



ASSOCIATION OF  
**MANITOBA**  
MUNICIPALITIES

**Meeting with the Honourable Cameron Friesen  
Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living**

**2020**

**Introduction**..... 1

**Priority Issues** ..... 2

    1) Health System Transformation led by Shared Health..... 2

    2) Patient Transfers under The Mental Health Amendment Act ..... 4

    3) Community Safety Issues..... 5

**Appendix – AMM Active Resolutions** ..... 6

## Introduction

- The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Cameron Friesen and representatives of Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living.
- The AMM encourages the Province of Manitoba to consider municipal concerns as well as the effects of funding decisions on local communities throughout the budget process.
- The *Speech from the Throne* (November 2019) highlighted the provincial government's commitment to work closely with municipal partners to provide efficient, cost-effective local government, in response to the AMM calling for a 'Partners in Growth' Memorandum of Understanding during the provincial election campaign. The AMM looks forward to working with the Province of Manitoba to strengthen provincial-municipal growth and partnership opportunities through a balanced discussion of both revenues and expenditures.
- This document outlines the AMM's position and recommendations on several important municipal issues relevant to the Health, Seniors and Active Living portfolio.

## Priority Issues

### 1) Health System Transformation led by Shared Health

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Proactively consult with the AMM on any changes to the provincial healthcare system that affect local communities;*
  - ❖ *Continue to assist municipalities with addressing concerns related to EMS restructuring; and*
  - ❖ *Implement a comprehensive provincial strategy to recruit and retain physicians throughout Manitoba.*
- As the Province continues to move forward with implementing changes to the healthcare system province-wide, it is imperative that Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living and Shared Health continue to consult with municipalities.
  - The AMM appreciated Shared Health's efforts to consult with our members during our 2019 District Meetings that were held across Manitoba, and we look forward to continuing to work together to communicate changes to our members.
  - To ensure a smooth transition process with the restructuring of EMS, the AMM urges the Province to continue assisting municipalities with outstanding concerns.
  - While the AMM appreciates the department providing factsheets tailored to municipalities, going forward it would be more beneficial if resources were developed and distributed to municipal offices to coincide with official announcements.
  - The AMM urges the department to immediately review any cases of increased emergency response times, with a focus on rural areas, that may result from regional consolidation or other changes to the provincial healthcare system.
  - In addition, a comprehensive provincial strategy to recruit and retain physicians in Manitoba is urgently needed.
  - Currently, more than 90 per cent of Manitoba municipalities are reporting doctor shortages while nearly 95 per cent are allocating financial resources to recruit and retain health practitioners in local communities.

- When compared to other provinces and territories, Manitoba consistently has one of the lowest physician-to-population ratios. This is concerning given that municipalities spend over \$1-million annually on recruitment and retention efforts even though a higher amount of doctors are graduating in Canada than ever before.
- The AMM welcomes the provincial government's commitment to establish a Physician Recruitment and Retention program for local communities throughout Manitoba.
- In particular, the development of a Rural Residency Program through the University of Manitoba to increase the number of trained physicians in rural and northern Manitoba is both timely and welcomed by the AMM, and thus we would appreciate an update on the progress of this program.
- Lastly, the AMM appreciates serving on the Rural Physician Recruitment Advisory Committee and expects concrete recommendations to be expeditiously acted upon by the provincial government.

## 2) Patient Transfers under The Mental Health Amendment Act

The AMM recommends the government:

### ❖ ***Expand the newly-created MHA transfer hub system to other parts of Manitoba.***

- According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, 20 per cent of Canadians will personally experience a mental illness in their lifetime.
- Given the complex links between mental health and the criminal justice system, police responses to mental health issues continue to be a topic of significant discussion both within Manitoba and across Canada.
- As *The Mental Health Amendment Act* enables a ‘qualified person’ other than a police officer to assume custody of and supervise an individual who's awaiting a mental health assessment, these changes should significantly reduce policing costs and help ensure police service coverage in local communities.
- We urge Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living to continue to support the training program for ‘qualified persons’ in consultation with our organization.
- The AMM also encourages the department to discuss the necessity of expanding the newly-created MHA transfer hub system with Manitoba Justice and Regional Health Authorities (RHAs), particularly in northern Manitoba and the Parkland region.

### 3) Community Safety Issues

The AMM recommends the government:

❖ ***Ensure municipalities receive all necessary tools, resources and assistance to help mitigate illicit drug use in local communities.***

- The Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) has noted that increases in crime are in large part due to the growing use of methamphetamines and the patterns of violence associated with the illicit drug trade.
- Similar increases in crime are also being reported across Manitoba in both rural and urban areas.
- Given the increasing prevalence of methamphetamines, illicit drug use presents an urgent and growing threat to local communities and public health throughout Manitoba.
- As community safety is a top priority for Manitoba municipalities, the AMM appreciates the presentation on the recommendations made by the Illicit Drug Task Force to reduce the use and effects of illicit drugs within Manitoba municipalities at our annual Convention in November 2019.
- The AMM commends the creation of the Illicit Drug Task Force and urges the Province to expedite the recommendations made in the June 2019 Report to help mitigate illicit drug use and distribution in local communities.
- Additionally, the AMM encourages Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living to ensure local communities receive adequate resources, tools and assistance to better promote public health practices to reduce harms and risks throughout Manitoba.

