



# DUFFERIN COUNTY PARAMEDIC SERVICE

Annual Report  
2023

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# Land Acknowledgement

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**We would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that Dufferin County resides within the traditional territory and ancestral lands of the Tionontati (Petun), Attawandaron (Neutral), Haudenosaunee (Six Nations), and Anishinaabe peoples.**

**We also acknowledge that various municipalities within the County of Dufferin reside within the treaty lands named under the Haldimand Deed of 1784 and two of the Williams Treaties of 1818: Treaty 18: the Nottawasaga Purchase, and Treaty 19: The Ajetance Treaty.**

**These traditional territories upon which we live and learn, are steeped in rich Indigenous history and traditions. It is with this statement that we declare to honour and respect the past and present connection of Indigenous peoples with this land, its waterways and resources**

# Purpose, Strategic Directions & Values



## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

### Getting even better

- Relentlessly driving even higher levels of quality across our teams
- Investing in the continuous development and recognition of our people
- Continuously improving our facility and driving operational excellence

### Nothing about you, without you

- Partnering with patients and families on what's most important to them
- Empowering individuals and teams to have more control over their work and work life
- Continuing to build the future of our hospital with our community

### Integrated care, close to home

- Partnering to advance integrated systems of care in our community
- Improving the health of our community with our partners

## OUR VALUES

KINDNESS	
PASSION	
COURAGE	
TEAMWORK	

## SUPPORTS

Making every dollar count for our patients & community  
Innovation, research & technology

# Purpose, Strategic Directions & Values

## OUR VALUES

Our values are more than words, they are what define and connect us. They determine how we work, how we behave, and how we relate to our patients, their families and caregivers as well as to everyone who is part of the Headwaters community. Our values are how we show that we are 'One Community, Caring Together'.



### KINDNESS

#### Caring for one another

- We see the *person* in every patient, and welcome all people with compassion, empathy and respect.
- We understand our care starts with listening to what is most important to every patient and caregiver.
- We believe our work starts with valuing and supporting each other.



### PASSION

#### Relentlessly building a better future

- We take pride in delivering the best possible care to every person, every day.
- We challenge ourselves to be creative and resourceful in finding solutions.
- We reach out beyond our walls to improve the health of our whole community.



### COURAGE

#### Being brave and stepping up

- We do what's right, even when it's hard.
- We are curious and open to new perspectives.
- We speak up, push boundaries, and are not afraid to change.
- We go beyond what's expected.



### TEAMWORK

#### Better together

- We commit to working together – patients, families, staff, volunteers, physicians and partners – to deliver the care our community needs.
- We inspire each other to be the best we can be.
- We appreciate each other's abilities and use the strength of all of us to achieve the extraordinary.

For more information contact [info@headwatershealth.ca](mailto:info@headwatershealth.ca) visit [headwatershealth.ca](http://headwatershealth.ca) or [@HeadwatersHCC](https://www.instagram.com/HeadwatersHCC)



# Chief's Message

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On behalf of Dufferin County Paramedic Service (DCPS), it is with great pleasure that I present the 2023 Annual Report. This report highlights just some of the tremendous accomplishments we achieved in 2023, as well as some of the challenges that we had to overcome as a team.

From 2019 – 23, DCPS experienced an 18% increase in call volume and a 17% increase in patient transports. Despite the increase in call volume, DCPS was able to improve the average response time as well as our Code Red incidents and total time. This could not have been accomplished without the tremendous support we have received from Headwaters Health Care Centre to reduce offload delay in the Emergency Department (ED), allowing our team of highly skilled paramedics to provide the care needed to those in the community, rather than waiting in the ED with patients on ambulance stretchers.

For the first time in its history, the International Plowing Match and Rural Expo was hosted in Dufferin County, and DCPS was proud to serve as the primary on-site medical provider. With over 75,000 visitors attending the event over five (5) days in September, our team of paramedics were dedicated to serving the needs of those visitors who became ill or injured while in attendance.

This year, DCPS was able to develop strategic partnerships to ensure that our frontline staff have the tools they need to perform an incredibly difficult job. In partnership with the Ministry of Health, we deployed mCAD



software which provides paramedics with turn-by-turn navigation and call details instantaneously. With the assistance of Interdev Technologies, we introduced CAD Link which populates Ambulance Call Reports with specific data points, reducing the data entry burden on paramedics when completing documentation and ensuring the data being captured is accurate. Finally, we partnered with HGlobal Technologies to improve our data analytics.

