

EMERGENCY RESPONSE AGREEMENT

Introduction:

The County of Hastings and the member municipalities within including the cities of Belleville and Quinte West support the implementation of formal response agreements between emergency services. Such written agreements provide a framework for cooperation and coordination of emergency services on a local level. The coordination of public safety is a teamwork approach that helps improve upon the response to specified emergency situations and overall level of public safety. Many agreements containing certain elements that are included in this agreement are called tiered response agreements. This document includes tiered response elements as well as co-response elements. Tiered response focuses on timeliness of response while co-response focuses on which agencies should be involved based on function in relation to the precipitating incident irrespective of timeliness. This document was therefore titled, "Emergency Response Agreement".

Purpose:

The purpose of this agreement is to ensure that emergency services are alerted and requested as indicated by the nature of the emergency.

This agreement is used in the context of a relatively small or frequently seen emergency calls. Larger scale incidents are dealt with in the context of emergency/disaster plans.

Background:

Response agreements are recognized internationally as an effective method coordinating public safety agencies to provide rapid first response assistance to the public in a timely and efficient manner. The emergency response agreement endeavors to send the most appropriate emergency response agency with consideration of time, training and equipment, to render assistance at the scene of an emergency incident with the understanding that the primary response agency may not arrive first.

Such agreements represent a formal, written accord negotiated between two or more public safety agencies.

When the agencies agree on the terms of the agreement, it is up to their respective dispatch centres to implement the agreement. In the case of Hastings-Quinte Paramedic Services, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Emergency Health Services (EHS) operates through a performance agreement with the Kingston Health Science Centre Central Ambulance Communication Centre (CACC). This agreement will be forwarded to both the MOH<C EHS and CACC with instructions to include it as part of the Hastings Paramedic

Services Deployment plan. This will be done with the understanding that it will be integrated into the CACC operating policies. This approach is identified as the method to be used by EHS.

Guiding Principles:

In an effort to safely and efficiently mitigate life threatening/public safety incidents, effective coordination of emergency services is needed to ensure the timely notification of trained and equipped personnel and resources.

This agreement outlines the agreed upon notification criteria of respective agencies relative to incident/emergency type. Agencies make their own decisions on whether or not to respond based on circumstances at the time of the notification.

Recognizing that all response agencies do not have similar expertise in each other's primary fields, it is incumbent upon the participants of such agreement to ensure that field specific expectations related to public safety be established and included in this agreement.

Administration:

This agreement will be reviewed and updated annually at minimum or when any agency indicates their desire to make changes.

Direction to enter into this agreement originates from the respective councils of the participants.

Emergency Response General

Time Synchronization:

All agencies are to make efforts to keep their time referencing devices synchronized. Updates should occur once per week via the National Research Council in Ottawa at (613) 745-1576 or via NRC web site or via Kingston CACC.

Updates:

First arriving agencies and/or dispatch centres should update other responding agencies as soon as possible with any hazards or other details pertinent to the agencies responses.

For the criteria below first response agencies will not stand down the ambulance prior to the ambulance arrival. Note: first arriving agencies may request other responding agencies to continue with response.

Medical Aid Emergency Response

Despite the agreement of the parties herein, the implementation of emergency response notifications outlined in this agreement may be modified as a result of Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, or Hastings-Quinte Paramedic Services during events such as SARS, pandemic, or other circumstances. Such modifications will not expand the types of calls responded to by the agencies and may result in temporary suspension of the agreement until the event is over.

Responding Agency Responsibilities:

Agencies indicating their preference to enter into this agreement do so with the understanding:

- That there is no financial reimbursement by one responding agency to the other responding agencies and
- They are responsible to ensure the following:

Staff Certifications:

- Staff providing medical aid to patients by virtue of this agreement to have valid CPR for Adult, Child, and Infant or equivalent/superior certifications;
- Staff operating defibrillators has valid certifications.

Infection Prevention and Control for First Responders

It is extremely important that responding agencies and individual responders exercise diligence in the area of infection control. This protects the patients as well as the responders from carrying transmitting or contracting communicable disease. Many patients requiring medical responses are vulnerable due to weakened immune systems and can be at higher risk for increased illness and death as a result of communicable diseases such as influenza. It is therefore indicated that an infection control practice standard be established and adhered to. This will increase public and responder safety and raise the standard of patient care for all patients who call for emergency response in Hastings County.

