



Administrative Report

To: Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council

From: Justin Lammers
Chief, Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services

Date: Wednesday, September 18, 2024

Subject: Land Ambulance Response Time Performance Plan

Report #: 2024-0918-EMS-R10-JL

Purpose

To provide Essex County Council with background information and approve the recommended 2025 Land Ambulance Response Time Performance Plan (RTPP) for Essex Windsor EMS, as required by Ontario Regulation 257/00.

Background

Since 2012, and each year following, the *Ambulance Act*, O. Reg 257/00 (section VIII) mandates every municipality providing land ambulance services to submit a Response Time Performance Plan to the Director of the Emergency Health Regulatory and Accountability Services Branch (EHRAB) before October 31st.

In preparing the RTPP, data is extracted from the Ministry of Health via the Ambulance Dispatch Reporting System (ADRS). ADRS is a dataset containing details of all 911 calls received by the Ontario Land Ambulance Dispatch system and includes administrative and basic demographic data.

The Essex Windsor RTPP outlines the target response time for urgent responses, categorized by the Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale (CTAS). Ontario Regulation 257/00 establishes a six (6) minute response time for patients suffering a Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA), and an eight (8) minute response time for patients categorized as CTAS 1. The upper-tier municipality responsible for the delivery of land ambulance sets the response times for CTAS 2 through CTAS 5.

Table 1 – Canadian Triage Acuity Scale Levels

CTAS Level	Clinical Presentation
1 (Resuscitation)	Conditions that are considered threats to life or limb or have an imminent risk of deterioration requiring immediate aggressive interventions. These are patients that have arrested, or require active and aggressive resuscitation, or are pre-arrest or post-arrest.
2 (Emergent)	Conditions that are a potential threat to life, limb or function requiring rapid medical interventions and the use of condition-specific controlled medical acts. These patients have serious illness or injury and have the potential for further deterioration that may then require resuscitation.
3 (Urgent)	Conditions that could potentially progress to a serious problem requiring emergency interventions. May be associated with significant discomfort or affect the ability to function at work or activities of daily living. These patients have normal vital signs but their presenting problem suggests a more serious acute progress.
4 (Less Urgent)	Conditions that relate to patient age, distress, potential for deterioration, or complications that would benefit from intervention or reassurance. These patients will typically have stable vital signs and lower pain scales.
5 (Non-urgent)	Conditions that may be acute but non-urgent as well as conditions which may be part of a chronic problem with or without evidence of deterioration.

Discussion

Essex Windsor EMS has maintained the same RTPP since 2012, and Table 2 below contains the historical trend, up to September 10th, 2024.

Table 2 – Essex Windsor EMS Response Times

CTAS	Time (min)	Target	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024(P)
SCA	6	55%	63%	62%	53%	44%	46%	59%	59%
1	8	75%	80%	77%	75%	69%	65%	69%	70%
2	10	90%	86%	85%	83%	83%	79%	80%	82%
3	12	90%	87%	87%	85%	88%	88%	88%	91%
4	14	90%	90%	91%	90%	86%	93%	92%	94%
5	14	90%	90%	90%	90%	86%	94%	93%	94%

While it does not appear that Essex Windsor EMS will be able to meet the established response times for CTAS 1 and 2 for 2024, there is incremental improvement noted from 2023 and at the very least, no regression. These improvements can be attributed to:

- Ongoing efforts of hospitals in reducing EMS offload delays
- Essex County Council approving land ambulance enhancements
- Successful Community Paramedicine program
- Implementation of the Community Assessment Triage Team (CATT)
- Committed and engaged workforce
- Local healthcare agency collaboration, including the Windsor Essex Ontario Health Team

However, it should be noted that flu season typically starts in October, and historically, this is a difficult time for the healthcare system. Limited capacity within hospitals and increased calls for service to Essex Windsor EMS exacerbate an already strained environment. The percentages in Table 2 for 2024 are up to September 10th and have not yet factored in pending surges. Essex Windsor EMS continues to meet with hospital leadership to strategize on opportunities to increase flow and reduce offload delays, but it should be anticipated that difficult days are on the horizon.

Essex Windsor EMS will continue to press forward on the current path and eagerly awaits the finalization of the 2024 Master Plan, which is anticipated to conclude in November of this year. Results will include optimal deployment strategies in both resource allocation and future expansion. The results of the Master Plan will be shared with Essex County Council before the end of the year.

Additional areas of focus for Essex Windsor EMS include:

- Advocacy to the Ministry of Health to integrate with Windsor Central Ambulance Communications Centre
- Increasing CATT capacity
- Ongoing Paramedic Recruitment
- Working closely with St. Clair College to increase successful Paramedic Program graduates
- Strategizing with health system partners to leverage alternate models of care
- Internal policy and process changes to improve workplace morale

Essex Windsor EMS is not requesting a change to the current response time targets. It is recommended that the current response time targets remain, and any changes to deployment are benchmarked based on the set targets and historical performance. However, as future growth occurs and methods of how ambulances are dispatched are subject to change, it will be worth revisiting.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications with this report.

Consultations

- Essex Windsor EMS Senior Leadership Team
 - Ambulance Dispatch Reporting System
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Strategic Plan Alignment

Working as Team Essex County	Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence	Building a Regional Powerhouse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Scaling Sustainable Services through Innovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focusing “Team Essex County” for Results <input type="checkbox"/> Advocating for Essex County’s Fair Share 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Being an Employer with Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Government Working for the People <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promoting Transparency and Awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Providing Reliable Infrastructure for Partners <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Dynamic and Thriving Communities Across the County <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonizing Action for Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

Recommendation

That Essex County Council receive and approve the 2025 Land Ambulance Response Time Performance Plan for Essex Windsor EMS, as required by Ontario regulation 257/00 (as amended by regulation 267/08).

Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,
Justin Lammers

Justin Lammers, Chief, Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services

Concurred With,
Sandra Zwiers

Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix	Title
N/A	N/A