

# 2024 to 2026 Business Plan & Budget

# **Paramedic Department**

# **Prior Year Accomplishments**

## **Innovate for Service Excellence**

Northumberland Paramedics embrace a culture of training, technology, and innovation. Pursuing partnerships, integrating technology, and using data to make informed decisions to deliver excellence in patient care in an efficient manner.

• Managing and Leading in a Municipal Environment diploma

In 2023 Northumberland Paramedics enrolled five (5) of their management staff in the Managing and Leading in a Municipal Environment Diploma. Those enrolled included:

- 2 Operations superintendents,
- Deputy Chief of QA and Professional Standards,
- Superintendent QA of the Community Paramedic Program,
- Coordinator of the Community Paramedic program.

This diploma teaches and provides the aspects of leadership and guidance to the management team to assist them in their daily duties, coaching and mentoring the paramedics.

## • MCAD and Technological Advancements in Cab

This mapping dispatching interface provides a real time mapping system to the paramedics when responding to emergency calls. It will allow dispatch to push out hazardous information and alerts to the responding crew ensuring messages are received and requiring a confirmation receipt. This system utilizes buttons/swipes to communicate in-service and arrive scene/locations thereby decreasing verbal communication and air- time improving efficiency of messaging.

MCAD screen provides the operation Superintendents to monitor the deployment plan real time. At a glance they can see what calls and crews are



active, the acuity of their calls, any off load or scene delays, and hazards that are occurring.

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#### • Technological Advancements in cab of ambulance

The introduction of MCAD and the continued use of electronic ambulance call reports necessitated the updated replacement of the Tough books, and introduction of the iPhone and iPad. The MCAD system communication is automated through these devices allowing for pre-alerts to calls, call details and hazards. These components all promote the safety and efficiency of the crews and their responses to emergency calls.

## • Public Safety Radio Network – PSRN

The radios used by front-line and emergency responders are at the end of their supportable life, are no longer produced and the province's stocks are depleting.

The new radios available on the market today will not function with the aging towers and technology of the current network. The current network does not provide capabilities expected in a modern public safety radio network, including encryption. Critical information and personal health information is broadcast over radio unencrypted.

PSRN is one of the largest and geographical complex public safety radio networks in North America, covering approximately 750,000 km2 and directly supports:

- The Ontario Provincial Police's (OPP) front-line officers and dispatchers
- Ambulance bases, communications centers, paramedics, hospitals, and support staff
- o Forest fire services and aviation emergency services



- Provincial highway maintenance staff
- o Correctional officers, bailiff, and transportation staff
- Enforcement officers
- o Ontario Parks staff

This system provides increase security and privacy providing digital encrypted communication between the dispatcher and crews. It also allows for inter-service communications on calls that include any service on the PSRN network.

#### • Primary Care Paramedic Autonomous Intravenous Access (PCP AIV)

Northumberland Paramedics is committed to providing the best possible level of service to the community through innovation and Organizational excellence. The implementation of a Primary Care Paramedic – Autonomous IV (PCP-AIV) program continued in 2023 and was an opportunity to increase the knowledge and skills of 12 additional primary care paramedics that can now provide a higher level of care to the community and as well as visitors of Northumberland County.

The PCP-AIV certification allows Primary Care Paramedics (PCP) to initiate Intravenous (IV) access and administer a wider range of medications. This will both reduce suffering and decrease wait-time to medication which would otherwise be given in the Emergency Department. The PCP-AIV certification does not reach the level of Advanced Care Paramedic (ACP). Therefore, the educational and training costs are quite manageable consisting of only 1 day in class and 1 day in the clinical setting, followed by on the road mentorship.

Northumberland has a large pool of dedicated primary care paramedics who are now AIV certified. By the end of 2023 we will have trained 82 primary care paramedics in intravenous cannulation.



#### Agricultural mutual aid training

Northumberland County is a vibrant and active agricultural community. In the fall the



agricultural community organized an educational opportunity amongst first responders. Northumberland paramedic superintendents and paramedic team leads participated with local firefighters in a joint mutual aid training day regarding confined space rescue. The confined space rescue scenarios allowed the allied agencies to collaborate as they work through each scenario, exchanging information and progressing through the rescue and treatment phases.

Cameco / Port Hope Police- Emergency Exercise and multi casualty incident
 Another opportunity to work with community partners -Cameco and allied first
 responders -Port Hope police presented itself in the fall. This lockdown and mass
 casualty scenario allowed us to proactively work through a scenario involving securing
 various incident locations and clearing the scenes and triaging patients, evacuation and
 transporting patients to nearby hospitals. These security drills prepare site personnel to
 achieve maximum safety, and coordinate with the first responders in the community
 through the various phases of an emergency incident.

