



ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA MUNICIPALITIES POLICY BRIEF – January 24, 2023

MINISTER OF HEALTH | AUDREY GORDON |

The AMM appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Audrey Gordon and representatives of Manitoba Health. The AMM encourages the Province to consider municipal concerns as well as the effects of funding decisions on local communities throughout the budget process. This document outlines the AMM's position and recommendations on a number of important municipal issues relevant to the health portfolio. The AMM looks forward to working with the Province of Manitoba to strengthen provincial-municipal growth and partnership opportunities.

TOP POLICY IMPLICATIONS



- While we welcome recent provincial announcements related to the construction of new hospitals and centralized Virtual Emergency Care and Transfer Resource Service (VECTRS), we remain concerned with ongoing healthcare facility closures as well as suspension of services in many communities with little to no notice to impacted municipalities.
- As municipalities continue to raise concerns with inadequate health care services, the AMM urges the Province to unveil its overall plan for the health care system, particularly for rural healthcare facilities.
- Moreover, the pandemic has heightened the need for greater access to physicians across the province, especially in rural areas that often suffer from slower emergency response times and staff shortages.
- The current shortage of health care professionals is putting a strain on the health care system in Manitoba communities, which not only creates risk for public safety but also hinders economic growth in local communities.
- Moreover, Manitoba's licensing requirements are some of the most stringent in Canada. Hiring internationally educated nurses (IENs) could help alleviate some of the shortages many communities are seeing across the province.

MUNICIPAL PRIORITIES

1. SHARED HEALTH PLAN FOR HEALTHCARE TRANSFORMATION
2. PHYSICIAN SHORTAGES

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, despite healthcare being a provincial responsibility.

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ *Unveil Shared Health's plan for transforming rural healthcare under Manitoba's Clinical Preventive Services Plan in consultation with the AMM and municipalities; and*
- ❖ *Expedite a comprehensive strategy to recruit and retain physicians throughout Manitoba.*

TOP POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- For more than three years, municipalities have been ringing the alarm on the risks to public safety and impacts on emergency response created by the framework established by the College of Paramedics of Manitoba (CPMB), which went into effect on Dec. 1, 2020.
- CPMB's framework negatively impacts volunteerism in municipalities by charging the highest college registration fees in Canada and nearly tripling training from 120 to 310 hours.
- In response to municipal concerns, the AMM welcomes the department establishing a Medical First Response (MFR) Working Group with our organization and other stakeholders to review medical first response service-delivery models within Manitoba as well as licensing and dispatching requirements.
- The AMM looks forward to continuing these discussions and identifying a process that works for medical first responders and their communities.
- Moreover, municipalities continue to struggle to provide funding to health capital projects whose designs and costs are determined by the Province of Manitoba.
- This policy requires communities to contribute to all local health capital projects while municipalities are typically expected to contribute funding even though health care is a provincial responsibility.
- The AMM appreciates provincial flexibility towards communities who must fulfill this requirement, however the funding formula remains unclear as it differs across the province.

MUNICIPAL PRIORITIES

3. **MEDICAL FIRST RESPONDERS**
4. **COMMUNITY CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR HEALTH FACILITIES**

AMM continues to disagree that full-time professionals and volunteer responders should be treated in the same manner. Staffing and emergency response times are being jeopardized in the midst of a global pandemic, especially in rural areas.

The AMM recommends the government:

- ❖ ***Prevent emergency room closures and address paramedic shortages by establishing a medical first response (MFR) service-delivery model outside of the framework established by the College of Paramedics of Manitoba (CPMB);***
- ❖ ***Clarify the community capital contributions formula, including in-kind contributions for health facilities; and***
- ❖ ***Move toward funding all health facilities provincially.***

ACTIVE AMM HEALTH RESOLUTIONS

AMM Resolution #23-2022: Medical First Responders

WHEREAS the College of Paramedics of Manitoba regulates Emergency Medical Responders and professional paramedics; and

WHEREAS the significant increase of training hours, licensing requirements and associated costs for volunteer Emergency Medical Responders will be detrimental to the recruitment and retention of volunteers to sustain the program; and

WHEREAS Emergency Medical Responders are on call volunteers who live in the local community and are medically trained personnel who are dispatched to medical emergencies and in most cases are on scene prior to the arrival of an ambulance which in many cases can be 30 minutes to an hour; and

WHEREAS consultations with Municipalities and Emergency Medical Responder Programs throughout the Province have identified the need for a different classification for volunteer Emergency Medical Responders outside the mandate of the College of Paramedics;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM to lobby the Province of Manitoba to create a licensing level for Volunteer Emergency Medical Responders under the Department of Health to sustain the model that has been in place for many years and has been successful in allowing Emergency First Responder programs to remain viable and sustainable.

