

**Region of Waterloo**

**Public Health and Paramedic Services**

**Paramedic Services**

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**To:** Community and Health Services Committee

**Meeting Date:** March 5, 2024

**Report Title:** Paramedic Services' 2023 Response Time Performance Plan Results

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**1. Recommendation**

For information.

**2. Purpose / Issue:**

In August 2022 (PHE-PSV-22-03), Council approved Paramedic Services' 2023 Response Time Performance Plan targets. This report summarizes Paramedic Services' compliance to its Council approved targets.

**3. Strategic Plan:**

The Response Time Performance Plan aligns with the Equitable Services & Opportunities strategic priority for the Region of Waterloo: Through collaboration and innovative design, we will provide equitable, accessible services across Waterloo Region that support the social determinants of health, safety and complete communities as we grow.

**4. Report Highlights:**

- Paramedic Services met its compliance targets for all six categories.
- Compliance results indicate that urgent calls were given a more appropriate priority and attended to faster. Setting faster times for more urgent calls, and progressively slower times for less urgent calls, is a standard approach.
- Paramedic Services' results by Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale (CTAS) category were:
  - Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA):
    - Target: 6 minutes or less for a defibrillator to arrive on scene 70% of the time.
    - Result: 72 per cent compliance
      - Seventy per cent of the time SCA calls were responded to within 5 minutes 45 seconds.

- The six-minute time standard is set by the Ministry of Health.
- The 70 per cent compliance standard for SCA calls was chosen by Paramedic Services, and exceeds the Ministry mandated compliance target of 50 per cent.
- SCA results include data from local all fire departments.
- CTAS 1 (resuscitation):
  - Target: eight minutes or less 70 per cent of the time
  - Result: 74 per cent
    - Seventy per cent of the time CTAS 1 calls were responded to within 7 minutes 42 seconds.
- CTAS 2 (emergent):
  - Target: ten minutes or less 80 per cent of the time
  - Result: 81 per cent
    - Eighty per cent of the time CTAS 2 calls were responded to within 9 minutes 54 seconds.
- CTAS 3 (urgent):
  - Target: eleven minutes or less 80 per cent of the time
  - Result: 81 per cent
    - Eighty per cent of the time CTAS 3 calls were responded to within 10 minutes 50 seconds.
- CTAS 4 (less urgent):
  - Target: twelve minutes or less 80 per cent of the time
  - Result: 83 per cent
    - Eighty per cent of the time CTAS 4 calls were responded to within 11 minutes 21 seconds.
- CTAS 5 (non-urgent):
  - Target: twelve minutes or less 80 per cent of the time.
  - Result: 82 per cent
    - Eighty per cent of the time CTAS 5 calls were responded to within 11 minutes 41 seconds.
- Response times vary according to population, road density, system capacity, and road conditions. Drive times are longer in rural areas.
- As part of the Region of Waterloo Paramedic Services commitment to using a data informed approach to quality improvement and equitable service delivery, Paramedic Services will table a report seeking approval for the 2025 Response Time Performance Plan targets. These targets are likely to be updated to better reflect prioritizing the highest acuity patients, managing staff workload, and to prepare the service for the implementation of the Medical Priority Dispatching System (MPDS) at the Cambridge Central Ambulance Communications Centre (CACC) in 2026.

## **5. Background:**

Each year, all land ambulance services are required to submit a Response Time Performance Plan to the Ministry of Health as required under legislation and in accordance with the Ambulance Act, O. Reg. 267/08, amending O. Reg. 257/00, under Part VII, Response Time Performance Plans, and Sections 22-24.

Once approved by council, the following year's Response Time Performance Plan is submitted to the Ministry of Health each October, and the previous year's Response Time Performance Plan compliance results are submitted to the Ministry of Health each March.

The Council approved Paramedic Services Master Plan adds Paramedic response resources in order to meet the Response Time Performance Plan. Currently, Paramedic Services is in the high growth scenario.

## **6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public**

**Area Municipalities:** None.

**Public:** None.

## **7. Financial Implications:**

In July of 2023, as part of the Council approved Paramedic Services Master Plan, four ambulance units were added to deployment to provide 48 additional hours of coverage in a 24-hour period. In January of 2024, an additional four ambulance units (48 hours) were added with four more (48 hours) scheduled for November 2024.

The Region's 2024 approved Paramedic Services Operating Budget has a total approved expenditure of \$64M. Funding is cost shared with the Province primarily on a 50/50 basis but includes 100% funding also. The approved 2023-2032 Paramedic Services Capital Program includes total expenditure of \$10M in 2023 and a ten year total expenditure of \$91M. Expenditures associated with the performance measures in this report are accommodated within 2024 approved budgets.

## **8. Conclusion / Next Steps:**

The compliance results to the 2023 Response Time Performance Plan will be submitted to the Ministry of Health prior to the March 31, 2024 deadline.

As part of the Region of Waterloo Paramedic Services commitment to using a data informed approach to quality improvement and equitable service delivery, Paramedic Services will table a report seeking approval for the 2025 Response Time Performance

Plan targets. These targets are likely to be updated to better reflect prioritizing the highest acuity patients, managing staff workload, and to prepare the service for the implementation of the Medical Priority Dispatching System (MPDS) at the Cambridge Central Ambulance Communications Centre (CACC) in 2026. Once approved, the Ministry of Health will be notified of the adoption of the 2025 Response Time Performance Plan as required under legislation.

**9. Attachments:**

Appendix A – Paramedic Services’ Response Time Performance Plan results 2022-2023

Appendix B – March 5 2024 CHS Committee Presentation

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**Approved By:** Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Commissioner/Medical Officer of Health