with the Hamilton Police Service to support the most marginalized individuals in Hamilton. The Rapid Intervention and Support Team (RIST), led by Hamilton Police Service, is an extension of SNP consisting of a multi-disciplinary outreach team of community service providers. RIST members work together daily to provide resources and support in a timely fashion. This team is focused on helping individuals with complex and often concurrent issues navigate systems that are equally complex.



In 2024, 576 individuals were served by the SNP and RIST program. There were 4,316 interactions with individuals in need resulting in the delivery of 9,902 services to clients including providing information, food, clothing, water, transportation, harm reduction resources, wound care, hygiene products, wellness checks and 118 referrals to service providers. On average, the SNP/RIST team interacted with 360 clients per month in 2024.

CP@Clinic

The CP@Clinic program was developed to improve the health and quality of life for older adults living in subsidized housing. The aim is to help individuals stay healthy at home while also reducing avoidable calls to 911. Community paramedics hold sessions in residents' buildings to assess and address their needs with a focus on chronic disease prevention, management, and health promotion. The benefits of the program include improved health and quality of life, reduced social isolation, and being connected to primary care and community resources.

In 2024, MIH conducted clinics in 16 buildings including CityHousing Hamilton locations and residential care facilities. Community paramedics staffed recurring clinics in these buildings, conducted 354 assessments and administered 248 immunizations to residents.



CP@Home

The @Home program provides in-home supports to vulnerable clients such as frequent callers of 911, palliative patients, clients on the long-term care waitlist and the underserved population. A community paramedic visits the client where they live, conducts an in-depth assessment including point of care urine and blood testing and wound imaging. The community paramedic can promptly connect the client to resources related to a variety of issues such as congestive heart failure, diabetes, falls, mental health and addiction and palliative care.

The CP@Home program had 1,020 new clients enrolled in 2024. Community paramedics made 3,384 in-person visits to clients and 15,421 telephone check-ins to ensure clients' medical needs were addressed in a timely manner. As a result, community paramedics contacted physicians 338 times, activated 911 50 times, and performed 152 designated controlled medical acts.

Community Paramedic Remote Patient Monitoring

As part of the CP@Home program, community paramedics leverage technology to monitor clients' conditions in their home. The patient-generated health data is transmitted wirelessly to a database and monitored by a community paramedic. Through this program, a client's condition is proactively managed before it requires an emergency 911 response and hospitalization.

In 2024, community paramedics received 6,378 patient reading alerts from up to 240 clients and conducted 12,742 follow-ups either in-person, on the phone or activating an emergency response.

Community Engagement

The MIH team also provides information on community paramedicine and preventative health education to community organizations and events. In 2024, these included Circle of Friends, Dundas and Hamilton Seniors Fairs, Young Carer's Association, Sheffield and Bartonstone United Churches and the Gurdwara Sikh Mosque among others.



MIH also organized donations from the Amazon Fulfillment Centre in Hamilton in 2024 and distributed them to community service providers such as YMCA, YWCA, St. Matthew's House, Welcome Inn, Mission Services, Hamilton Regional Indian Centre, Alzheimer's Society, John Howard Society as well as SNP and Community Paramedic clients.

Clinical Excellence



Clinical excellence is the expert knowledge, skills and practices of a clinician that results in the delivery of informed and compassionate patient care. At HPS, clinical excellence is achieved through a commitment to continued growth and development. HPS has a skilled and experienced team of instructors dedicated to enhancing the performance and further developing the expertise of Hamilton paramedics. In 2024, the Performance and Development section of HPS delivered continuing education to all HPS paramedics that included new clinical procedures, medical equipment and a review of existing procedures and standards thereby expanding and refreshing paramedics' capabilities. In 2024, paramedics received a total of over 27,000 hours of training and education to ensure excellent clinical care is provided to clients and patients.

2024 New Recruits

In 2024, HPS recruited and trained 41 new Hamilton paramedics. Nineteen of these new recruits were fast tracked as they had already been working as paramedics. The orientation training is condensed for the fast-track group, so they are able to get on the road and serve the community in an expedited timeframe. The remaining 22 new recruits recently completed a paramedic college program and therefore receive a more comprehensive orientation than the experienced paramedics.

