



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Toronto EMS User Satisfaction Survey

Date:	May 21, 2008
To:	Community Development & Recreation
From:	Chief and General Manager, Toronto EMS
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

Through the first quarter of 2008, Toronto Emergency Medical Services (EMS) worked with students from Seneca College to design and carry out a mail survey with people having been recently provided care by EMS. The survey, structured to gauge user satisfaction, confirmed some existing perceptions held by staff.

In general, the results of the survey revealed that 65% of the patients served by Toronto EMS rated their care as “excellent”. Approximately 30% of the respondents rated their care as “very good or satisfactory”. Only 2% considered the care they received to be “fair or poor”.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts beyond what has already been approved in the current year’s budget.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Patient Care Standards in Ontario are set by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) under the Ontario Ambulance Act (O. Reg. 257/00). The standards set out a logical ordering of the paramedic’s activities and practices in order to facilitate service delivery.

User satisfaction surveys with patients are not required under the Ontario Ambulance Act but EMS services may choose to do so, on their own initiative. This is the second such survey conducted by Toronto EMS. The first one was completed in 2000 and also

confirmed a very positive evaluation of the services provided.

COMMENTS

Through the first quarter of 2008, Toronto Emergency Medical Services (EMS) worked with students from Seneca College to design and carry out a mail survey with people having been recently provided care by EMS. The project was managed by staff in the Professional Standards Unit of EMS. The role for the students was in survey design, distribution, data input, analysis and presentation of the findings.

To begin, 750 names were selected from the EMS Patient Care database for use in the survey and mailed out with return envelopes. Each patient had to be at least 18 years of age and had used EMS between November 2007 and January 2008. The response rate was good as 34% of the patients contacted, took the time to complete and return the survey.

Major findings from the survey

1. The majority of patients accessing EMS services were over the age of 65
2. Women were generally more satisfied with the care received than men
3. Paramedics followed proper procedures and made the patient feel comfortable
4. Patients age 65+ were charged ambulance fees more often than any other age group
5. 65% of the patients rated the care provided by EMS as “excellent”
6. 30% of the patients rated the care provided by EMS as “very good or satisfactory”
7. 2% of the patients rated the care provided by EMS as “fair or poor”

The survey helped to confirm staff perceptions that the care provided by Toronto EMS is well received and highly valued by the people of Toronto. As expected, Toronto’s aging population will continue to utilize Toronto EMS more than any other age group. Unfavorable ratings or complaints of the service provided by Toronto EMS are received at the Professional Standards Unit and fully investigated to ensure all applicable standards are being met.

The limitations of the survey include the problem of “hidden populations” experienced by all surveys and the Census. That is, patients that have used the EMS service but without a mailing address could no be contacted for feedback. Also, staff are aware that a portion of the surveys not returned may be due to language barriers. With Toronto’s diverse population, alternative techniques for engaging people must be developed such as the General Manager’s Advisory Committee (GMAC) currently underway at Toronto EMS.

The management at Toronto EMS considered the user satisfaction survey to be a worthwhile exercise and will continue to use this tool periodically. The experience of working with the young people from Seneca College was valuable and successful from all perspectives. Letters of appreciation to the students that worked on the survey and the College have been drafted and mailed out.

CONTACT

Michael Neill
Acting Deputy Chief, Toronto EMS
416-392-3700

SIGNATURE

Bruce K. Farr
Chief/General Manager
Toronto EMS