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Report 2021-155

Report Title: Community Paramedicine – Long Term Care Funding

Committee Name: Community Health Committee

Committee Meeting Date: October 4, 2021

Prepared by: Susan Brown
Chief
Northumberland Paramedics

Reviewed by: Jennifer Moore, CAO

Council Meeting Date: October 20, 2021

Strategic Plan Priorities: Sustainable Growth, Inclusive Communities

Recommendation

Whereas the Community Health Committee reviewed Report No. 2021-155 requesting Council support and to advocate to the Province for eligibility regarding funding for the Community Paramedic – Long Term Care Program (CP- LTC) for Northumberland Paramedics; and

Whereas municipalities that had Community Paramedic programs in place prior to 2019 were eligible to apply for CP LTC Funding in Phase 1 and Phase 2; and

Whereas Northumberland County has since established a successful Community Paramedic program in 2020;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved That the Committee recommend that County Council advocate for and request funding from Ontario’s Community Paramedic and Long-Term Care program, for Northumberland Paramedics.”

Purpose

To inform County Council of the Community Paramedic – Long Term Care program and funding opportunity, and to request their support in advocating to the Province for eligibility and equitable inclusion, and participation in this program.

Background

The Ontario Government has invested millions to expand the Community Paramedicine for Long Term Care Program. The goal of this initiative is to help more seniors stay safe while living in the comfort of their own homes longer as they are on wait lists for admission to a long term care home.

Phase 1 Funding of the CP LTC program was announced in October of 2020 and was made available to those Community Paramedic programs that were established and operating in 2019. There were five (5) services eligible and approved at this phase, they were; Brant County, Cochrane District, the City of Ottawa, Renfrew County, and York Region all provided \$5M in funding over five years.

Phase 2 Funding of the CP LTC program was announced November 27, 2020. To be eligible and apply for this phase of funding communities had to have an existing paramedic program funded by the Ministry of Health through their Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and wish to expand. There were 29 more municipalities added at this phase ranging in funding from \$2.8M up to \$9.75M over three years, ending March 2024.

Phase 1 and 2 funding strategies and the expansion of the Community Paramedicine programs in these communities have been a great success. We are very supportive of these initiatives and would also appreciate an opportunity to expand our current and successful Community Paramedic program here in the County of Northumberland. Our current Community Paramedic Program started July 2020, having received approval and funding by the Ministry of Health through the new OHT-N that was established in November of 2019. These timelines precluded our eligibility for Phase 1 or Phase 2 funding. Our current Community Paramedic program meets the established criteria set out for Phase 2 funding which was: Existing community paramedicine programs can be expanded quickly to meet the needs of the target LTC -related population. The LHIN is supportive and committed to maximizing local resources rather than replacing or duplicating existing or new resources from other community paramedicine programs. (OHT-N support and collaboration). There is existing local community paramedicine provider capacity, specifically advanced care paramedics, without risk to emergency medical services. Northumberland County represents an ideal rural/urban location to integrate and expand our Community Paramedicine program to assist with long term care wait lists. The 2016 census data shows that 36.9% of the population is 65 years and older. This trend is consistent and supported by our 911 call volume which shows in both 2019 and 2020 over 60% of our calls are for people aged 65 and older.

Local Long Term care facilities are experiencing wait lists of 360+ days. Our request is for a potential Phase 3 Funding model of the Community Paramedic Long Term Care program here in Northumberland County. We believe the expansion of our Community Paramedic Program will be successful and support the seniors within our community by supporting them and

maintaining their safety and well-being, as well as providing education and preventative measures of potential injury and illness in their homes while they wait for admission to LTC. Community Paramedicine brings support directly to their homes thereby supporting the client, their primary caregiver, and family. Knowing that the Community Paramedic is there to check on their well-being, deliver services, and decrease the need for transportation out of the home for all the various appointments, and to each respective site. A visit by the Community Paramedic provides the service for various assessments, tests, diagnostics, treatment, and the emotional and mental support for the patient and their family.

The demand for in-home healthcare supports has been growing for many years as our population ages. The length of time on long term care waitlists has grown. Additional long term care beds have been approved and are under construction across the region but it will take time to make those beds operational. The expansion of the CP LTC program would help address the need in the short term.

Consultations

Eastern Ontario Paramedic Chiefs

Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs

Ontario Health Teams - Northumberland

2021 Ontario Budget – Ontario’s Action Plan: Protecting Peoples Health and Our Economy announced an investment of approximately \$160 million over three years to support the expansion of Community Paramedic Programs in 33 communities.

Legislative Authority/Risk Considerations

The inequalities of funding and availability of Community Paramedicine outreach in the County has a direct effect on the 911 system and increased call volumes, off load delays and the capacity and movement through the hospital affecting the emergency department, admissions, and discharges from the hospital.

Our residents are not receiving the adequate supports that many need to remain safe and independent in their homes as long as possible. The expansion of the Community Paramedicine program will assist in the Long Term Care Homes providing care to those most at need and reducing current waitlists of up to a year. Diverting those seniors who only need minimal care and assistance to stay in their homes safely and independently to the Community Paramedic program will allow openings to those seniors that are currently in hospitals requiring extensive care transferred to the Long -Term Care centers faster and more efficiently. Triaging the seniors and providing the right care in the most appropriate facility will help decrease the wait lists for the Long -Term Care homes. Those seniors that are capable of living safely and independently with minimal assistance will be removed from the waitlists and receive care from the Community Paramedic in the comfort of their own homes.

Discussion/Options

The chart below shows the distribution of funding for the Community Paramedic Programs across the various Municipalities in the Eastern Region. Currently, Prescott Russell, Lennox and Addington, Peterborough, Northumberland, Kawartha Lakes and Durham Region have not been deemed eligible to apply or receive CP LTC funding for their Municipality. This has resulted in inequalities of the beneficial care and support of Community Paramedicine across Eastern Ontario.

Paramedic Service	Base /HISH funding	CP LTC Phase 1 (5 years)	CP LTC Phase 2 (3 years)
County of Renfrew	\$ 365 K	\$5 M	
Ottawa	\$ 1 M	\$5 M	
Cornwall SD&G	\$ 365 K		\$ 2.8 M
Prescott Russell	\$ 365 K		
Lanark	\$ 365 K		\$ 3.25 M
Leeds and Grenville	\$ 365 K		\$ 3.25 M
Frontenac	\$ 365 K		\$ 6.5 M
L&A	\$ 365 K		
Hastings Quinte	\$ 365 K		\$6 M
Haliburton	\$ 365 K		\$3.25 M
Peterborough	\$ 365 K		
Northumberland	\$ 365 K		
Kawartha	\$ 365 K		
Durham	\$ 850 K		

Financial Impact

There would be no financial impact to the County as the CP LTC funding program is 100% funded by the Province. The current program has minimal staffing and supervision, and general support of the program is provide through existing resources within the 911 operations. Additional funding committed over several years would provide the ability to provide greater support and resources for the staff currently working as community paramedics. Planning, scheduling, program development and training could be incorporated in the expanded program.

Member Municipality Impacts

All Municipalities and residents of the County would benefit equally with the expansion of the CP LTC program.

Conclusion/Outcomes

Staff request that County Council assist Northumberland Paramedics and the remaining services in Ontario by advocating to the Provincial Government for third phase funding opportunity for the Community Paramedic Long Term Care funding. This inclusion of eligibility would provide equity amongst all Municipalities in Ontario to provide and expand the Community Paramedicine programs and beneficial outcomes to all regions equitably.