All recruits undergo extensive training consisting of in classroom training, simulation scenarios, hands-on learning, driver training and time on the road. In 2024, recruits received over 8,380 hours of orientation training after which they are assigned to a team of two Hamilton paramedics and act in full capacity as a certified paramedic while they become accustomed to their new career.



(Photo credit: P. Casey)



Primary Care Paramedics Autonomous Intravenous

HPS offers Autonomous Intravenous (AIV) training to all Hamilton Primary Care Paramedics (PCPs) through the Performance and Development section. The PCP AIV course expands the scope of practice of PCPs enabling them to assist with an increasing number of high acuity patients. Through this course, PCPs are trained to perform controlled medical acts that are performed by Advanced Care Paramedics. PCPs certified in PCP AIV can administer peripheral intravenous therapy and medications outside of the scope of regular practice of a PCP.

In 2024, 33 paramedics completed this course totaling 528 hours of training in addition to clinical training at the hospital. Since the introduction of PCP-AIV training in the spring of 2021 to the end of 2024, a total of 284 PCPs have been PCP AIV trained. This moves HPS closer to achieving the objective identified in the HPS Master Plan of having every PCP trained and certified in AIV. By the end of 2024, 87% of PCPs have been trained in PCP AIV.

ACP Tuition Reimbursement Program

HPS recognizes that continuing education contributes to service excellence as well as employee satisfaction. Through the City of Hamilton, HPS offers financial support for paramedics who are enrolled in or have been accepted to an Ontario Community College Advanced Care Paramedic (ACP) training program.

ACPs have a broader scope of practice than Primary Care Paramedics (PCPs) and are authorized to perform procedures, controlled medical acts and administer medications to treat complex medical issues or traumatic injuries.

The HPS Master Plan recommends increasing the number of ACPs to a level that would enable at least 90% of calls requiring ACP intervention to have an ACP response. The benefits to increased ACP response include:

- A higher level of care to all patients regardless of their condition or level of acuity
- Increase in available ACP resources for emergency calls (even if ACPs are also dispatched to non-emergency calls)
- Reduction in dual responses when PCPs arrive at a call first then determine they need to call in an ACP as well

In 2024, 13 paramedics were successful in receiving tuition reimbursement for the ACP training program. A total of 49 paramedics have received ACP bursaries since 2020.

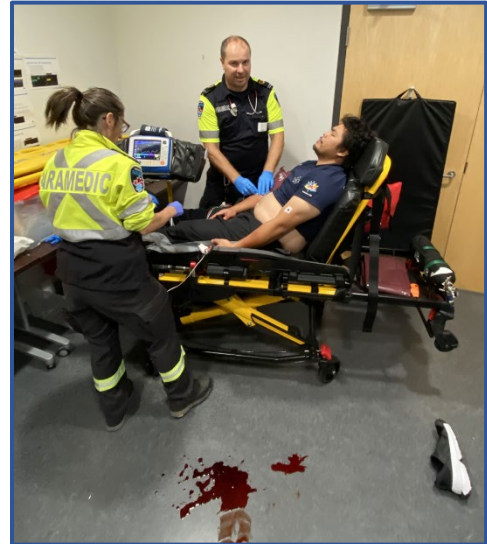


Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support

While Hamilton paramedics respond to hundreds of emergency medical calls each day, on average, just under 10% are trauma calls. In 2024, HPS had 7,241 trauma calls. Traumatic injuries are sudden and severe injuries that require urgent medical attention to prevent death and disability.

Recognizing it is vitally important that paramedics are proficient in managing patients with traumatic injuries, the HPS Master Plan identified as an objective that all Hamilton paramedics receive enhanced training in advanced trauma life support.

As a result, in 2024, HPS achieved certification through the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) to deliver Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) training and provided this training to all 450 HPS practitioners (i.e., paramedics, Supervisors, Commanders, Deputy Chiefs) through seven weeks of intense, high-fidelity training.



PHTLS training included an online component as a prerequisite for in-person training that consisted of 13 simulation scenarios reflective of incidents occurring in Hamilton, including a mass casualty incident.

At the time of this report, HPS is one of only three paramedic services in the province to be authorized to deliver PHTLS training and the only service in Ontario providing training to all the service's active practitioners.

