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Report 2024-086

Report Title: Northumberland Community Paramedic, 2024 Semi-annual Report

Committee Name: Community Health

Committee Meeting Date: July 30, 2024

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Coordinator
Northumberland Paramedics

Reviewed by: Susan Brown
Chief
Northumberland Paramedics

Approved by: Jennifer Moore, CAO

Council Meeting Date: August 14, 2024

Strategic Plan Priorities: Innovate for Service Excellence
 Ignite Economic Opportunity
 Foster a Thriving Community
 Propel Sustainable Growth
 Champion a Vibrant Future

Information Report

That the Community Health Committee receive Report 2024-086 'Northumberland Community Paramedic, 2024 Semi-annual Report' for information; and

Further That the Committee recommend that County Council receive this report for information."

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a semi-annual review of Northumberland Community Paramedic Program services for information purposes. All data and statistics presented include the time period of January 1 to June 30, 2024.

Background

The Northumberland Community Paramedic (CP) Program has been providing non-emergency services to the members of our community since early in 2020. In 2022, it was announced that the Ministry of Long-Term Care would be funding a pilot program to expand CP services across the province. At this time Northumberland County was awarded a temporary funding opportunity of \$3 million per year until March 31, 2024. Since then, the Ministry has extended the funding with a current end date of March 31, 2026. The primary goal of the program is to provide the right care to the right person in the right location while allowing individuals to remain at home longer, safely.

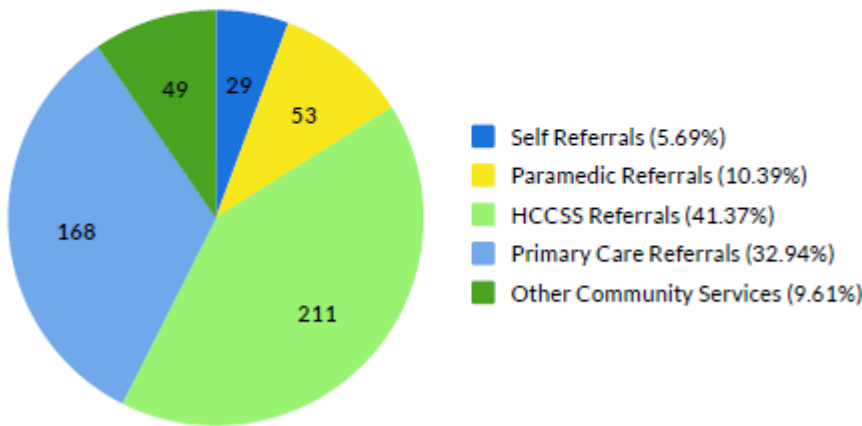
We also receive a small amount of funding through Ontario Health; approximately \$345,000 annually. Within each funding stream there are specific requirements for services provided and to which populations. This chart summarizes the current funding structure.

	CP LTC	Ontario Health/HCCSS	OHT-N
Funding	3 M / year until March 31, 2026	259,000 + 50 RPM HISH - \$18,000	2024 – 0 2023 – 50 RPM 2021/22 - \$64,411
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LTC waitlist • Assessed for admission to LTC • Eligible for admission to LTC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HISH • Referred by HCCSS • Decrease 911 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness • Addictions • Frail/co-morbid • Mental Health

Since the inception of the CP program, we have provided services for approximately 5000 community members across Northumberland County. From January 1 to June 30, 2024, we have had 1283 active clients with 317 new enrollments throughout the county (see map attached). We provide Community Paramedic services to the municipalities of Alnwick/Haldimand, Brighton, Cobourg, Cramahe, Hamilton, Port Hope and Trent Hills. Referrals are received from various community partners including Ontario Health @ Home (formally known as Home and Community Care Support Services), primary care providers, hospitals, other community partners and self / family. To date this year our largest referral source has been Ontario Health @ Home (211) followed by our primary care providers (168). Currently, when referrals are received initial contact with the potential client has been made within 72 hours 98% of the time.

