



February 10, 2020

Jim Pine  
Special Advisor on Public Health and Emergency Health  
Ministry of Health  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
777 Bay Street  
Toronto ON M7A 2J3

Dear Mr. Pine,

The City of Guelph and County of Wellington are pleased to contribute to the ongoing consultation on Emergency Medical Service Modernization.

The City of Guelph delivers paramedic services both within the municipality and across Wellington County through the Guelph Wellington Paramedic Service (GWPS). GWPS employs 170 full- and part-time paramedics, who serve a population of 225,000 people over a 2,600 square kilometre geographic area. The service responded to more than 26,300 calls for medical assistance in 2019.

To ensure residents of Guelph and Wellington continue to receive quality paramedic services, we urge you to consider the following municipal input:

**Ensure service delivery remains local and responsive to community needs**

- GWPS has benefited from its ties to municipal government because it is responsive to local needs and nimble enough to engage in innovative local partnerships.
  - Examples include GWPS's community paramedicine program and involvement in the Guelph-Wellington Drug Strategy, both of which leverage their unique front-line experience with at-risk clients to meet community goals
- To maintain and enhance systems connectivity, it will be necessary to build strong linkages between EMS and the new Ontario Health teams and to retain existing connections between GWPS and social services offered by Wellington County as the Service System Manager.
- Moving towards a more centralized model where the service is removed from the City of Guelph would challenge the existing 50/50 cost share relationship. Changes should only be made if there is a strong business case.

**Protect municipal investments and enhance the existing funding relationship**

- Municipal governments have considerable assets tied into EMS service delivery. If the Province decides to move towards a more centralized approach and transfer these

assets to another service provider, compensation will be necessary to protect these property tax funded investments.

- The province should also maintain the current 50/50 cost share model. Shifting costs to municipal governments may lead to property tax increases. EMS needs stable, long-term predictable funding.
- The province should tie funding to inflation and finance its portion of growth-related funding needs. It should match year-to-year municipal funding increases aimed at enhancing service quality rather than tying funding levels to past annual allocation amounts.
- Should restructuring occur, the province should pay for implementation costs (severances, leases, assets, etc.) so these are not borne by the property tax base.

### **Certainty for GWPS**

- GWPS needs certainty to continue providing the high quality services residents expect. The current review has delayed planned service enhancements and created uncertainty for workers.

### **Next Steps**

Once a service delivery model has been chosen, there will be a need for more discussions to ensure a smooth transition. The City of Guelph and County of Wellington are committed to ongoing dialogue to ensure we arrive at a solution that works best for our residents and property taxpayers.

Should you have any questions or require more information on this submission, please contact Kate Sullivan, Acting Manager of Policy and Intergovernmental Relations for the City of Guelph at [kate.sullivan@guelph.ca](mailto:kate.sullivan@guelph.ca). The City and County would also be pleased to host you for a consultation session on public health and emergency medical services if you are in the area.

Sincerely,



Scott Stewart  
Chief Administrative Officer  
City of Guelph



Scott Wilson  
Chief Administrative Officer  
County of Wellington

**Guelph City Hall**  
1 Carden St. Guelph, ON N1H 3A1  
519-822-1260  
TTY 519-826-9771

[guelph.ca](http://guelph.ca)

**County of Wellington**  
74 Woolwich St. Guelph, ON N1H 3T9  
519-837-2600

[wellington.ca](http://wellington.ca)