The Community Paramedic Program continues to be a highlight for our community. This team at DCPS provides in-home and virtual support to the most vulnerable citizens in our community, allowing them to remain at home while receiving the highest level of evidence-based care.

I am incredibly proud of our team who continue to provide the best care in some of the most extreme conditions. The dedication and resilience of this incredible team allows us to tackle the many challenges that paramedics experience daily.

# Service Overview



Dufferin County Paramedic Service (DCPS) is responsible for the delivery of paramedic services to the residents of the County of Dufferin. The Province of Ontario and the County of Dufferin share the costs of land ambulance services. Through a unique partnership between the County of Dufferin and Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC), DCPS staff are employees of HHCC which provides efficiencies to both organizations.



Through the professionalism and dedication of our paramedics and administrative staff, we have created a dynamic organizational culture of service excellence.



DCPS provides emergency medical coverage to over 66,000 residents. Services we provide include Advanced Life Support, Community Paramedic Program and Public Access Defibrillator Program.

# About us

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Our staff are the greatest asset to the organization and our community. Our 60 members – including front-line Paramedics, an Administrative Assistant, two Deputy Chiefs and a Chief – work together to provide the best possible care. Our team has a variety of backgrounds and skill sets that contribute to the successful delivery of paramedic services within Dufferin County.

All Paramedics employed by DCPS are college graduates and are delegated by the Medical Director of the Regional Base Hospital Program to perform medical interventions under the regulated Health Professions Act. As such, they are certified to administer numerous medications and perform an extensive list of controlled medical acts.

# Staff Recognition

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Our staff were recognized for the amazing contributions that they have made over the past year and throughout their careers. If it was not for these dedicated members of our team, we could not provide the high level of service that our community deserves.

This past year, eight (8) members of the DCPS team were recognized for Exemplary Service by the Governor General which involves over twenty (20) years of service to the community. Recipients included Stacey Becker, Mike Chambers, Brian MacIntyre, Heather McNab, Shawn O'Donnell, John Posavac, Gary Staples and Dave Tyler.

# Staff Recognition

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The Centre for Paramedic Education and Research (CPER) Annual Quality of Care Award is given to a selection of Paramedics from each of the Region's nine (9) Services. These Paramedics have been identified and nominated from either their peers or CPER's internal program staff including the Quality, Education, Management and Medical Council Teams. Nominees are identified for a variety of reasons such as outstanding patient care and documentation, continued medical education and presence in the classroom, community involvement of a clinical nature, or outwardly promoting the Paramedic profession. Pictured (L-R) Dr. Paul Miller, Medical Director, Tim Dodd, Program Director, Angela Burgess, Quality Specialist & Paramedic Jody Dzikowski. Absent Jason Dzikowski



## Quality of Care Award

For 2023, paramedics Jason Dzikowski and Jody Dzikowski were the deserving recipients for DCPS.

# Staff Recognition

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The Richard J. Armstrong Award is presented to a Chief, Deputy Chief or Manager who is recognized for outstanding leadership and significant contribution to Paramedicine in Ontario. The recipient for 2023 was Chief Tom Reid of Dufferin County Paramedic Service. With over 40 years of dedicated service to the community including more than 25 years as chief, Tom has been instrumental in shaping the direction of paramedicine in Dufferin County and the province. Pictured (L-R) Chief Reid accepting the award from Mrs. Armstrong, wife of the late Richard J. Armstrong.



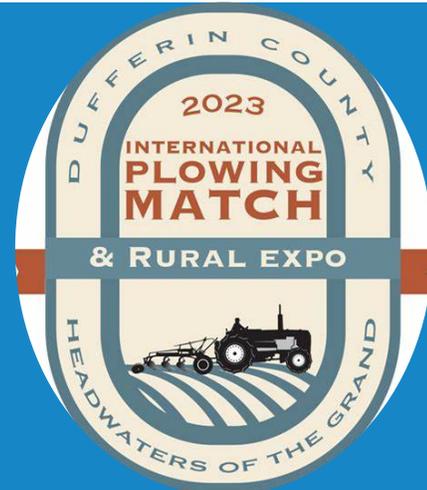
## Richard J. Armstrong Award

The Richard J. Armstrong Award is awarded annually to an individual recognized for both outstanding leadership and significant contributions to Paramedicine in Ontario.