New Referrals

Total Referrals Submitted this Year: 510

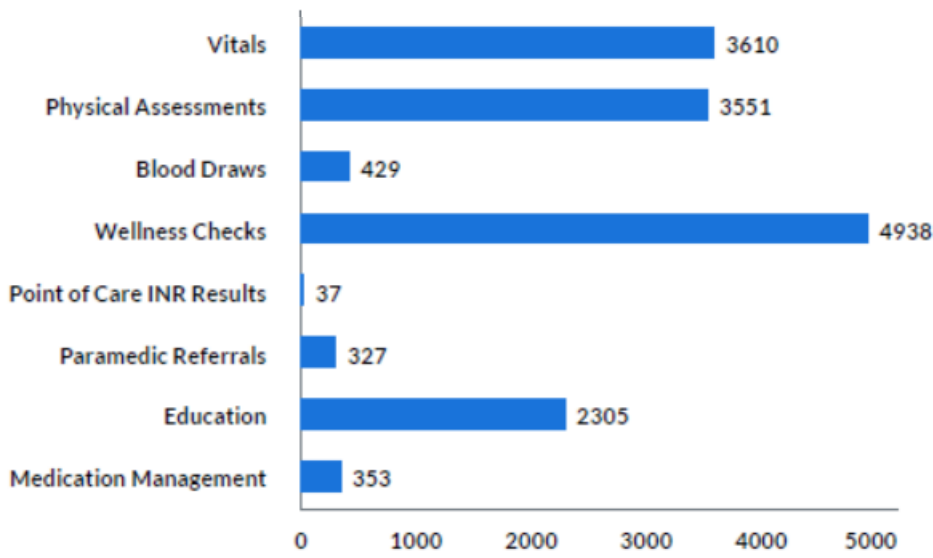


Currently, we have twelve (12) full time CP positions with four (4) stationed in Cobourg and two (2) in Campbellford who all work on a 12-hour continental shift rotation. Our full time CPs are all certified paramedics with a minimum of 108 additional hours of specialized training in geriatrics and community paramedicine to start with continued specialized education provided annually. Part time CPs participate in an introductory 12-hour geriatric and community paramedicine course as well as annual continuing medical education for CP. Recently we were able to send 4 CPs to a 2-day advanced wound care training program focusing on skin health and proactive care plus best wound care practice for minor to major wounds. In addition, 15 CPs have recently completed the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) course which is a recognized cognitive assessment test across multiple disciplinary fields.

CP services include both home and telephone wellness assessments, medication administration, point of care testing such as urinalysis, and blood tests, phlebotomy for homebound individuals, ECGs, vaccinations, remote patient monitoring, IV antibiotic administration, wound care, health education, and system navigation assistance. To date in 2024, we have completed over 15,500 different tasks for our clients including almost 5,000 wellness assessments (see attached 2024 YTD infograph). We work with our community partners to identify gaps in healthcare within the community to avoid redundancy of services provided.

Completed Tasks by CPs

Total Tasks Completed This Year: **15,550**



Reduction of 911 calls for many of our high 911 users has been seen after enrollment in the community paramedic program. In 2023, we were able to help reduce 134 ambulance calls with just 25 of our clients for a cost savings of at least \$31,160. This estimated cost savings is based on \$240 per ambulance call as per the Ambulance Services Billing document from the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care last modified 2023-10-25.

Since January 1, 2024, the CPs have responded to at least 195 urgent requests for assessment due to various concerns by clients, family and caregivers including urinary tract infections (UTI), chest infections, skin infections, post fall assessments, and wound care to name a few. Many of these urgent visits have led to many emergency department diversions for a significant cost savings to the healthcare system. These estimated cost savings are based on the Canadian Institute for Health Information patient cost estimator from 2021-2022 for patients who are at least 60 years of age. The chart below is an overview of major illnesses/injuries that we have seen and does not include more general wellness complaints.

