

PARAMEDICINE WORKING GROUP

There is renewed aggressive pressure on the provincial government to amend legislation that allow for the expansion of fire-based emergency medical response services. You may have heard people refer to it as the "fire medic" model.

Key paramedic stakeholders opposed to a fire-based emergency medical services (EMS) model, met recently to develop a joint plan of action. Those attending the landmark meeting included representatives of the following organizations:

CUPE (CACO)-CUPE Ambulance Committee of Ontario
OPSEU- Ontario Public Service Employees Union- Ambulance Division
SEIU- Service Employees International Union
UNIFOR- Union for Canada
OPA- Ontario Paramedic Association

This is the first time our organizations have worked together on a common goal. To that end, we have established the Paramedicine Working Group (PWG). We believe it is imperative that we work collaboratively and speak to the provincial government with one cohesive voice on the adverse impact of fire-based EMS model on:

- patient safety;
- the dilution of paramedic certification, education, competency, training and;
- costs to municipalities.

In this, PWG's first joint communication we also want to share with you, that there are other groups that share our concerns about an expanded fire-based EMS. At the end of June, the Association of the Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) sent a sternly worded letter to the Ministers of Health, Labour, Community Safety and Municipal Affairs, calling on the province to 'put the brakes on this" proposal. As well The Ontario Base Hospital Group Medical Advisory Committee (OBHG MAC) recently submitted their opposition as well.

Over the course of the summer and early fall, PWG aims to develop and facilitate a plan of action that we hope to carry out with the support and assistance of paramedics province-wide. The PWG will be releasing all information collectively so that there is no confusion.

We will be in touch soon with more information.

