
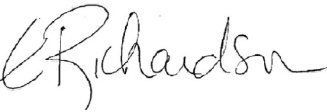




# COMMUNICATION UPDATE

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members City Council
<b>DATE:</b>	January 30, 2023
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Hamilton Paramedic Service Harm Reduction Kit Launch (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Michael Sanderson Chief, Hamilton Paramedic Service Healthy and Safe Communities Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC Medical Officer of Health, Public Health Services Healthy and Safe Communities Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

Hamilton Paramedic Service (HPS), in partnership with Hamilton Public Health Services (HPHS), will be launching a new service enhancement on February 1, 2023 to distribute harm reduction supplies within HPS' ambulance fleet. Harm reduction supplies include things such as needles, alcohol swabs, sterile water, glass stems, cookers; supplies that are needed for an individual injecting or inhaling a substance. As Hamilton continues to experience a significant public health crisis associated with opioid use, this is an important expansion of services locally. With paramedics and their social navigator program offering these supplies, it will significantly increase access and availability in order for community members to reduce the harms associated with substance use. Paramedics see firsthand the effects of people not having access to new consumption supplies on hand every time they use. Blood borne infections, respiratory and skin infections secondary to the use of used needles or inhalation supplies can lead to infections, hospitalizations and even death.

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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This service expansion will benefit from the knowledge and expertise of Hamilton's highly trained paramedics to help to remove stigma surrounding accessing harm reduction supplies and naloxone. This new initiative expands on the naloxone distribution program that was launched in April 2021. Since the initiation of the program, Hamilton Paramedics have distributed naloxone kits to over 500 people along with providing overdose prevention education.

The goal of this initiative is to further reduce stigma and increase access to harm reduction supplies in Hamilton and provide a trusted voice to open a conversation that could assist those struggling to seek out resources when they are ready. Hamilton Public Health Services welcomes this partnership with the Hamilton Paramedic Service on this important service delivery which is the first of its kind in Ontario. A robust evaluation is planned to evaluate this initiative and results will be shared with Council, anticipated in early 2024.

Should you require further information, please contact Superintendent David Thompson at ext. 7757 or at david.thompson@hamilton.ca; or Melissa Biksa, Manager, Mental Health and Harm Reduction at ext. 6709 or melissa.biksa@hamilton.ca.

**APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

None