Results of post-training feedback survey showed that practitioners felt the relevant material, real-life scenarios and instructor expertise helped them to increase their skills and confidence and feel better prepared to deal with traumatic injuries in the field.

Having all Hamilton paramedics certified in PHTLS, increases the quality of care being provided to the community and exceeds that which is required of paramedics as per Ministry of Health standards. Hamilton paramedics are now more prepared and more competent in providing optimal care to patients with traumatic injuries.



Continuous Improvement

HPS is constantly improving processes, programs and services through innovation and best practices to ensure optimal delivery of quality care to the community. Some of the continuous improvement initiatives undertaken in 2024 are highlighted in this section.

The Hamilton Paramedic Service Master Plan (2022-2031)

The HPS Master Plan sets the course for more integrated services delivered by paramedics equipped with progressive technology and expanded skills to ensure the best outcomes for all people who depend on HPS for their health and well-being.

The HPS Master Plan identifies five priorities with 29 distinct objectives and corresponding actions.

The key objectives that were completed in 2024 are as follows:

- ✓ Add one staffed ambulance per year to address growth in service demands **Objective 2**
- ✓ Increase the number of ACPs toward a level that enables 90% of calls requiring ACP intervention to have an ACP response **Objective 4**
- ✓ Conduct a review and analysis of the Tiered Response Agreement utilizing current call response and patient care data compared to modified response during the pandemic **Objective 6**
- ✓ Continue to reduce offload delay in collaboration with health care system partners **Objective 7**
- ✓ Support Primary Care Paramedics in becoming certified in Primary Care Paramedic Autonomous Intravenous (PCP AIV) **Objective 11a**
- ✓ Train all paramedics in Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support **Objective 13**
- ✓ Complete a review of Logistics and Planning section to ensure resources meet growing demands **Objective 18**
- ✓ Develop a clean and green plan for reducing the carbon footprint of HPS **Objective 21**
- ✓ Acquire smartphones for all paramedics to integrate with dispatch systems **Objective 22a**
- ✓ Secure a shelter to address the short-term needs of storing vehicles in a protected environment **Objective 27**
- ✓ Develop a facility plan to address the medium and long-term needs for a growing service **Objective 28**
- ✓ Continue to build relationships with diverse communities to expand HPS recruitment activities and promote cultural competency among paramedics **Objective 29b**



HPS Master Plan Priorities



Quality Assurance

HPS has a robust quality assurance program that, among other activities, reviews and responds to feedback from customers. Follow-up with paramedics is an integral part of the program to ensure the continuous improvement of service delivery.

In 2024, the quality assurance reviews conducted consisted of:

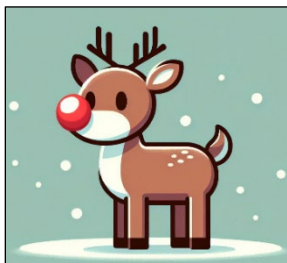
- Compliments (71)
- Collisions (58)
- Concerns (45)

In comparison to 2023, the number of compliments and collisions each decreased by approximately 30% while concerns increased by 22%.

Most of the customer concerns were related to professional conduct. Such matters are thoroughly reviewed utilizing a standardized approach (described in detail below) and may result in coaching or additional training of paramedics. Most of the collisions in 2024 were minor with damages under \$1,000 caused by clearance issues.

A wide range of compliments were received in 2024 from people who used HPS services or from their caretakers or loved ones. Paramedics were praised for their empathy, compassion, kindness, knowledge, professionalism, calming ability and willingness to go above and beyond their duties for to care for their patients.

The following are just two examples of the recognition Hamilton paramedics received in 2024 from the community they serve:



I called 911 on Christmas morning about my 2-year-old daughter having trouble breathing.

The paramedics were so friendly to my daughter, telling her things like the red light on her finger was just like Rudolph's nose! And they lit up the vehicle lights for her when they were done looking after her.