#### • Pet Therapy Support Dog- Community Paramedic Clients – Ivy



The notion of pet therapy and its numerous benefits was implemented within the paramedic department and county. This program will expand to the clients within the community paramedic program, peer support and during public relation events in 2024 once further training has been completed. Pet therapy has proven to reduce anxiety and assist with depression and other mental health challenges. People feel that dogs are compassionate and communicative. This builds feeling of intimacy, leading the person to feel safe and understood. This can benefit a grieving human, who may be apprehensive about talking with another person for fear of being judged or hurt. Pets allow people to feel safe and secure, and accepted. Ivy Joules started at Northumberland paramedics in late August and has completed the first 2 levels of pre-kindergarten training. She will continue training and preparing for her full socialization and emotional support certificate. Ivy has brought many smiles and lots of comfort through the Paramedic department, and the County as a whole - when you just need that comforting cuddle.

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## Ignite Economic Opportunity

Increased call volumes and off load delays continue to challenge the paramedic department specifically regarding response times. Working collaboratively with our hospital partners and the Ministry of Health – Emergency Services Branch (MOH EHSB), and the Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs (OAPC) for innovative solutions in attempt to build resilience and prosperity to healthcare.

## Off Load Nursing Funding

The MOH EHSB offered a funding program to assist with off load delays at hospitals within the services catchment areas. An application was submitted for both Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) and Campbellford Memorial Hospital (CMH) for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 budget years. Northumberland paramedics were successful with both off load submissions. The 2022/23 funding was available for 4 weeks, and only at NHH – although short time it proved to assist with the off -load delays and allowed the paramedics to clear the hospital faster and operational for the county. The 2023/2024 funding started in September for NHH and will remain in effect until March 31, 2024.

We are currently working with CMH to secure staffing for the off- load nursing program for implementation at their site as well.

We have also initiated the "Fit to Sit" program at both hospitals as well. This program triages and assesses those patients brough in by paramedics to see if they are able to off load to the waiting room at the respective hospital. This program releases the paramedics faster and allows the hospital to triage acuity for their overall emergency department.

## > Hospitals – Paramedics assisting with Human Resource shortages.

Northumberland Paramedics assisted CMH with nursing staffing shortages. Working collaboratively to mitigate hospital closure due to staffing shortages. Paramedics assisted with triaging and assessments in the emergency department allowing the hospital to remain open. In the few events when the staffing shortages included physicians – Northumberland Paramedics upstaffed an ambulance within the community to assist with potential call volume increases.



### **Foster a Thriving Community**

Community involvement and collaboration is an important role that Northumberland Paramedics enjoy participating. During the emergency life-saving requests and responses this time does not avail itself. Instances present themselves through the year when we can engage the public in various opportunities to visit with and provide education such as CPR or first aid or reflect on past interactions and outcomes.

#### Survivor Night – 8<sup>th</sup> Annual

Northumberland Paramedics responds to approximately 150 cardiac arrests per year. A small percentage of these cardiac arrest calls have the potential for successful resuscitation.



Public awareness and education on the "Chain of Survival" has a direct impact on the chance of resuscitation. Once a year we honour and connect cardiac arrest survivors with the Paramedics, community First Responders (Fire, Police), Ambulance Dispatch Officers and public involved in their successful resuscitations. This event brings together community members and allied agencies for an evening of celebration and has become highly appreciated and anticipated

by the First Responder agencies we work with every day. This strengthens our positive relationships both on and off duty. This year we are celebrating 10 saved lives through the collaborative efforts of our teams. The 2023 Survivor Night took place September 21<sup>st</sup> at the Lions Hall. This event continues to acknowledge and celebrate the ongoing collaboration of First Responders, Allied Agencies, and the community involved in the successful resuscitation of a cardiac arrest.

## Santa Claus Parades

A great opportunity to interact with and engage with the Community. Northumberland paramedics have committed to attending and participating in the following Santa Claus parades:

- Brighton November 17
- Port Hope November 25
- Campbellford November 25
- Colborne November 25
- Cobourg December 2







#### Special Olympics-polar plunge Invited to participate in a first responder challenge to raise money for the Special Olympics- Northumberland Paramedics participated in the polar plunge on March 23, 2023, raising \$5,610 for special Olympics.

