

Designation of the Word Name “Paramedic” Within the City of Toronto

(City Council on November 23, 24 and 25, 1999, adopted this Clause, without amendment.)

The Community Services Committee recommends the adoption of the following joint report (September 28, 1999) from the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services and General Manager, Toronto Ambulance:

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to request City Council to approve the definition and use of the word name “Paramedic” by only those persons directly employed by a licensed ambulance service as defined under the Ambulance Act of Ontario O.Reg. 501/97, O.Reg. 492/97 and directly engaged in the provision of emergency medical services within the City of Toronto.

Financial Impact:

There is no financial impact associated with this report and/or recommendations.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the term “Paramedic” be restricted for use by only those persons who are qualified based on their training and certification in accordance with Part III of the Ambulance Act of Ontario O.Reg. 501/97, O.Reg. 492/97;
- (2) the term “Paramedic” be further restricted to only those persons employed by a licensed ambulance service as defined by the Ambulance Act of Ontario O.Reg. 501/97, O.Reg. 492/97 and, directly engaged in the provision of emergency medical services within the City of Toronto; and
- (3) appropriate City officials be given the authority to give effect thereto.

Comment:

As a result of increased training, levels of qualification and the degree of medical intervention by paramedics within the City of Toronto, it is necessary to ensure that the term “Paramedic” is restricted to only those persons who meet the qualifications of a paramedic, and further are employed by a licensed ambulance service as defined by the Ambulance Act of Ontario O.Reg. 501/97, O.Reg. 492/97. By clearly defining the term “Paramedic”, the City of Toronto will ensure that only those persons who are qualified to perform the responsibilities of a paramedic are duly authorized to use this name, thus avoiding public confusion and misrepresentation.

Toronto Ambulance, in conjunction with Municipal Licensing and Standards, is currently engaged in the process of regulating private patient transfer services. Council approved the licensing of private transfer services in February 1999, in order to ensure that private transfer operators met the requirements of the Ambulance Act of Ontario, and further provided their services in an environment that protects the safety and well-being of the patients they carry. While these vehicles will not operate as ambulances as defined under the Ambulance Act of Ontario, it is important that the public not be confused regarding their role relative to the role of a "Paramedic" engaged in the provision of emergency medical services through Toronto Ambulance.

This report has been reviewed by the Toronto Base Hospital Medical Director and he concurs with the recommendations.

Conclusion:

We should encourage discussion and facilitate with the Ministry of Health the need for paramedic terminology to be used by only those persons engaged in the provision of EMS in accordance with the Ambulance Act of Ontario and who are qualified by definition under the Ambulance Act of Ontario.

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