Illness/injury	No. of calls	Estimated cost of hospital visit	Total estimated savings
UTI	30	6762.50	202,875.00
Chest infection /COPD exacerbation	7	5886.50	42,205.50
Cellulitis	3	8515.50	25,546.50
Dehydration	4	5293.00	21,172.00
Wound care	9	5310.00	47,790.00
Congestive Heart Failure (CHF)	3	8841.00	26,523.00
TOTAL			\$366,112.00

The Community Paramedic program also holds monthly wellness clinics at 7 county housing units and weekly clinics at Transition House and the warming hub (seasonal). This year we have held a total of 84 clinics over 138 hours with 139 in attendance to date. During these clinics we have been able to help prevent emergency department visits by connecting individuals with the resources they required. For example, during one clinic we were able to assess and bandage minor burns for 2 individuals. At the warming hub we facilitated a prescription of antibiotic and steroid creams for a skin infection.

Another integral part of our program is our remote patient monitoring (RPM) which allows Community Paramedics to monitor heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen saturation and weight of some of our clients remotely. We have had a total of 108 active RPM clients and performed 63 RPM assessments since the beginning of 2024. During this time, we have actioned 770 RPM alerts through telephone wellness checks and or home visits collaborating with primary care providers to adjust medications as required. The ability to enroll clients in the RPM program can help to facilitate earlier hospital discharge while providing peace of mind to the client, caregiver and primary care providers knowing they will be monitored daily for any changes in vital signs. Daily monitoring of an individual's vital signs allows for early intervention when / if changes are noted with a reduction in ED visits and potential hospitalization. We currently have 91 active RPM clients in our program.

Collaborating with our community partners including HCCSS, local hospitals and family health teams as well as the Ontario Health Team – Northumberland allows us to continue providing services to members of our community to assist them to stay home longer, safely. We can help, not just our clients, but also their caregivers and primary care practitioners. As the county's population ages the need for mobile healthcare support will continue to grow.

Through our quarterly surveys we received valuable feedback that help us improve our services. Surveys from the first half of 2024 show that 87% of respondents feel that the Community

Paramedic program has helped to prevent avoidable emergency room and/or hospital visits. While 85% of respondents feel that being in the CP program has helped decrease their use of 911.

See the attached January – June 2024 survey results.

Testimonials:

"Cannot say enough about program and the paramedics I've met. Please continue. We seniors and the disabled are an **"at risk" group**. It's **reassuring** to know there is **help available**."

-Q1 2024 Survey response

"They were helpful from the very beginning and still are. It is **comforting** to know I can reach out to them as needed. They are always **helpful** and **informative, friendly**, as well as **professional**. Just knowing I can call if I need to is comforting."

-Q2 2024 Survey response

"This program has been a **safety net** for me as [the CP] always checks my blood pressure - I was in so much pain with my swollen legs and feet that I could barely walk. If he hadn't visited me **at home** and **contacted my doctor, I would still be suffering**."

-Q1 2024 Survey response

Consultations

Prehos documentation data

Future Health Remote Patient Monitoring data

Eastern Ontario Association Paramedic Chiefs / Community Paramedic Programs

Northumberland Community Paramedic Quarterly Surveys

Canadian Institute for Health Information Patient Cost Estimator 2021-2022

Ministry of Health & Ministry of Long-Term Care Ambulance Services Billing publication, last revised 2023-10-25

Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations

N/A

Discussion / Options

N/A

Financial Impact

N/A

Member Municipality Impacts

Data presented is a semi-annual report inclusive of Northumberland County.

Conclusion / Outcomes

Staff request that the Community Health Committee receive Report 2024-086 'Northumberland Community Paramedic 2024 Semi-annual Report' for information.

Attachments

- 1) Report 2024-086 ATTACH 1 'CP Client Map 2024'
- 2) Report 2024-086 ATTACH 2 'Northumberland Community Paramedic January – June 2024 Infograph'
- 3) Report 2024-086 ATTACH 3 'January – June 2024 Survey Results'