## Paramedic Services Week – BBQ and Farmers Market

Paramedic week will be celebrated the last week in May of 2023. The purpose of Paramedic is two-fold in that, it provides an opportunity to thank paramedics, and the entire



emergency, and community paramedicine workforce for their sacrifices; and an opportunity for Paramedics to continue to raise public awareness about the critical role of emergency and community paramedic services in the community and celebrate the collaboration of allied agencies and partners. This has traditionally been held at the main base with a week-long of planned activities, ending with a BBQ and an open house for the Paramedics, allied agencies, partners, and the community to celebrate together. This year's theme was *"Diversity in Paramedicine – The Patient. The Provider. The Profession.* 



In an effort to expand our community inclusion paramedics participated in the Farmers market providing ambulance tours and meet and greet with Terry the Traumasaurus during paramedic week. This event provided an opportunity to educate all ages of the community regarding paramedicine, our special equipment, and medical supplies. This proactive interaction provides the knowledge and familiarity with paramedics and their equipment in a stress-free environment to better understand our profession.



## **Propel Sustainable Growth**

We strongly believe that these collaborative projects are examples of the County and member municipalities working together to create efficiencies and improve service delivery to our communities.

## Ambulance Replacements

As part of the County's capital planning, ambulances, and Emergency Response Vehicles (ERVs) are replaced on a regular cycle. This cycle ensures that the County continues to efficiently and cost effectively, operate paramedic services. In addition to replacement, to maintain operational readiness in its 24/7 operation, the County ensures that there is one ambulance available for every shift as well as ERVs that are deployment ready to service the community as needed. It was identified that 3 ambulances were due for replacement in the 2023 budget year: 4514, 4515, and 4596.

## ECO Mode on our ambulances

The ECO-Run (ECO) module puts you in control of your fleet's fuel consumption and carbon footprint. ECO-Run monitors vehicle system voltage and occupant compartment temperature, and automatically cycles the engine off and on during vehicle idle. The ECO-Run idle-reduction cycle can reduce vehicle idle times by up to 40% - effectively lowering fuel consumption, carbon emissions and general wear on your vehicle's engine. The vehicle will restart according to pre-programmed criteria such as when the battery voltage drops below a threshold or when the passenger compartment temperature gets too hot or cold.

#### **ECO-Run Benefits**

- Lowers your fuel consumption and costs by reducing idle times.
- Reduces carbon emissions.
- Prevents flat batteries.
- Extends vehicle and engine life.
- Reduces maintenance costs.
- Monitors drive behavior to reduce excessive RPM for additional fuel consumption reductions.
- Protects vehicles from theft when left idling.
- Detailed reporting including excessive fuel-use.



## **Champion a Vibrant Future**

We proactively build strong relationships with other levels of government, municipal, and community partners to address community needs and interests, influence policies and advance municipal goals.

- OHT-N collaboration council -continued ongoing collaboration with the OHT-N since the inception of 2020.
- Drug Strategy Steering Committee supporting the needs and gaps of the community with consultation.
- Situation Table Participating and consulting with first responders and other health and social agencies to identify specific situations where a collaborative effort is beneficial to a strategic positive outcome.

## 2024 to 2026 Service Objectives & Initiatives

#### **Innovate for Service Excellence**

- Continue the education of the paramedics, and installation of the Public Safety Radio Network (PSRN) in the ambulances, ERV's and paramedic stations.
- Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS). A proven enhanced call taking algorithm by the ministry dispatch centers. MPDS will more effectively triage and deploy our ambulances based on the acuity of the caller. This will result in less vehicles being sent Code 4 (lights and siren) to calls thereby improving the safety of the crews and community and improve response times based on the acuity (CTAS) of the patient. Northumberland Paramedics / Lyndsay dispatch is currently scheduled for this upgrade late 2024 to early 2025.
- Electronic Ambulance Call Report (e-ACR)- The current vendor contract was purchased by another vendor. The current platform is scheduled to be altered in 2024. Once developed the platform will be assessed and a decision to either continue with current platform or RFP to another vendor that is compatible with the Ontario Documentation Standards and the Ambulance Act.
- Defibrillators are on a current five (5) year replacement cycle due for replacement in 2025.



## Exemplary Service Medal

The Exemplary Service Medal, created on July 7, 1994, recognizes paramedic professionals in the provision of pre-hospital emergency care who have had at least 20 years of exemplary service, ten of which were in a position of risk. There is also the 30-, 40-, and 50-year bars of continued exemplary services.

Review of current staffing for eligibility, and a call for nominations of current Northumberland paramedics to submit to OAPC and the Chancellery for consideration for 2024, 2025, and 2026 respectively.

## Ignite Economic Opportunity

- Enhance and develop paramedic recruitment opportunities College visits for paramedic recruitment.
- Continue to watch for funding opportunities and grants that can assist the Community and work collaboratively with allied agencies and partners.

