



## Information Sheet FIRE FIGHTER PARAMEDIC

### ***Fire Fighters Integral in Emergency Medical Response***

Firefighters have been responding to medical calls for decades, providing life-saving services for Ontario municipalities.

Many professional fire fighters are also certified paramedics but are restricted by statute from using their knowledge, medical expertise, and skills to provide pre-hospital emergency patient care as a paramedic when they respond on a fire truck.

This is a missed opportunity to utilize resources more efficiently in Ontario municipalities.

### ***Advantages of Fire Fighter Response***

- Fire fighters often arrive before Ambulance services.
- Fire fighters often assess medical needs, provide lifesaving CPR, defibrillation, administer naloxone, epinephrine and other symptom relief medications.
- Fire fighters provide more resources to 2-person ambulance teams that assist in better life saving protocols, emergency patient removal, stabilization of the scene, bystanders and family members.

### ***Recognizing Paramedic Certification in Fire Fighters***

Service improvements and efficiencies result when there is a formal and official recognition of the skills of a fire fighter who is paramedic certified and operating as such.

- Coupled with simultaneous notification of calls response times are further reduced by responding fire fighters.
- They will 'stop the clock' for Ministry of Health arrival statistics
- They will provide advanced assessments and treatments
- When arriving early, they can communicate patient condition to the Central Ambulance Communications Centre (CACC) and to other paramedics
- In this model they permit ambulances to re-direct to more severe calls where conditions permit. In rural communities especially, the service improvement of a fire fighter paramedic can be dramatic to the patient and can provide relief to surrounding communities when ambulances are committed to other emergency scenes

### ***Cost Control and Value Added***

Successive Auditor General Reports have indicated that land ambulance costs are spiralling out of control. Ambulance services are not meeting response time standards. Fire services have the capability and capacity to address these deficiencies in pre-hospital care.

All professional fire services in Ontario can provide value added and swift medical emergency response using the technological advantages of Simultaneous Notification if it is mandated across the province.

### ***OPFFA Offers to Government***

The OPFFA Executive has requested and offered to meet and discuss all aspects of recognizing paramedic certification of fire fighters with the Ministry of Health. Additionally, we have formally submitted our name and offered to be part of the Ambulances Services Technical Working Group through the Minister of Health. We want to work with Finance and other ministries to develop pilot projects and design systems that work.

Have your MPP speak to others about this opportunity to improve services and contact us to facilitate any meetings to discuss this important matter.

**Copies of correspondence and any further inquiries should be forwarded to:**

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