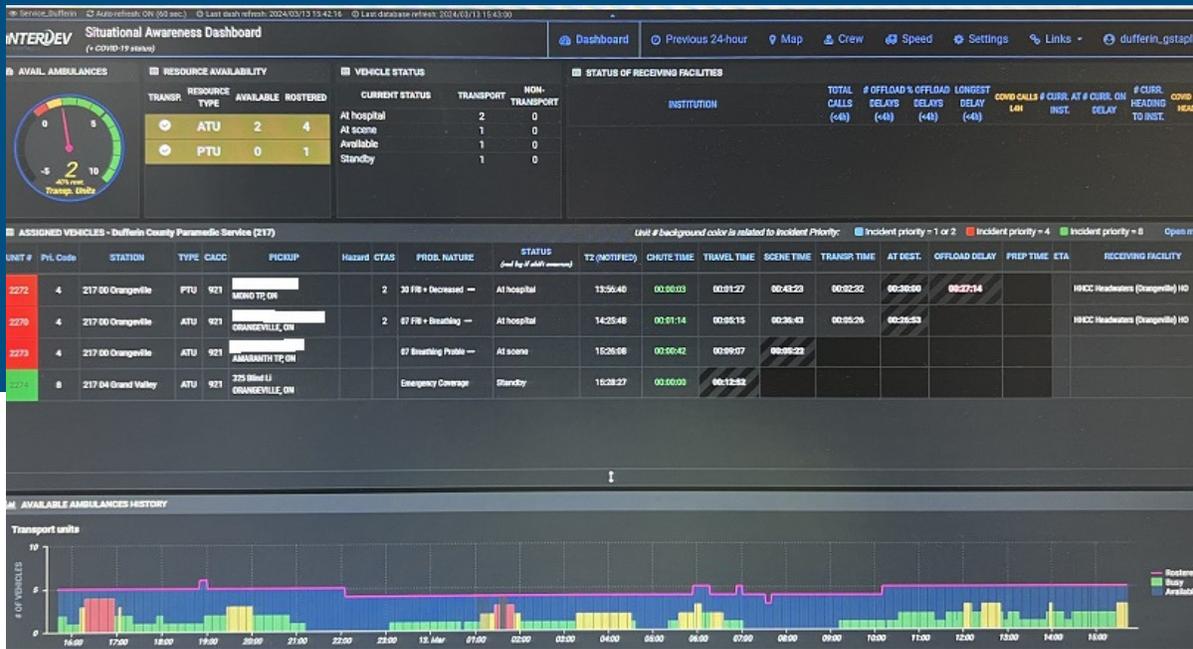


# 2023 International Plowing Match & Rural Expo

The International Plowing Match & Rural Expo (IPM) celebrates farming's history with extensive historical displays and demonstrations. The 2023 IPM also showcases the modern era with some of the newest and most advanced plows and agricultural equipment on the market competing.



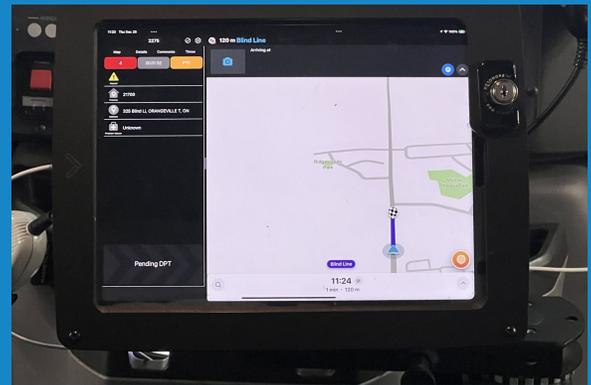
For the first time in its over 100 years, the International Plowing Match and Rural expo came to Dufferin County. This event attracted over 70,000 visitors from September 19 - 23. The 2023 IPM was located in the Town of Amaranth, and DCPS was able to provide 24-hour coverage for the event and the visitors that attended.