## Foster a Thriving Community

- Paramedic Week Staff BBQ -Open House annually
- Survivor Night 9<sup>th</sup> Annual (2024), 10<sup>th</sup> Annual (2025), and 11<sup>th</sup> Annual (2026)
- Sana Claus Parades Annually
- > Participate in Emergency exercises with County and lower tier municipalities.
- Participate with allied agencies in emergency, situational incidents fostering collaboration and joint educational opportunities.

## **Propel Sustainable Growth**

## Ambulance Replacements

As part of the County's capital planning, ambulances, and Emergency Response Vehicles (ERVs) are replaced on a regular cycle. This cycle ensures that the County continues to efficiently and cost effectively, operate paramedic services. In addition to replacement, to maintain operational readiness in its 24/7 operation, the County ensures that there is one ambulance available for every shift as well as ERVs that are deployment ready to service the community as needed.

The following are scheduled to be undertaken in 2024 to address the Paramedic vehicle needs:



- o 3 ambulances- replacement of 4133, 4316, 4373
- 1 ambulance -additional 12 hour crew
- 1 Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV) -replacement of 4319 \*Hybrid

The following are scheduled to be undertaken in 2025 to address the Paramedic vehicle needs:

• 3 ambulances – replacement

The following aare scheduled to be undertaken in 2026 to address Paramedic vehicle needs:

- 3 ambulances replacement
- 1 ERV additional 12 hour first response vehicle (100% funded development charges)

#### > Hybrid Emergency Response Vehicle

Environmental sustainability is an important initiative that continues to be identified and supported by the County. Electric ambulances and vehicles have not yet been proven as a safe and reliable in the emergency paramedic services. There has been some movement to the hybrid capability and therefore with Council support we have purchased a hybrid ERV for 2024. This will allow us to measure the effectiveness as an emergency response vehicle while supporting a green initiative.

#### Brighton Base – Emergency Services Base

We have six (6) ambulance stations strategically located through Northumberland County. Three (3) of these bases are currently shared joint emergency bases with the local fire department, they are Cramhae, Roseneath, and Trent Hills. We are planning to continue this trend with Brighton by developing a shared joint service base in Brighton in 2024/25. We strongly believe that these collaborative projects are examples of the County and member municipalities working together to create efficiencies and improve service delivery to our communities.

# Long Term Plan & Strategic Objectives

#### **Innovate for Service Excellence**

Northumberland Paramedics will continue to strive for excellence in patient care and the delivery of effective and efficient patient within the County.



Participation in research, pilot programs, and alternative delivery of care and treatment options that reflect the specific needs of our community.

We will continue to utilize data and statistical information that identifies and supports the response capabilities of the service and maintains the safety of the County and meets the needs.

## Ignite Economic Opportunity

Continue to monitor and apply for funding grants and opportunities for Northumberland Paramedics and any collaborative partnerships that may present themselves.

## **Foster a Thriving Community**

Continue networking with local and provincial agencies to support the needs of Northumberland.

Continue to promote public relations and education opportunities with the community at various events regarding paramedicine and overall healthcare.

Continue to support and engage the paramedics within the department. Providing a healthy workplace, with mental and physical health initiatives.

## **Propel Sustainable Growth**

Monitor call volumes, response times and population growth to ensure base locations are appropriate and plan for new base locations as required.

Maintain a current and safe fleet of vehicles that are compliant with the Land Ambulance Certification Vehicle Standards.

## **Champion a Vibrant Future**

Monitoring healthcare trends and opportunities.

Collaborating and supporting the initiatives of the OHT-N regarding identified healthcare needs and gaps of the community in a systematic unified approach for efficiency and effectiveness. Continued collaboration with our allied first responders to promote safe communities and efficient and effective emergency response.



# 2024 to 2026 Business Plan & Budget

# **Community Paramedics**

# **Prior Year Accomplishments**

## **Innovate for Service Excellence**

Community Paramedic Foundational training provided for 12 full-time and 5 part-time paramedics based on the needs of Northumberland County. Training included a 96 hour Community paramedic practitioner course, NHH mental health strategies and education, Diabetes education center training and Ed's house hospice care services overview with tour offered. This has allowed the community paramedic program the opportunity to support vulnerable populations, persons with mental health and addictions, clients with chronic diseases and other unserved or medically un-attached residents in Northumberland County.

Evolving the role of paramedicine in our community in conjunction with a medical director that is well versed in community paramedicine. Clinical practice guidelines and additional skill sets have been developed and are available for community paramedics to utilize for clients that are unattached and without a medical practitioner.