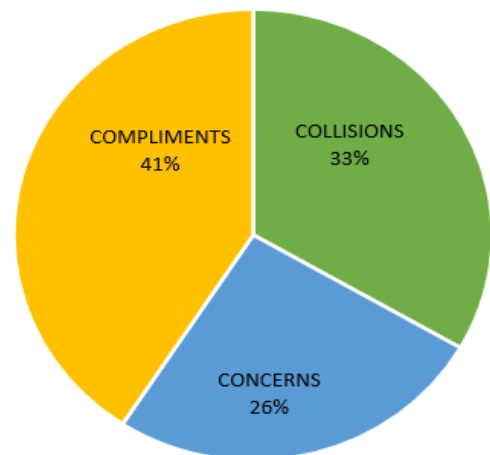
They made us all feel safe and comfortable.



It was my sister-in-law's last day as she chose MAID. The paramedics who transported her home, stopped first at the river so her and her husband could spend some last moments at a spot that meant so much to both of them. She was treated with such respect and dignity.

I will never forget what the paramedics did to ensure her last day was a beautiful one.

Quality Improvement Reviews
2024



Collaborative High Reliability

It is critical to optimize reliability in an organization of high-risk such as emergency medical services. Paramedics perform in complex, demanding environments where decisions have to be made quickly and errors can have devastating consequences.

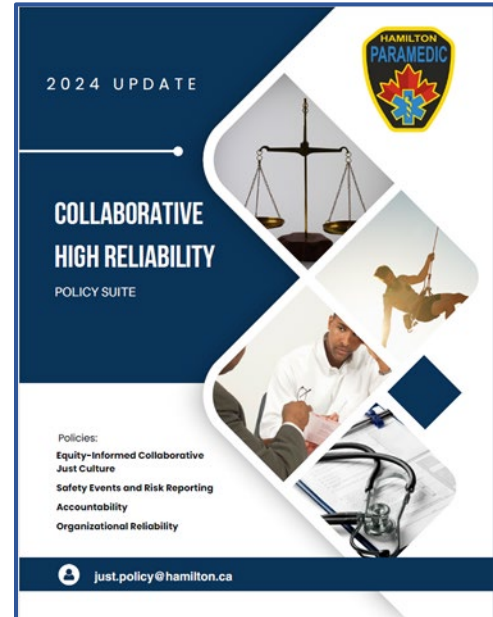
For many years, HPS has been working with a renowned organization in the field of high-consequence industries such as healthcare, aviation and emergency services to create a collaborative culture in which employees are encouraged and rewarded for identifying and reporting risks. This approach focuses on the risks and systems issues that influence human performance and can cause errors and negative outcomes.

Being able to identify, monitor and address risks and systems issues is foundational to achieving a highly reliable organization where safety incidents and errors are reduced, employees are more engaged and satisfied, and operational performance is optimal.

HPS has revised systems such as policies, procedures, processes guidelines, and quality reviews to support high reliability and in 2024, HPS provided training to all employees in collaborative high reliability. This training helps employees see and understand the risks that impact them every day. HPS also introduced an electronic reporting system to make it easy to report risks so they can be proactively managed to prevent adverse outcomes.

Moreover, in 2024, HPS delivered additional training to all management level employees on the use of a standardized approach to reviewing and assessing risk-related issues. Collaborative high reliability training is now part of orientation for all employees whether they are a new to HPS or move to a management position.

HPS is committed to achieving and sustaining collaborative high reliability and is poised to be one of the first organizations in Canada to have its program audited for qualification in an ongoing journey of continuous improvement.



Collaborative High Reliability Management Training

Solar Panel Ambulance Initiative

Ambulances must run constantly not only for the comfort of the patient but also to ensure that pharmaceuticals and equipment within the vehicle are in a temperature-controlled environment at all times. Constantly idling vehicles negatively impacts the environment by releasing greenhouse gas emissions and polluting the air. There are operational costs as well, such as the cost of fuel and replacement of vehicle batteries.

To address these concerns, in 2024, the Logistics and Planning section of HPS conducted a pilot project as identified in the HPS Green Plan and installed solar panels on two ambulances that kept batteries charged and reduced idling.