## Appendix – AMM Active Resolutions

### AMM Resolution #18-2019

#### Topic: The Mental Health Act

Sponsor(s): City of Winkler (Central District), Town of Altona (Central District), Municipality of Pembina (Central District), Municipality of Lorne (Central District), Municipality of Louise (Central District), RM of East St. Paul (Eastern District)

Department(s): Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living; Manitoba Justice

WHEREAS under Section 15(1) of The Mental Health Act a peace officer who takes a person into custody for an involuntary medical examination under Section 11 or 12 or an involuntary psychiatric assessment under Section 9 shall remain with the person and retain custody of them, or arrange for another peace officer to do so, until the examination or assessment is completed or the person is admitted to the facility; and

WHEREAS The Mental Health Act is amended under The Mental Health Amendment Act in: Sub-Section 15(1) by adding "or a qualified person" after "for another peace officer"; after Sub-Section 15(3) by adding: Sub-Section 15(4) in this section, "qualified person" means a person who holds a position specified in the regulations or who has received training specified in the regulations; and

WHEREAS peace officers are taken away from regular duty for extended periods of time, leaving their municipalities exposed to greater risk and public safety issues when they are not available; and

WHEREAS in addition to public safety issues, significant overtime costs are incurred by municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to:

- expedite the implementation of "qualified persons" at healthcare facilities; and
- provide a safe and secure area at a healthcare facility for persons in custody while awaiting examination and/or assessment.

### AMM Resolution #19-2019

#### Topic: Methamphetamine Issues

Sponsor(s): City of Dauphin (Parkland District)

Department(s): Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living; Manitoba Justice

WHEREAS methamphetamine (meth) is an illicit drug that is highly addictive, becoming more widely available, and is inexpensive to purchase; and

WHEREAS the effects of the use of meth are destructive to individuals and families, can result in violence, and are life altering; and

WHEREAS there are insufficient resources for education regarding meth, insufficient supports for those addicted and their families, and insufficient resources to enforce laws regarding the crimes related to meth; and

WHEREAS many of the effects of meth use present indirect and direct costs to municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to provide sufficient funding to educate the population regarding the hazards of the use of methamphetamines in hopes to prevent its use, provide sufficient funding for readily available and comprehensive rehabilitation programs for those addicted, and sufficient funding for law enforcement associated with the crimes related to the distribution of meth.

**AMM Resolution #33-2019**

**Topic: Priority Infrastructure Upgrades**

Sponsor(s): Town of Carberry (Western District), Municipality of North Cypress-Langford (Western District), RM of Whitehead (Western District)

Department(s): Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living; Manitoba Infrastructure

WHEREAS there have been a streamlining of ER and hospital services that have resulted in communities sharing on-call services between them; and

WHEREAS this may result in a delay of ambulance services being offered to local residents on a timely basis due to the distance between communities that share these services; and

WHEREAS the infrastructure between these communities may pose an undue risk of further injury or delay to First Responders and patients during transport if not kept up to date;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba so that communities that share Emergency Room services be placed in a priority position to receive infrastructure upgrades to the main roadways between them to further enhance the safety and effectiveness of First Responders so they can safely and effectively do their jobs on route to the appropriate facility.

**AMM Resolution #35-2018 \*Standing Policy**

**Topic: Rural Health Care**

Sponsor(s): Village of St-Pierre-Jolys (Eastern District)

Department(s): Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living

WHEREAS Manitoba municipalities have been advised that Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living is proposing to make changes to rural health care in our province; and

WHEREAS 41% of Manitoba's population resides outside of Winnipeg; and

WHEREAS hospital closures will force rural residents to seek health services farther away which could not only compromise chances of survival, but would take services further away from where people live and have support; and

WHEREAS larger facilities who already experience emergency wait times of up to 5 hours would see an increase in wait times due to the increased volume of patients; and

WHEREAS closures of most rural hospitals could be detrimental to the growth or survival of many communities, taking away a valuable quality of life service and removing quality jobs for our youth; and

WHEREAS rural communities are not all the same, resulting in the need for different models of care;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to work with municipalities and local communities towards innovative solutions for the delivery of sustainable rural health care.

**AMM Resolution #17-2017**

**Topic: Emergency Services Assistance in Municipalities**

Sponsor(s): RM of St. Andrews (Interlake District)

Department(s): Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living; Manitoba Municipal Relations

WHEREAS the RM of St. Andrews Emergency Services staff regularly perform duties to assist other Emergency Responders such as Manitoba Hydro Safe Watch and the transportation of residents for ambulance services; and

WHEREAS these services utilize municipal fire fighters resulting in long periods of time of non-availability and financial burdens; and

WHEREAS other programs such as MPI have a funding model to compensate for such services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to establish a cost-recovery model to allow these services to be identified, adequately staffed and funded.

