



October 20, 2015

Delivered by: Email & Canada Post

Ms. Jennifer Young
Director Strategic Planning,
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Ornge
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Ms. Young:

I am sending this correspondence as per your recent request during dialogue with Deputy Chief Robert Smith. I understand that the Deputy Chief had initiated discussion surrounding challenges and mitigation opportunities related to transport of non-urgent patients from Services de santé de Chapleau Health Services, in Chapleau, Ontario to the referral center at Timmins and District Hospital.

Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board is responsible for delivery of land ambulance services within the Manitoulin and Sudbury Districts; including within the community of Chapleau. Movement of patients from this community to Timmins for diagnostic care and treatment remains an ongoing issue directly related to distance and emergency coverage. Specifically, use of the only land ambulance in Chapleau to perform non-urgent transportation to Timmins leads to loss of municipal paramedic coverage for up to seven hours. Obviously this is a significant risk to the community; one that municipal officials are overtly aware of.

Chapleau is not unique to many communities in Ontario, in that the municipality has a small hospital that depends heavily on regional referrals. Chapleau is unique geographically however in that the land ambulance redundancy is more than one hour away, with responses out of Foleyet, Ontario or Wawa, Ontario.

While I understand that the MOHLTC EHS Branch has in place through their CACC Manual of Practice (MoP) and guideline that requires non-urgent transfers to be greater than 240 kilometers between points to warrant air ambulance consideration, I am also aware of exemptions to this guideline that have been in place for many years. Movement of non-urgent patients from Wawa to Sault Sainte Marie have been facilitated by Ornge since the late 1990's, while similar patient movements from Atikokan to Thunder Bay have also been facilitated by Ornge.

The issue of distance between facilities, is just one measure that must be considered when setting guidelines. Time of travel must also be included in any determination of a

guideline. Mapping of the existing exemptions (using Google Maps) reveals that the distance from Wawa to Sault Sainte Marie is 224 Kms, while the travel time is 2 hours and 27 minutes. Atikokan to Thunder Bay is 206 Kms and the time of travel is 2 hours and 14 minutes. Chapleau to Timmins is 202 Kms, but travel time is 2 hours and 39 minutes. Much of the travel time relates to the fact the highway between Chapleau and Timmins (Hwy 101) is a secondary roadway that is not of excellent quality.

I appreciate the time you took to speak to Deputy Chief Smith and I am hopeful we can work together to develop a plan to help mitigate the community risks associated with movement of non-urgent patients between Chapleau, Ontario and Timmins, Ontario.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience. Should you require any more information on this topic or if you have questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



Michael Maclsaac
Chief of EMS
Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB

cc. Robert Smith, Deputy Chief of EMS