# System Enhancements

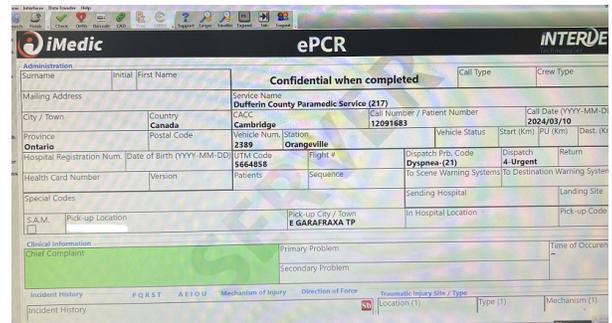
## mCAD

mCAD is revolutionary technology from the Ministry of Health, which instantaneously transmits data from the dispatch center to an iPad in the ambulance. Paramedics will have all the call details, routing, and caution notes. This enhances paramedic safety and reduces the workload for communication centre staff.



## CAD Link

CAD Link includes mobile data integration and system awareness tools that populate the ePCR with available data and provides managers with situational awareness to help manage the paramedic operations and enhance service delivery.



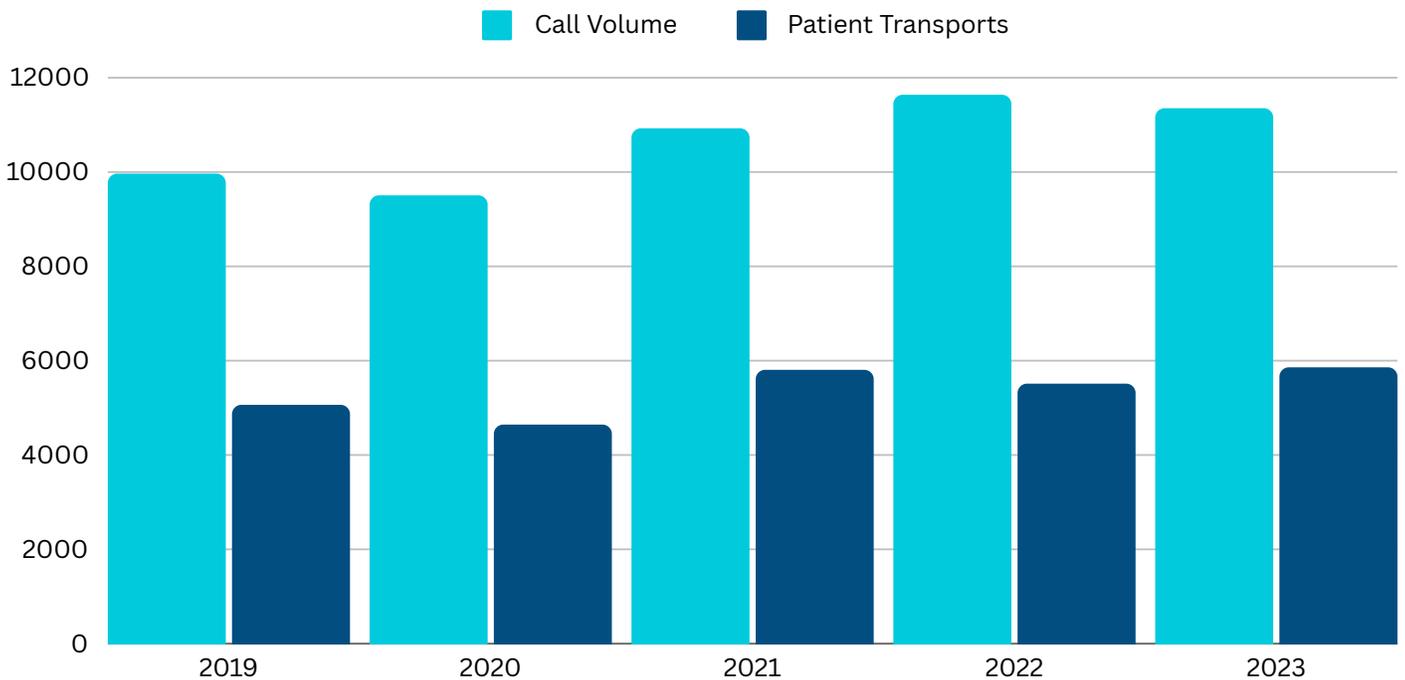
# System Performance

## Call Volume



DCPS strives to provide the best possible care in a timely manner to the residents and visitors of Dufferin County and surrounding area. In order to achieve this, our administrative team continuously monitors the operational demands for DCPS.