This standard is consistent with that mandated by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. It is used by paramedic Services across Ontario

Patient Confidentiality:

All information pertaining to patient identity and condition is to only be shared with personnel within the circle of care for the purpose of provision/transference of care or for the purposes of required reporting for quality assurance activities. No such information is to be shared for any other purposes unless required to by overriding mechanism such as subpoena. This practice is consistent with PHIPA and MFIPPA requirements that are followed by paramedic and other health care personnel with a view to respecting and safeguarding patients' private health information.

Equipment:

On Scene exchange of equipment may take place if equipment is deemed compatible with Hastings-Quinte Paramedic Services' requirements and time permits. Non compatible equipment will not be exchanged.

Items that must be procured by individual response agencies and will not be exchanged include:

- PPE supplies

Responder Assistance En-Route to Medical Facility:

Paramedics may at their discretion request responders to assist with the patient care en- route to the medical facility. Response agencies are free to set their own policies with respect to the provision of such assistance. Should the responder accompany paramedics to the medical facility, there can be no guarantee of return transportation from the paramedics.

Hastings County

Emergency Response Agreement



1. County Emergency Response Program

This Plan sets out the Notification, Activation and Response Criteria for local agencies participating in the Emergency Response Program for Hastings County.

2. County Criteria for Notification of Allied Agencies

This letter of agreement between The Corporation of the County of Hastings operating as Hastings-Quinte Paramedic Services and partnering authorizes the activation of the "Emergency Response Criteria" as outlined below.

LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCY:

Responding agencies shall be notified following CACC committal or information update to a call for the following condition:

Absence of Breathing
Unconscious Patient
Airway Obstruction
Vital Signs Absent
Profuse Bleeding
Cardiac Chest Pain
Acute Shortness of Breath
Convulsion/Seizure >30 yr. with no or unknown history
Symptoms of Anaphylaxis

Exclusion criteria is where the instructions are at a Long-term Care Facility or correctional institution.

Co-Response: This is the dispatching of multiple agencies to a scene based on the type of event without reference to who will arrive at the scene first.

Co-Response Criteria Includes:

- Structure fire with reports of smoke or flame
- Motor vehicle collision with unknown or suspected injuries
- Motor vehicle collision – no injuries – with spill or leak from vehicle (i.e. gas,oil or other hazard)
- Suspected need for extrication
- Suspected difficult access (i.e. off road)
- Motor vehicle collision on 400 series Provincial Highways
- Explosion
- Carbon monoxide calls with symptomatic patients
- Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive response

- Allied agency request – post arrival at scene

3. System Notification/Activation

The effectiveness of the medical response programs is dependent upon prompt notification of participating agencies and the activation of the appropriate emergency response unit, regardless of agency affiliation. Belleville Fire Dispatch will be notified within **(1) one minute** of call committal 90% of the time or greater.

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

Participants making adjustments to their defined response areas must notify in writing to the Director of Emergency Services for Hastings County.

Agencies participating in this agreement will be notified by means of the most efficient and effective method available, in accordance with the Emergency Response Criteria and other such applicable governing Policies and Legislation.

4. Terms and Conditions

Participating agencies shall

1. Ensure that all personnel have been trained and certified, by a credible agency in Adult, Child, and Infant CPR and Automatic External Defibrillation.
2. All defibrillators maintained in accordance to manufactures recommendations.
3. The following PPE should be available and utilized when required:
 - (a) Routine hand hygiene,
 - (b) Wearing of disposable gloves,
 - (c) At a minimum the use of fluid resistant particulate respirator masks designed to filter airborne particles. (ie disposable N95)

All Parties agree that upon request they will provide documentation detailing all emergency responses for a given period.

The Hastings Quinte Paramedic Services will not financially reimburse local agencies for participating in the agreement; however it does sponsor a disposable equipment exchange program if compatible where certain equipment is replaced at no cost to the agency.

If equipment is compatible, then a straight exchange of equipment may take place. In the event that the equipment is incompatible, the Paramedic Service is not responsible for equipment replacement.

5. Dispute/Issue Arbitration

Concerns/Issues arising between the parties to this agreement shall be in writing addressed to the Director of Emergency Services for Hastings County,

- Incidents and/or issues shall be documented stating the time, date, location and all parties involved.
- The problem and/or issue shall be clearly stated

6. Termination

Written notification must be sent to either agency regarding termination giving 90 days' notice. There may be a temporary suspension of the agreement by Hastings-Quinte Paramedic Services in regards to health emergencies such as SARS, pandemic, or other circumstances.

This agreement will be reviewed every four years.

8. Authorization

By authorized signature each partner agency agrees to adhere the criteria as set out within this agreement.

City of Belleville

Name and Title: Mitch Panciuk, Mayor

Name and Title:

Hastings County

Rick Phillips, Warden

Cathy Bradley, Clerk