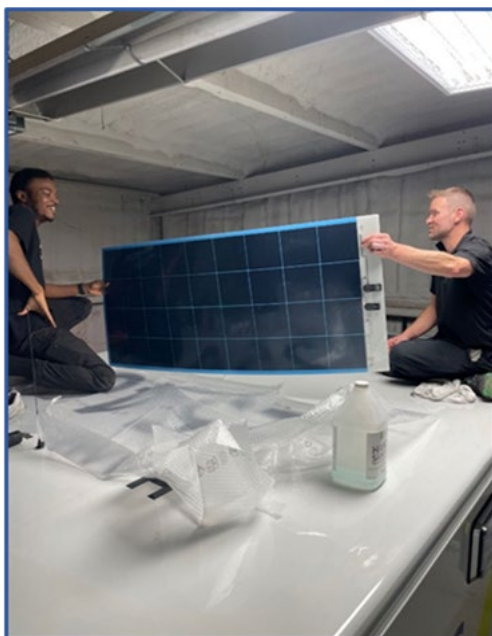
Due to the project's alignment with the City of Hamilton's climate action objectives, HPS received funding from the Climate Change Reserve to expand the initiative to all ambulances in the HPS fleet.

There are many benefits to having ambulance batteries powered by solar including these key projected benefits:

- Annual CO2 emissions savings of 154,173.62 kg for 57 ambulances
- Annual energy savings of 661,257 kWh for 57 ambulances
- Annual cost savings of approximately \$247,726 for 57 ambulances through reduced fuel consumption and reduced battery replacements
- Cost savings of approximately \$1.5 million for entire fleet of operational ambulances over their six-year average lifespan

In addition to environmental and financial benefits, ambulances will be able to maintain critical systems during extended periods without access to traditional power sources. This cutting-edge technology is also equipped a vehicle intelligence module that will enhance fleet maintenance and a new Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) system to enhance operational efficiency.

HPS expects to have all ambulances in the fleet outfitted with solar panels by the end of 2025.



Mobile Computer Aided Dispatch

A priority of the HPS Master Plan is infrastructure progression which includes utilizing the most up-to-date technology to ensure operational efficiency and effectiveness.

In 2024, all vehicles in the HPS fleet were equipped with the Mobile Computer Aided Dispatch (mCAD) system. This system provides real-time data from the Central Ambulance Communication (CACC) dispatch centre to paramedics' mobile devices, so the most updated information is at their fingertips. The mCAD system provides critical details of calls and incidents, as well as mapping and GPS-based navigation to improve response times. mCAD reduces the need paramedics to use for radio communications and provides more efficiency while responding to calls.



Pelvic Binder

Having state-of-the-art equipment is critical for paramedics to deliver quality care and improve patient outcomes. HPS continually researches, tests and implements the latest equipment with input from frontline paramedics.

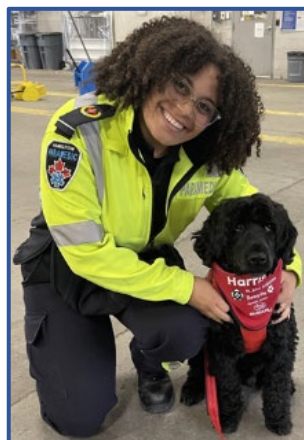
One piece of equipment introduced in 2024 was a device to stabilize pelvic fractures in trauma patients. The pelvic binder helps to minimize hemorrhaging and reduce pain. It can be rapidly applied by paramedics and ensures stabilization during patient transport.

Every paramedic received training on the use of the pelvic binder which is now part of all ambulances' standard equipment.



Employee Wellness

Ensuring the physical and mental health of HPS employees is of the utmost importance and essential to delivering quality service to the community. Based on the results of the HPS Employee Well-Being survey conducted in 2023, the HPS Employee Wellness Supervisor implemented a number of activities in 2024 to promote health and wellness including therapy dog visits, nutritional cooking classes, family night for new recruits, external violence against paramedic program, and seminars in addition to the Peer Support Team.



Community Connections

Hamilton paramedics play an important role in the community not just by providing emergency response and medical care to people where and when it's required, but also by providing information and support to promote health and well-being in the community. In 2024, Hamilton paramedics volunteered their time at community events, fairs, fundraisers and educational outreach activities.

Total Solar Eclipse

On April 8, 2024, the city of Hamilton experienced a once in a century phenomenon as one of many cities in North America in the path of totality for a solar eclipse. Such a rare occurrence attracts many people who want to experience this once in a lifetime event. However, looking directly at a total solar eclipse without proper eye protection can damage the retina and cause permanent distortions in vision.