Below is a five (5) year overview of the changes in Total Call Volume and Total Patients Transported to hospital.



# System Performance



## Response Time Standards

DCPS continues to meet the legislated and council approved response time standards. The current response time reporting framework is defined as the elapsed time from when the first paramedic unit is notified to the arrival of a paramedic unit on scene. Response times across Ontario are measured and publicly reported in the same manner to the Ministry of Health.

### DCPS Response Time Standards

Category	Time Target	Target Percentage	2023 Performance
CTAS 1	8 minutes	60%	64%
CTAS 2	15 minutes	80%	92%
CTAS 3	30 minutes	90%	99%
CTAS 4	30 minutes	90%	99%
CTAS 5	30 minutes	90%	99%

# System Performance



## Response Time Standards - Sudden Cardiac Arrest

In cases of Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA), response time is defined as the elapsed time from when the first paramedic unit is notified to the arrival of any person trained and equipped to provide defibrillation. This response time is greatly affected by the availability of a public access defibrillator. Public access defibrillators can be found in various locations throughout Dufferin County including recreation facilities, schools, municipal buildings and fire departments.

### DCPS Response Time Standards

Category	Time Target	Target Percentage	2023 Performance
SCA	6 minutes	20%	47%

# System Performance

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## Response Time



DCPS remains committed to providing the best pre-hospital care in a timely manner. In order to meet the demands, DCPS requires innovative ways to achieve these results in a community that continues to grow and has an increasing demand for services.

Below is a five (5) year overview of the average response time for all calls received by DCPS within the boundaries of the County of Dufferin.