Community Paramedics participated in provincial working groups to align our services and expand our roles based on best practices in the industry. Community paramedic programs across the province participate to ensure core service and skills and provide consistency, transparency and accountability to stakeholders and funding partners.

Team directed development of processes. Monthly team meetings and daily huddles are held to ensure that staff are connected and kept up to date.

## **Foster a Thriving Community**

Vaccinations provided for flu and COVID both individually to clients, families, and caregivers and in clinic or group settings.

Weekly clinics established at the warming room and transitional housing residence to promote dignity and inclusion of all people.



Information sessions completed with Rotary Club and Cobourg Public Library. Increased awareness and helps to foster a thriving community.

## **Propel Sustainable Growth**

Lunch and learn at Family Health Team offices with staff to collaborate and assist with keeping patients safe at home and supported. Education regarding what services we can provide has increased partnerships, collaboration, sustainability, and referrals.

Discharge planning meetings and weekly meetings with HCCS to provide needed supports for mutual clients and avoid duplication of services while also filling the "gaps" when identified.

## **Champion a Vibrant Future**

New technology purchased and utilized to provide expanded scope of skills. For example ISTATS for point of care INR and Chem 8 testing which allows clients to avoid clinic and or hospital visits.

Technology purchased to support sustainable growth within the community paramedic program. Platforms for documentation and tools to accomplish these objectives included PreHos documentation platform, tablets, iPhone, desk top computers and laptops.

Naloxone distribution pilot project with the Health Unit.

Remote Patient Monitoring program to provide vital sign monitoring to clients in their home with alerts provided if vitals are outside normal limits. This provides families peace of mind if they are unable to be home with their loved one and increases early detection of issues and improves safety.

# 2024 to 2026 Service Objectives & Initiatives

## **Innovate for Service Excellence**

Expanded areas of training including phlebotomy to decrease hospital/clinic visits and support discharge planning and reintegration of clients to home.

Expanded medical directives incorporating additional medications that are available for common ailments. This will allow clients to avoid seeking treatment at the hospital and



improve cost saving measures. This also allows early intervention to decrease hospital admissions and lengthy stays. Especially beneficial for seniors with mobility issues and clients without a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

Provincial working groups expanded to include knowledge exchange committees covering operations, education and quality assurance framework and standards. Promotes growth of community paramedic programs and sustainability.

## **Foster a Thriving Community**

Increased collaboration with family health teams, nurse practitioners and other community providers to provide more comprehensive care allowing clients to receive the right care, at the right time in their home.

Improved integration and closer relationships and team approach with hospital discharge teams to maximize savings and allow clients to be discharged earlier and safely with supports.

Evolving clinical considerations and expanding skill set. Introduction of IV antibiotics will allow people to remain at home and provide cost savings to all health care stakeholders.

Additional vaccine clinics, wellness clinics and educational sessions to clients and individuals at County Housing units. Expansion will service many underserved populations that do not have access due to socioeconomic barriers, mobility issues and lack of medical practitioners available.

Expansion of wellness clinics to include all county owned housing. Currently we provide 9 wellness clinics monthly.

Expansion of wellness clinic participation at the warming room. Expanded to 1 day time support clinic and several nightly wellness clinics in collaboration with other community support providers for persons with mental health, addictions, and unsheltered populations.

Remote patient monitoring expansion. Improved technology and access to support remotely with the option to allow practitioners to participate virtually without visits to clinics and with the support of community paramedics.



## **Propel Sustainable Growth**

Continued collaboration with community partners

## **Champion a Vibrant Future**

Continued networking with community partners – OHT-N, Health Unit, Family Physician, Long Term Care Home to expand and evolve based on gap analysis.

Continued group work with Eastern Ontario Paramedic Chiefs – Community Paramedic groups.

# Long Term Plan & Strategic Objectives

## **Innovate for Service Excellence**

Gap analysis of community needs.

Identify and help support unmatched patients with physicians – video teleconference with these clients presenting full assessment and vitals to carry out a treatment plan.

## Ignite Economic Opportunity

Video teleconference abilities – take advantage of the mobility of paramedics and their assessment capabilities and testing capabilities – blood draws, urinalysis, 12 leads, point of care testing (CHEM 8, INR, and blood glucose) thereby diverting unmatched patients from ER.

## **Foster a Thriving Community**

Develop working plan and strategy to support indigenous populations.

Develop a program in collaboration with county social services to provide regular supports to vulnerable, unhoused populations in the community. Example, CP and social services outreach worker partner to provide these supports throughout the community several days / week.

## **Propel Sustainable Growth**

Advocate for sustainability from local municipal and provincial governments. Presentations outlining program success and usage rates- local networks, Councils and professional associations for sustained permanent funding.