**AMM Resolution #26-2017**

**Topic: Healthcare Services**

Sponsor(s): Prairie View Municipality (Midwestern District)

Department(s): Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living; Manitoba Municipal Relations

WHEREAS Prairie Mountain Health Authority has notified the Prairie View Municipality that ambulance stations will be staffed on a regional basis and operated on a rotational basis within the communities of Hamiota, Shoal Lake and Birtle, partly as a result of emergency staff shortages in the region; and

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has announced financial cutbacks which will result in the Health Authorities removing primary care services from various rural communities, which will negatively impact healthcare provided in rural communities, and will cause many residents of rural communities to relocate or travel to larger centers or out of Manitoba for more timely medical services; and

WHEREAS the distance and wait time for emergency ambulance services has drastically increased, putting residents' lives in jeopardy;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to review the impacts of financial cutbacks to health services, the drastic impact of a regional ambulance service on the rural population, and the effects of continually losing healthcare services in rural communities.

**AMM Resolution #42-2016**

**Topic: Health Cards**

Sponsor(s): City of Dauphin (Parkland District)

Department(s): Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living

WHEREAS for years the Province of Manitoba has directed new residents to the local municipal office to obtain information and apply for a Manitoba Health Card; and

WHEREAS the provision of health care services falls within the provincial mandate; and

WHEREAS Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living recently revamped its website to include a new electronic Manitoba Health Card Registration Form;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to revise its policies and/or practices by removing all references to local municipal offices providing assistance or being involved in the Manitoba Health Card registration process.

**AMM Resolution #13-2015**

**Topic: Trans Canada Trail Funding**

Sponsor(s): Municipality of Harrison Park (Midwestern District), Municipality of Roblin (Midwestern District)  
Department(s): Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living; Environment and Climate Change Canada

WHEREAS the Trans Canada Trail Network runs through the province of Manitoba providing recreational benefits to all citizens;

AND WHEREAS Trails Manitoba is the parent body for the 22 Trail Groups in the province who are the keepers of Trans Canada Trail;

AND WHEREAS these individual Trail Groups in Manitoba must receive their financial assistance for trail maintenance through grants from Trails Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS there is currently no annual funding from the Province of Manitoba for the maintenance requirements in the annual Trails Manitoba budget leaving a crippling shortfall;

AND WHEREAS municipalities that house the Trans Canada Trail Groups are often called upon to bear the financial burden of ongoing trail maintenance and projects;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to allocate funding to Trails Manitoba in order to meet the demands of maintenance on the Trans Canada Trail in Manitoba.

**AMM Resolution #19-2015**

**Topic: Medical Inter-Facility Transportation**

Sponsor(s): LGD of Pinawa (Eastern District)  
Department(s): Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living

WHEREAS approximately 90% of ambulance transports are for non-emergency inter-facility transports;

AND WHEREAS this significantly impacts the availability of ambulances for emergencies;

AND WHEREAS there are other jurisdictions where a significant number of non-emergency inter-facility transports are managed by private organizations;

AND WHEREAS an alternative method of inter-facility transportation would free up ambulances and EMS staff for emergencies plus increase capacity for proactive in-home visits (Community Paramedics) by EMS personnel with higher risk patients, and in particular, the elderly, which has been proven to be highly effective in other jurisdictions in Canada;

AND WHEREAS EMS staff could also have capacity for assisting in rural Emergency Room care;

AND WHEREAS this scenario would improve the quality of health care in rural areas, reduce the number of 911 calls, and likely reduce the cost of providing rural health care;

AND WHEREAS the member municipalities of the Eastern Region Community Health Committee are prepared to

participate in a pilot project;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to facilitate a pilot project to establish the feasibility of privately managed medical inter-facility transportation.

**AMM Resolution #24-2013**

**Topic: Palliative Care Services**

Sponsor(s): Town of Russell (Midwestern District)

Department(s): Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living

WHEREAS access and provision of health care services throughout the Province of Manitoba are important to all residents of Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS all services from beginning of life to end of life are critical to a health care system that is compassionate and respectful;

AND WHEREAS the provision of palliative care is not always funded through Manitoba's Department of Health and is left to be organized and funded by local communities;

AND WHEREAS 'end of life' care should receive a greater level of support and recognition by Manitoba Health;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to change the current funding arrangements so that palliative care services are given greater priority and greater resources through regional health authorities.

**AMM Resolution #25-2013**

**Topic: Reduce Community Contribution Requirements**

Sponsor(s): LGD of Pinawa (Eastern District)

Department(s): Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba (the Province) has a policy on community contributions to health capital (the Policy) projects whereby health capital projects will be cost shared between the Province and a community, the community paying at least 10 per cent and the Province paying the remainder of the costs associated with the health capital project;

AND WHEREAS the Policy states that the community contribution may be spread out in equivalent annual payments for a ten year period, resulting in a contribution of 20 per cent of the health capital projects;

AND WHEREAS the AMM presented Resolution 19/07 to Manitoba Health resolving that the Province of Manitoba remove the 10 per cent community contribution requirement;

AND WHEREAS Manitoba Health has not yet acted upon this Resolution;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to reduce the community contribution requirement on any health care facilities to a fixed 5 per cent;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the community contributions be in the form of progress payments over the project construction period at the said fixed 5 per cent rate.