## DCPS Average Response Time

07:46

08:17

08:33

08:32

08:10

2019

2020

2021

2022

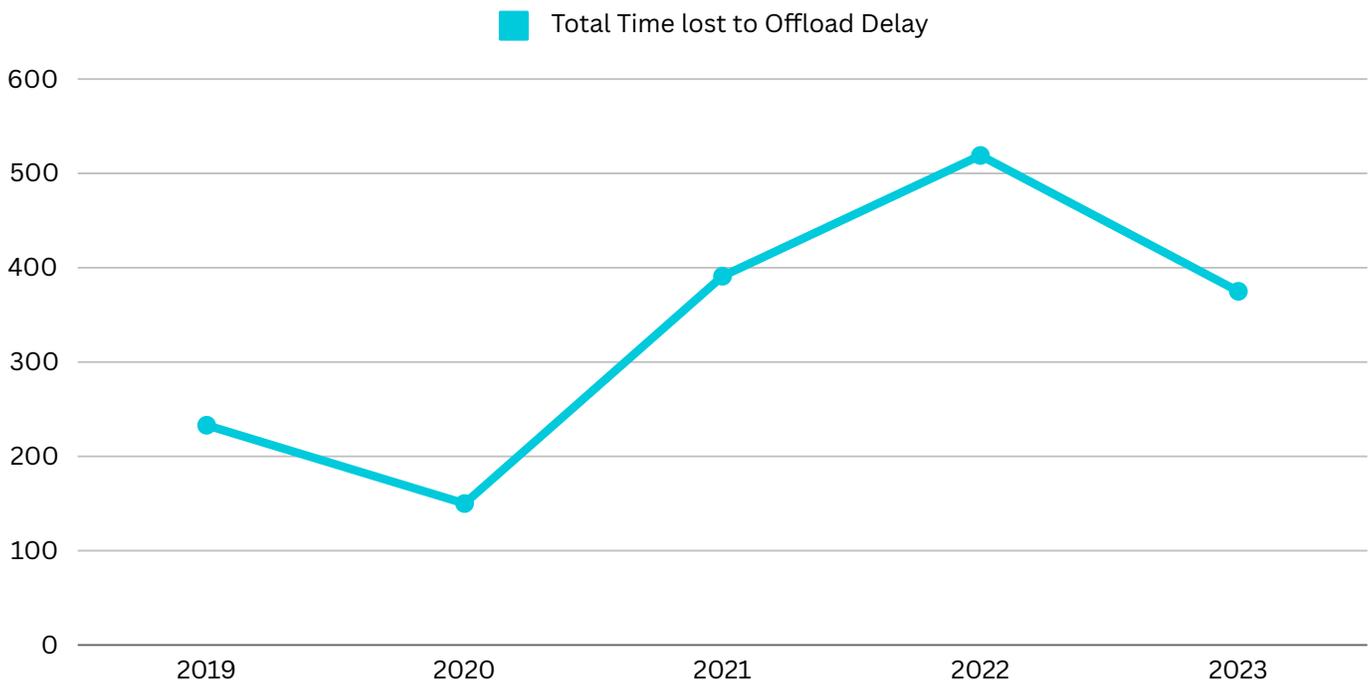
2023

# System Performance

## Offload Delay

Offload Delay is defined as time in hospital greater than 30 minutes. DCPS and Headwaters Health Care Center having been working on innovative ways to help reduce the amount of time that paramedics are waiting in hospital. Increased funding was secured from the Ministry of Health for a dedicated offload nurse which is responsible for ensuring that paramedics can transfer care to hospital and the patient can be monitored while waiting to be seen in the Emergency Department. Additionally, programs such as Fit-2-Sit which allows paramedics to transfer care directly to hospital staff for low acuity patients without having to wait have supported paramedics being available to respond to emergencies in the community.

The graph below shows the total amount of time (in hours) lost to Offload Delay over the past five (5) years. Since 2019 there has been a 61% increase in the amount of time DCPS paramedics are waiting in the ED which decreases the availability of ambulances. In 2023, there was a 27% improvement in reducing paramedic lost time.