HPS's newly established Community Engagement Bike Unit (CEBU) was deployed to the designated viewing area to engage with eclipse viewers, share information about safely viewing the eclipse and provide specialized glasses to protect them from harmful solar radiation.



Tim Hortons Camp Day

Hamilton Paramedics volunteered their time to serve the community in a different way at a local Tim Hortons coffee shop on Camp Day 2024.

Paramedics' support helped to raise money to send youth from underserved communities to camp where they can develop skills needed to thrive and have memorable experiences.

CPR Training

In 2024, HPS partnered with Hamilton Police Services to train police officers in becoming instructors of Heart and Stroke Basic Life Support. The two services along with the Hamilton Fire Department and the Hamilton Indian Regional Centre (HIRC) collaborated to develop and deliver the CPR Heartsaver Course to staff and clients of HIRC. The course provided education on the use of AEDs, naloxone administration and delivering CPR to help community members become response rescuers.



Outreach Activities

HPS paramedics provided important information and resources to a variety of community organizations and events in 2024 including the Immigrant Working Centre, the Wakya'Ta'Shaetse Social, McMaster University's Muslim Student Association, Muslim Association of Hamilton, Paramedic Career Fair and even Girl Guides. Information sessions and booths helped deliver important information on topics such as when to call for emergency medical response, yielding the right of way to emergency vehicles, the role of paramedics in an emergency and paramedicine as a career.



Honour Guard

The Honour Guard is a unit that represents the service during significant events performing ceremonial duties in parades, badging ceremonies, and memorial services. In 2024, HPS formalized and expanded its Honour Guard which is comprised of active and retired paramedics who volunteer their time to uphold the traditions and values of the profession. They undergo specialized training and monthly practices in drill, ceremony, marching, uniform standards, and protocols for various events.



Food Drive

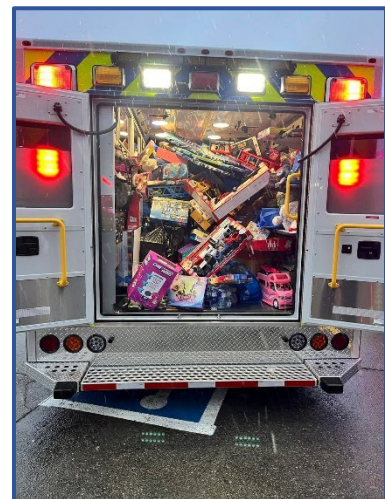
Every year, since 1998, Hamilton paramedics partner with the Burlington Auxiliary O.P.P. to hold a food drive on location at Fortinos' grocery stores. In 2024, this two-day event resulted in the collection of 9,473 pounds of food and \$24,274.73 in monetary donations all of which was donated to the Neighbour to Neighbour Centre to provide essential food to Hamilton families during the holidays.



Toy Drive

2024 marked the 20th year of the HamiltonParamedic Toy Drive. For two decades, HPS has been helping CityKidz ensure that children in Hamilton who experience the challenges of poverty receive a personalized and meaningful gift for Christmas.

In 2024, with assistance from the Burlington Auxiliary O.P.P., and donations from the Amazon Fulfillment Centre in Hamilton, paramedics raised \$10,901 in monetary donations and over 2,025 toys for CityKidz to help make the season a bit brighter for children and youth in the community.



Food Donation



Through GlobalMedic, HPS was able to arrange for and deliver a donation of over 1,500 pounds of food to the Hamilton Indian Regional Centre food bank during the 2024 holiday season.

GlobalMedic is a Canadian charity dedicated to helping people in their time of need and has been a valuable partner in helping HPS provide support to the community.



Santa for Seniors



This initiative began in 2020 by Hamilton paramedics to help seniors living in long-term care feel less isolated during the holidays given restrictions caused by the pandemic. With the success of the program and the realization that even after the pandemic some residents may not have visits from loved ones during the holiday season, the program has become an annual event.