AMM Resolution #24-2022: Firefighter/Paramedic Shortage

WHEREAS Manitoba is experiencing a shortage of dual trained professional Firefighter/Paramedics; and

WHEREAS there are limited seats in the Province of Manitoba to train for both services at once through the Public Fire Paramedic Program; and

WHEREAS the lack of sufficient qualified individuals trained in both services places Manitobans at risk and undermines the ability of Municipalities to provide mandated services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to boost annual enrolment in the Public Fire Paramedic Program;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to explore establishing a second Public Fire Paramedic Program to support developing northern and rural fire-paramedics closer to their home communities.

AMM Resolution #25-2022: Emergency First Responders

WHEREAS Emergency Responders in Manitoba are the first to respond to emergency events; and

WHEREAS a number of years ago an incident took place involving a North East Mutual Aid District (NEMAD) Fire Dept. and an Interlake Eastern Regional Health Authority (IERHA) ambulance; and

WHEREAS several members of the ambulance crew incurred frost/freezing injuries as they were not properly dressed/equipped for the needed response; and
WHEREAS as a result of this incident IERHA (North Eastman Health Authority at the time) implemented a policy that stopped the ambulance crews from leaving their ambulance's immediate area or the road surface where it was parked; and

WHEREAS this seems to be a policy that has not been implemented in other Regional Health Authorities within the Province; and

WHEREAS the responsibility for rescue and initial assessment and treatment has now shifted to the responding NEMAD Fire Dept. thus delaying needed treatment that could/should be provided by a paramedic and as such further endangering the victims/patients of the incident; and

WHEREAS some of these incidents occur well off of the roadway resulting in rescue operations that can take a considerable amount of time, up to an hour or more, the victim/patient is being put at undue risk; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to have this policy changed to allow the ambulance crews to again go off of the road to assist in the rescue and treatment of those injured in the incident; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to have IERHA provide the needed cold weather and all-weather gear to allow the ambulance crews to respond without putting them at risk to inclement weather conditions, in accordance with current Workplace Safety and Health Regulations; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT if this is not done the NEMAD Fire Depts. will be forced to call for STARS to deal with issues where ambulance crews could and should be responding and dealing with the incident.

AMM Resolution #26-2022: Internationally Educated Nurses

WHEREAS citizens of all Manitoba municipalities are being negatively impacted by a shortage of health care workers, including qualified nurses; and

WHEREAS the shortage of health care workers is putting a strain on the health care system in our communities; and

WHEREAS hiring of Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) could help alleviate some of the shortage; and

WHEREAS Manitoba's licensing requirements, as developed and administered by the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba, are some of the most stringent in all of Canada; and

WHEREAS some IENs are already fully licensed in other Canadian provinces, but cannot obtain a similar license in Manitoba;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to work with the Regional Health Authorities and the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba to review the current licensing procedures for Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs), with a view to encourage and expediting their licensing; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to require the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba to develop a quick, easy and affordable process to license those IEN professionals already licensed in other Canadian provinces, to work in Manitoba.

AMM Resolution #27-2022: Healthcare Benefits

WHEREAS the basis of Economic Development is sustainability and recruitment of a solid workforce; and

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba needs qualified employees in every field; and

WHEREAS the provision of healthcare benefits is a major factor in attracting qualified employees and their families; and

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba does not transfer healthcare to new Manitobans for three months;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to allow healthcare and health benefits to be provided instantly upon a new employee locating in Manitoba for employment from another Canadian Province; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM allow the provision of healthcare benefits nationally to children of Manitobans who reside outside of the province under custodial arrangements.

AMM Resolution #15-2021: CPMB Fees

AMM Resolution #16-2021: Dedicated Stretcher Service

AMM Resolution #17-2021: Medical Staff Retention

AMM Resolution #18-2020: Seniors Housing

AMM Resolution #19-2020: E-Health

AMM Resolution #18-2019: The Mental Health Act

AMM Resolution #19-2019: Methamphetamine Issues

AMM Resolution #33-2019: Priority Infrastructure Upgrades

AMM Resolution #35-2018: Rural Health Care - SP

AMM Resolution #17-2017: Emergency Services Assistance in Municipalities

AMM Resolution #26-2017: Healthcare Services

AMM Resolution #25-2013: Reduce Community Contribution Requirements