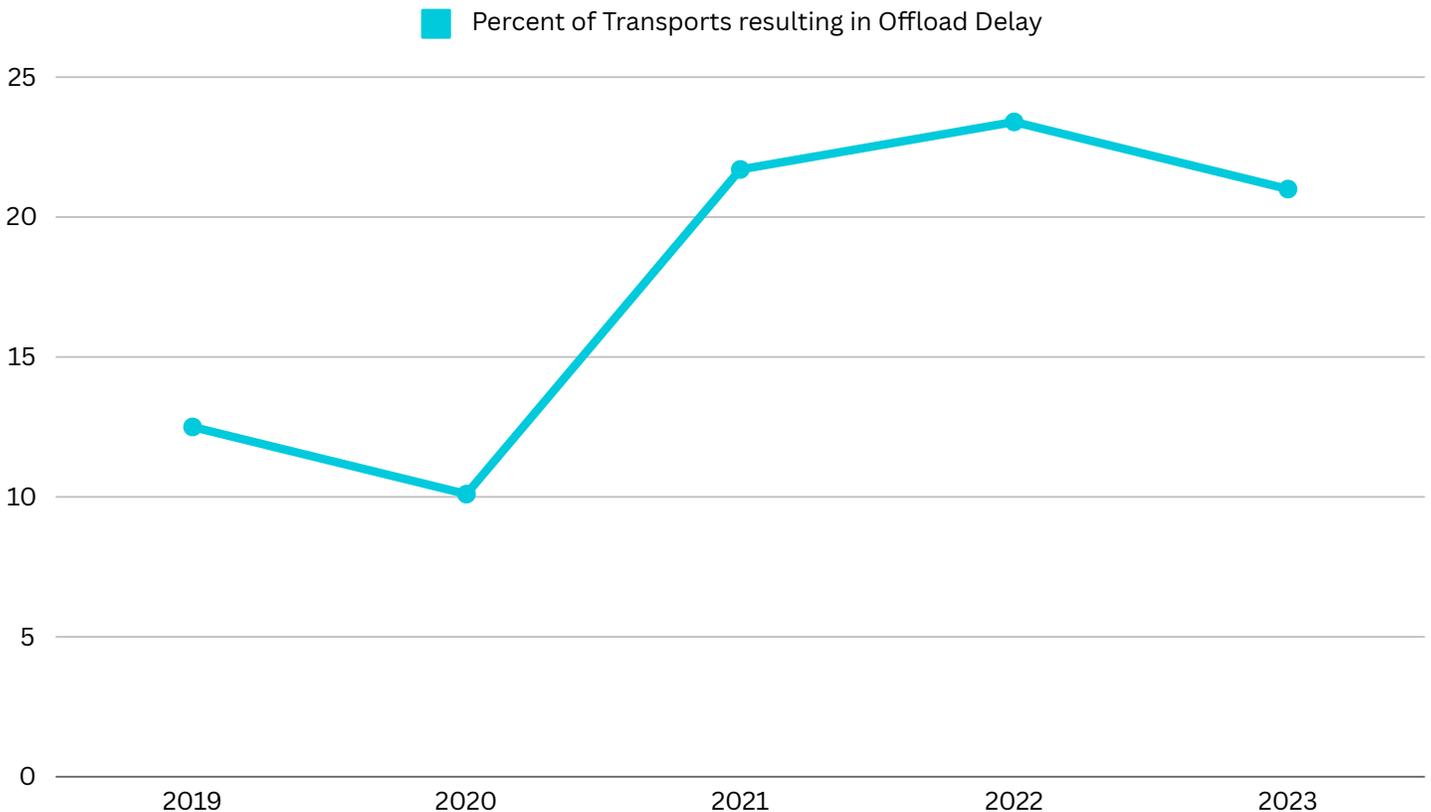


# System Performance



## Offload Delay

The graph below shows the percentage of patient transports that resulted in Offload Delay over the past five (5) years. In 2019, 12% of all transports to hospital resulted in paramedics waiting in the ED for more than 30 minutes whereas in 2023 it was 21%.

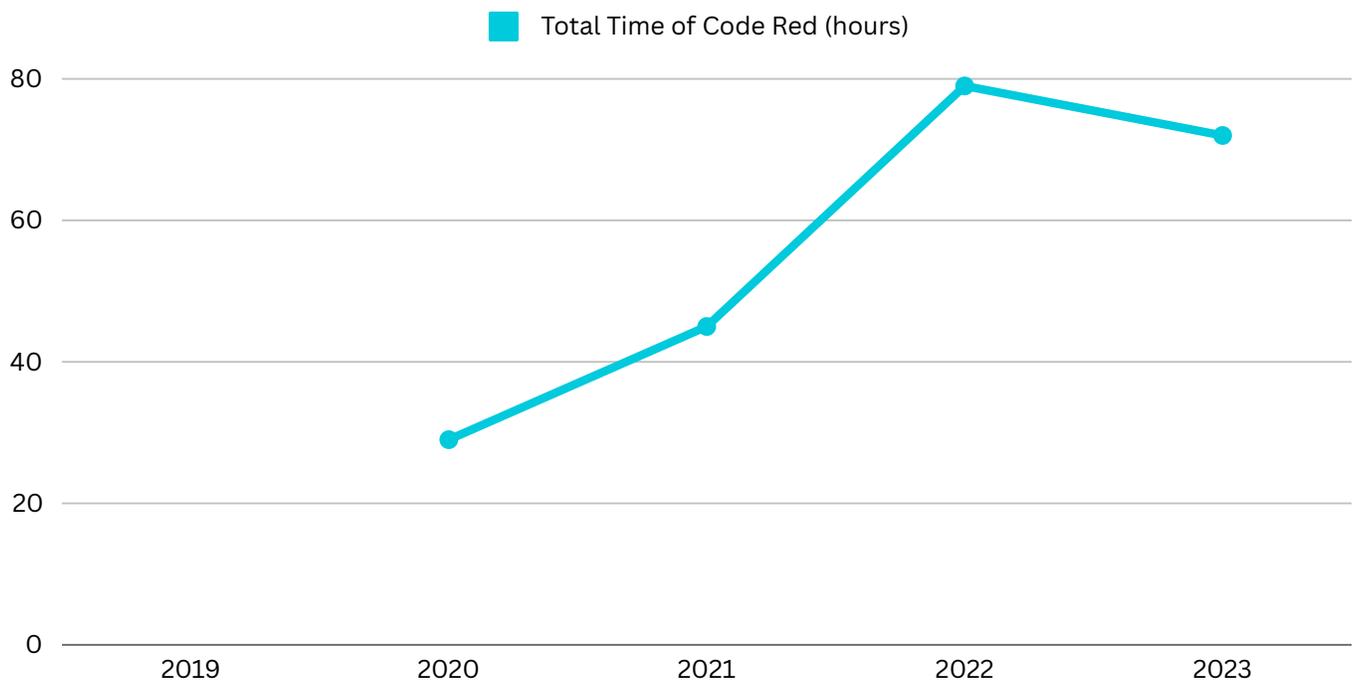


# System Performance

## Code Red

Similar to Offload Delay, Code Red has gained significant media attention over the past year. Code Red is referred to by various terms in different jurisdictions including Code Black, and Code Zero. This refers to times when zero (0) ambulances are available for a specific municipality. In Dufferin County this would mean that no ambulances from Dufferin County are available to respond to an emergency. When this happens, neighbouring Paramedic Services provide coverage and respond to emergencies until local resources become available.

