

MEMORANDUM

TO: Community & Corporate Affairs Committee

FROM: Bruce Morrison Deputy Fire Chief

DATE: April 6, 2018

MEMORANDUM NO.: MEM-FIRE-2018-0004

RE: Ontario Naloxone Program

PURPOSE OF THE MEMORANDUM:

To provide the Chair and Members of the Community and Corporate Affairs Committee information on the expansion of the Ontario Naloxone Program to include police and fire services.

BACKGROUND:

On December 7, 2017 Dr. Bruce Hoskins, Minister of Health & Long Term Care (MOHLTC) and Marie-France Lalonde, Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS) announced the expansion of the Ontario Naloxone Program (ONP) to include police and fire services.

On January 26, 2018 Fire Marshal Ross Nichols of the Office of the Fire Marshall and Emergency Management (OFMEM) provided further direction should fire services decide to access Naloxone kits to mitigate the impact of overdoses and protect firefighters.

COMMENTS:

The opioid drug “crisis” has slowly migrated from the western provinces, where its impact first became widely known to Ontario. Its impact on communities has varied from significantly taxing Public Health Units and emergency services, to a minimal impact, where its presence is barely noticed.

Naloxone is a drug formulated to rapidly reverse the effect of an opioid overdose. Once administered, it can reverse and block the effects of other opioids. It can restore normal respirations to a person whose breathing has slowed or stopped as a result of overdosing with heroin or other prescription opioid pain medications.

To access this program, fire services have the option to enroll in the program by contacting their local Public Health Unit. A list of eligibility requirements needs to be

met before the Public Health Unit will order a supply of Naloxone. These requirements relate to training, policy and procedures, developing a Memorandum of Understanding, Service Level Agreement with our Public Health Unit, consulting with legal counsel and municipal council.

Halton Region Paramedic Service, through our "Tiered Response" agreement, notifies Halton Hills Fire Department to respond to respiratory and cardiac arrest types of incidents. Halton Region Police are also notified to respond. HHFD firefighters are trained as First Responders and as such are able to provide rescue breathing therapy to individuals suffering the effects of overdoses. Once paramedics arrive on scene they are the higher medical authority, and the firefighter role is largely to support paramedics as treatment is provided to the patient.

CONCLUSION:

Senior staff has met with other emergency services in Halton Region through our Joint Emergency Services Operation Advisory Group (JESOAG) to discuss the responses to opioid overdoses. Senior staff has also consulted with Halton Region Public Health to understand the impact of opioids in our community.

We are currently not seeing the impacts or demands on resources that other communities unfortunately are seeing and, therefore, none of the other fire services in our region have taken the steps to enroll in this program. In addition, firefighters are issued personal protective equipment (masks, gloves, gowns etc.) to ensure their safety when responding to these types of calls.

We will continue to monitor the situation locally and regionally and will report back to the CCAC should there be a change in these types of responses.

Reviewed and approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John deHooze".

John deHooze, Chief & Commissioner of Fire Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brent Marshall".

Brent Marshall, CAO