

## Memorandum

**To:** Budget Standing Committee  
**Cc:** Kristine Douglas  
**From:** McCormick, Jeff  
**Date:** February 5, 2018  
**Subject:** Medical Calls Follow-up

At the budget steering committee meeting of November 20, 2017 there was a request for additional information/documentation as a result of discussions that ensued regarding a memo to the BSC dated November 15, 2017. Please accept this memo as a follow-up to those requests.

As some of these requests are for documents that are under the control of Niagara Region EM, the writer posed the requests directly to Niagara Region EMS Chief. For ease of the reader the original questions/requests of the BSC have been provided below with the respective responses immediately following.

- 1) What is the breakdown of medical calls (VSA, Breathing issues, etc.) that Fire responds to. Could a graph with each category and their three year trends be provided to the committee (similar to the graphs provided concerning FEMS sick time/overtime/salaries).

## Medical Calls by Category

Category	2015	2016	2017 to date	Totals 2015 to date
Allergies	53	52	55	160
Animal Bites/Attacks	2	0	3	5
Assaults/Sexual Assaults	34	28	40	102
Breathing Problems	1,289	1,308	1,343	3,940

Burns/Explosions	19	18	24	61
Carbon Monoxide/Inhalation	39	35	44	118
Cardiac Or Respiratory Arrest	166	160	186	512
Chest Pain	1,612	1,530	1,389	4,531
Choking	41	31	33	105
Convulsions/Seizures	174	207	174	555
Drowning/Diving/Scuba Incident	1	4	0	5
Electrocution/Lighting	1	3	0	4
Falls	321	312	304	937
Hemorrhage/Bleeding	0	0	3	3
Inaccessible Incident (Persons Trapped)	6	3	6	15
Overdose/Poisoning	52	53	87	192
Stabbing/Gunshot/Penetrating Trauma	0	1	0	1
Traumatic Injuries	58	59	59	176
Unconscious/Fainting	310	319	351	980
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,178</b>	<b>4,123</b>	<b>4,101</b>	

- 2) A copy to the budget committee for information purposes of the most recent Tiered Response Policy agreement;

#### EMERGENCY MEDICAL TIERED RESPONSE PLAN

The purpose of this plan is to establish a Medical Assistance Tiered Response protocol between the Niagara Emergency Medical Services (NEMS) and local Municipal Fire Departments situated within the Geographical boundaries of the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

This plan between the Niagara Emergency Medical Services (NEMS) and The Corporation of the City of St Catharines, authorizes the activation of Emergency Medical Tiered Response, in accordance with the agreed upon criteria, as amended by the parties from time to time. The response level applied according to this policy will be determined by St Catharines Fire Services in consultation with the applicable lower tier municipality (LTM).

NEMS hereby agrees to notify St Catharines Fire Services of emergency medical calls within their geographical area of responsibility in line with NEMS policy IV-3.5 (appendix a).

The Corporation of the City of St Catharines through Fire Services acknowledges that NEMS retain the right to make changes to policy IV-3.5 where the changes do not impact the level of response assigned to the fire service. Additional appendices outlining operational principles may be added to this policy as agreed upon by the Fire Service and Niagara EMS from time to time.

The NEMS Ambulance Communication Centre will notify the appropriate Fire Service Dispatch Centre by electronic interface.

Best practice for notification should be no more than one (1) minute of the call information being received and committed to the CAD. (Note: *When testing manual mode notification may exceed the benchmark*). If the CAD portal is down, for any reason, call notification will be provided by landline.

This plan recognizes that the participating agencies may not be able to respond when occupied with another emergency, or for any other reason as determined by their senior on-duty officer.

Each participating agency will notify the other agencies of their inability to operate or respond to the situation as soon after the inability is identified.

This plan will be reviewed annually to ensure its currency.

Region of Niagara, Niagara Emergency Medical Services (NEMS)

Chief 

Date May 19, 2016

Name of Fire Service

Name, Title David Wood, Fire Chief



Date May 6, 2016

Attachment (1 – Policy IV-3.5)

☐ Original Agreement – date \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Amended Agreement – date \_\_\_\_\_

- 3) A definition of higher acuity patients - as outlined in the Tiered Response Policy; Niagara EMS Chief Kevin Smith provided the following definition: "Acuity in relation to tiered response is determined through medical oversight by the Medical Director for EMS Dispatch and administered through the Medical Advisory Committee of which all 12 fire services are represented".
- 4) A table outlining revisions of the agreement in 2005, 2006, 2007; and 2008, 2009, 2011, and 2014 - and what medical responses fire agreed to attend were added/deleted to the Tiered Response Agreement;

For the sake of clarification the original memo indicated the Tiered Response Policy has been revised numerous times, not the Tiered Response Agreement. The Tiered Response Policy is an internal Niagara Regional EMS document. In

response to the question concerning the revisions to it, the Niagara Region EMS Chief has replied, "EMS does not maintain such a table as determinates for tiered response change with each version of MPDS as well as the emergence of new medical evidence supported by the Medical Director".  
(Note - MPDS stands for Medical Priority Dispatch System).

The one and only Tiered Response Agreement was signed in 2016, after Council passed By-Law 2016 – 101, officially authorizing FEMS to participate in the Tiered Response program. At the time the Ministry of Health had instituted a requirement for all Tiered Response participants to create formal agreements.

- 5) A copy to the budget committee for information purposes of the letter the Niagara Region EMS Chief penned indicating that NREMS was considering System Design Changes for their device delivery model.

The Niagara Region EMS Chief Kevin Smith provided the following answer; "The letter in question reiterated information as detailed in an EMS report to the Region (PHD 17-2017) which can be accessed publicly here  
<https://www.niagararegion.ca/council/Council%20Documents/2017/phssc-agenda-sep-26-2017.pdf>

Respectfully submitted

*Jeff McCormick*

Jeff McCormick,  
Acting Fire Chief, Director of Fire and Emergency Management Services