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## Report 2025-035

**Report Title:** Response Time Standards – Performance Actuals for 2024

**Committee Name:** Community Health

**Committee Meeting Date:** March 4, 2025

**Prepared by:** Susan Brown  
Chief  
Northumberland Paramedics

**Approved by:** Jennifer Moore, CAO

**Council Meeting Date:** March 19, 2025

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

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### Information Report

**“That** the Community Health Committee receive Report 2025-035 ‘Response Time Standards – Performance Actuals for 2024’ for information; and

**Further That** the Committee recommend that County Council receive the report for information.”

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### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Community Health Committee with the actual response time performance of Northumberland Paramedics for 2024. The Response Time Standards are one of the Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s) required by the Ministry of Health Emergency Services and reported annually on March 31<sup>st</sup> under Regulation 257/00 of the Ambulance Act.

### Background

The Ministry of Health under Regulation 257/00 Part VIII of the Ambulance Act sets out key performance indicators (KPI’s) that all Paramedic services must set, monitor, evaluate and report to the MOHLTC and the public for transparency. One of the KPI’s is the response time performance plan.

The Response Time Performance Plan measures the ability (time) for a service to respond to the patients categorized as CTAS 1 to 5, and Sudden Cardiac Arrests (SCA). CTAS is the Canadian Triage Acuity Scale which measures the acuity of the patient. The CTAS levels and their corresponding acuity is outlined in the chart below:

CTAS Level	Acuity Level
SCA	Sudden cardiac arrest
CTAS 1	Resuscitation
CTAS 2	Emergent
CTAS 3	Urgent
CTAS 4	Less Urgent
CTAS 5	Non-Urgent

Service providers are mandated by the Ministry of Health - EHSB - to submit their Response Time Performance Plan targets annually in October for the following year's performance target, as well annually in March the Service Provider reports on their actual performance in obtaining those targets in the preceding year.

In 2024, we fell short of the Response Time Standards in our response time targets of sudden cardiac arrests (SCA) and CTAS 2 and CTAS 3 calls, respectively.

CTAS	Plan in Minutes	Plan in Percentage	Actual Performance in Percentage
SCA	6 min	40%	29 %
CTAS 1	8 min	55%	55 %
CTAS 2	10 min	65%	63 %
CTAS 3	10 min	65%	63 %
CTAS 4	15 min	65%	80 %
CTAS 5	20 min	65%	90 %

Our target for SCA was 6 min 40% of the time and our actuals report that we obtained a 6 min response 29% of the time thereby falling short by 11%. It is also important to note that SCA are less than 1% of our call volume.

Our target for CTAS 1 (Resuscitation) was 8 min 55% of the time, the data demonstrates successfully obtaining the target response.

Our target for CTAS 2 (Emergent) and CTAS 3 (Urgent) patients is 10 min 65% of the time the data demonstrated we fell just short of these performance targets. Our performance response to CTAS 2 calls were 10 min 63% and CTAS 3 patients 10 min 63%.

Our target for CTAS 4 (Less Urgent) was 15 min 65% of the time, and the target for CTAS 5 (Non-Urgent) was 20 min 65% of the time. We successfully obtained these performance measures obtaining CTAS 4 patients 15 min 80% of the time, and CTAS 5 patients 20 min 90% of the time.

The Paramedic Department works diligently to meet or exceed the County approved response time standard as well as legislation as it relates to our response time plan. There are many factors that affect our response times such as but not limited to:

- Geography of the County with both rural and urban areas,
- Time on task/ call
- Off-load delays at hospitals.
- Code 4 response to neighboring municipalities

### Responses Outside the County

The Ambulance Act mandates seamless coverage for responding ambulances to any code 4 response in the Province of Ontario. Regardless of the originating municipality, if the ambulance is closest to an emergency it is dispatched. The majority of the outside calls that are being completed by Northumberland Paramedics outside of Northumberland County are to Hastings-Quinte, and Peterborough City/County respectively.

Northumberland Paramedics cross border responses have increased in 2024 to 655 calls completed within the Hastings Quinte regions, compared to their 186 responses into Northumberland County. This results in a differential of calls completed by NP by 469 calls. (Chart 1)

Northumberland Paramedics cross border responses decreased in 2024 to 523 calls completed within Peterborough County/City, compared to their 371 responses into Northumberland County. This still results in a differential of calls completed by NP by 152 calls. (Chart 2)

### Hospital Off Load Delays

Northumberland Paramedic off-load delays decreased in 2024 to a total of 717 hours, compared to 900 hours in 2023. The hospitals we frequent are Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH), Campbellford Memorial Hospital (CMH), Peterborough Regional Health Center (PRHC), and Trenton Memorial Hospital (TMH). In 2024 NP experienced a decrease in off- load delays in all hospitals with the exception of TMH. The decrease in off- load delays in both NHH and CMH can be attributed to the dedicated Off load delay program (DONP) that began in the 2022/23 fiscal year. (Chart 3). This funding program is key to minimizing off-load delays at our hospitals.

The 2024 budget approved the addition of a 12- hour vehicle. This additional 12-hour resource was implemented in Q3 of 2024 and did improve our response times, meeting and/or narrowing our target response time plan for 2024.

### **Consultations**

Ambulance Act; Regulation 257/00, Part VIII

Ambulance Dispatch Reporting System (ADDS)

Interdev Analytics Dashboard

### **Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations**

Response Time Performance Plans are one of the key performance indicators outlined in the Ambulance Act mandating service operators set their plans annually in October and report their performance of the prior year by March 31<sup>st</sup> annually.

The ability of the service to meet their response time performance plan is reviewed once again every 3 years during their Ministry Review certification and licensing. The County/Paramedic service must outline their plan, provide the analytics to support meeting the targets, and/or a plan to meet the targets if not obtaining them currently.

The most significant consideration in terms of risk is ensuring the County continues to meet or exceed established response time requirements. This includes meeting the public's expectations with respect to the level of service.

### **Discussion / Options**

We will continue to observe our response through 2025 to identify and investigate those calls that fall out of our response time standard targets.

The introduction of the new Provincial dispatch platform – Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS) is scheduled to go live on March 26, 2025. This new dispatch system will alter the time-frame ambulances are dispatched and therefore will affect response time plans and performance metrics. These new determinants, response time performance plans and KPI's have not been presented to service operators at the time of this report.

### **Financial Impact**

There is no fiscal impact connected directly to this report at this time.

### **Member Municipality Impacts**

The response time performance plan is one of the key performance indicators and mandated by the Ambulance Act, measured, and monitored by the MOH - Emergency Health Services Branch. It is a publicly reportable performance indicator/benchmark to ensure accountability, transparency, and excellence with regards to service delivery. Reduced response times ultimately results in reduced time to definitive medical care, which has the potential to decrease morbidity and mortality.

All municipalities of the County benefit from a service delivery that meets the targeted evidence-based response time performance plan. This response time performance plan is focused on the health and safety of the Community. Prioritizing response times to the sickest, most acute patients first, efficiently, and effectively.

### **Conclusion / Outcomes**

It is recommended by staff that the Community Health Committee and County Council receive Northumberland County's Paramedic response time performance plan for information.

### **Attachments**

- 1) Report 2025-035 ATTACH 1 'Cross-Border Responses (2021-2024) and Offload Delays (2022-2024)'