Each year, different residences are selected to receive personalized gifts for seniors, donated and delivered by Hamilton paramedics. Once again in 2024, Hamilton's Central Ambulance Communication Centre (CACC) partnered with Hamilton paramedics to collect and deliver 120 gifts to residents at Dundurn Place Care Centre and Victoria Gardens Long Term Care home.



Recognitions

A number of HPS employees were formally recognized in 2024 for their extraordinary achievements in serving the community and their peers.

Quality of Care Award

The Hamilton Heath Sciences Centre for Paramedic Education and Research (CPER) Quality of Care Award recognizes paramedics for a variety of reasons including outstanding patient care and documentation, community involvement regarding clinical care, continued medical education or promoting the paramedic profession. Paramedics are nominated by their peers or CPER's program staff.



In 2024, the recipient of the CPER Quality of Care Award was,

- ❖ Ryan Struss, Advanced Care Paramedic

Governor General of Canada Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal

The Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal awarded by the Governor General of Canada recognizes professionals with a minimum of 20 years' service who provide pre-hospital emergency medical services to the public in an exemplary manner, characterized by good conduct, industry and efficiency.

In 2024, medals were awarded to:

- ❖ Scott Stevenson, Advanced Care Paramedic
- ❖ Jody Solski, Primary Care Paramedic
- ❖ Elaine Urbanowicz, Primary Care Paramedic



In addition, the following previous Medal recipients were awarded service bars for reaching milestone years of service:

- ❖ Darlene Hall, Primary Care Paramedic (30 years)
- ❖ Neil Freckleton, Advanced Care Paramedic (30 years)
- ❖ Blake Mills, Advanced Care Paramedic (40 years)

HPS H.E.A.R.T. Award

The HPS H.E.A.R.T. was developed by staff to recognize their colleagues who go above and beyond in performing their duties when serving the residents of Hamilton. This monthly peer-nominated award represents excellent service that exemplifies Heart, Empathy, Accountability, Responsibility, Teamwork and Trustworthiness (H.E.A.R.T.).



The following are the 2024 award recipients were presented with the H.E.A.R.T. trophy, a certificate and the Chief's Challenge Coin which signifies caring, compassion, courage, and competence.



January

Jody Solski

An extraordinary Community Paramedic who is a compassionate advocate for senior clients



February

Steven Spolnik

Tireless contribution to the service and community through superior care of patients and the environment



March

Adriana Harris

Provided care while off duty to a citizen in distress and ensured the citizen's wheelchair was returned



April

Carolyn Veitch

Always engages with people in the community, taking a genuine interest in them and their well-being

May

Nicolas Sacchetti

Kind-hearted, compassionate and supportive, taking time to listen to peers with genuine concern



June

Lisa Heil Beaudoin and Jay Brodhagen

Went above and beyond to provide a patient at end of life a special experience with their spouse



July

Jeff Kemp

Empathetic, persistent and dedicated to the care of those in need, helping to improve their lives



August

Pawel Gawlik

Always considerate and positive and goes out of the way to help patients beyond providing medical care



October

Michael Kehoe

Goes beyond the call of duty even making sure a patient's pet was looked after before transporting to the hospital

November

Jason Brumfield

A logistic technician who jumped in to help meticulously clean an ambulance assisting a medic after a difficult call



December

Hailey Roberts

Kind, generous and selfless in putting patients first even giving her own lunch to a hungry patient

Chief Celebrates 50 Years in Paramedicine

In February 2024, HPS celebrated Chief Sanderson achieving an incredible milestone of 50 years dedicated to the field of paramedicine. Over the span of five decades, Chief Sanderson has been a paramedic, supervisor, educator and leader impacting the field locally, provincially, nationally and internationally. Before coming to HPS in 2013, the Chief was the Director of the British Columbia Ambulance service where he led emergency medical services activities for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics and Paralympic Games.

Chief Sanderson has earned many awards throughout his career including four awards of EMS Exemplary Service Medal, represented by the Medal itself and three bars, from the Governor General of Canada, as well as the Premier's Award for Excellence in Health Sciences.

Through his astute leadership, innovative practices, and strategic planning, he has helped to develop and improve a wide variety of systems, procedures, and processes to create more efficient ways of delivering paramedic services.



City of Hamilton Mayor, Andrea Horwath with Chief Sanderson
(Photo credit: P. Casey)