The graph below shows the total hours over a five (5) year period. In 2020, there were a total of 29 hours in which there were no DCPS ambulances available to respond to 911 calls and in 2023 that increased to 72 hours. For this time period, that is a 150% increase however in 2023 we did see a slight decline from 2022.



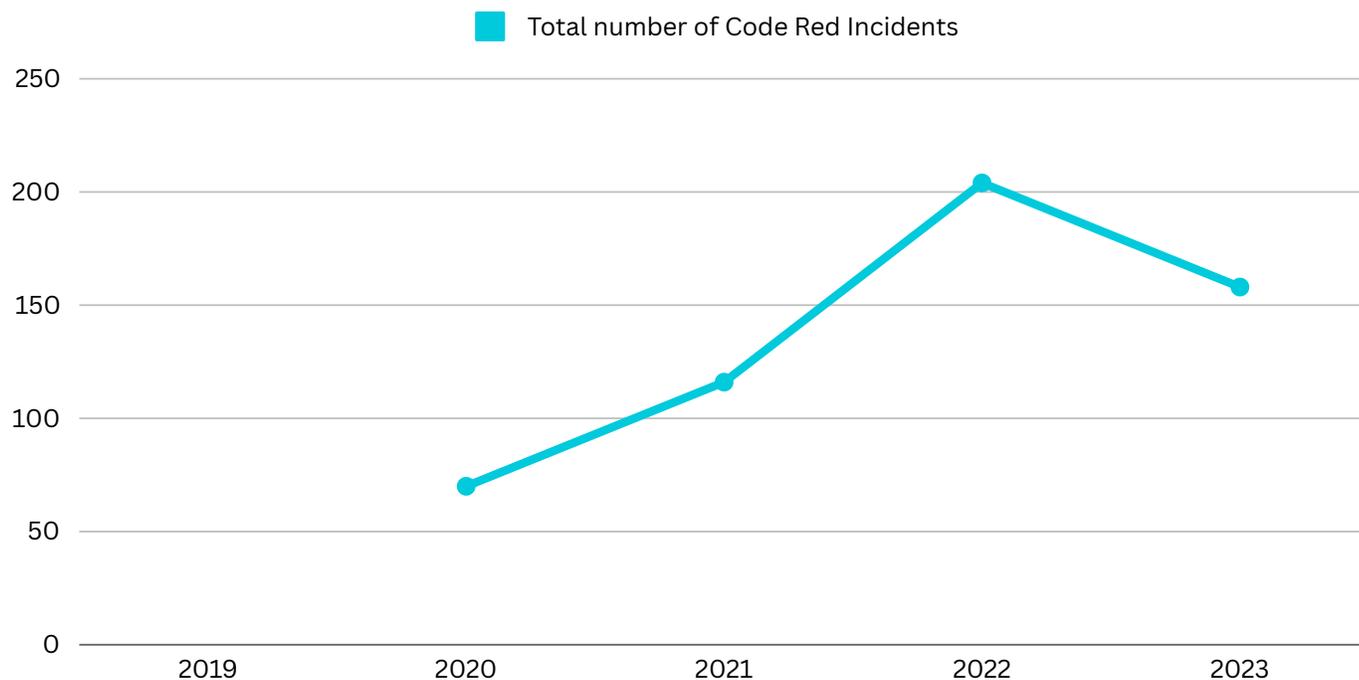
No data available for 2019

# System Performance

## Code Red

The Ministry of Health is working collaboratively with paramedic service leaders to help mitigate Code Red incidents. This work includes changes to provincial legislation that will allow paramedics to provide treatment to a patient and referring to external healthcare service providers such as community paramedics and home care services. As well, paramedics will be allowed to provide treatment to a patient and release them from care without being required to transport to hospital.

The graph below shows the total number of incidents of Code Red in Dufferin County over a five (5) year period. An incident is defined as any situation for which zero ambulances were available, even if the length of time was minimal. In 2020, there were a total of 70 incidents and in 2023 that number increased to 158 which is a 125% increase. From 2022 to 2023 there was a slight decline in total incidents.

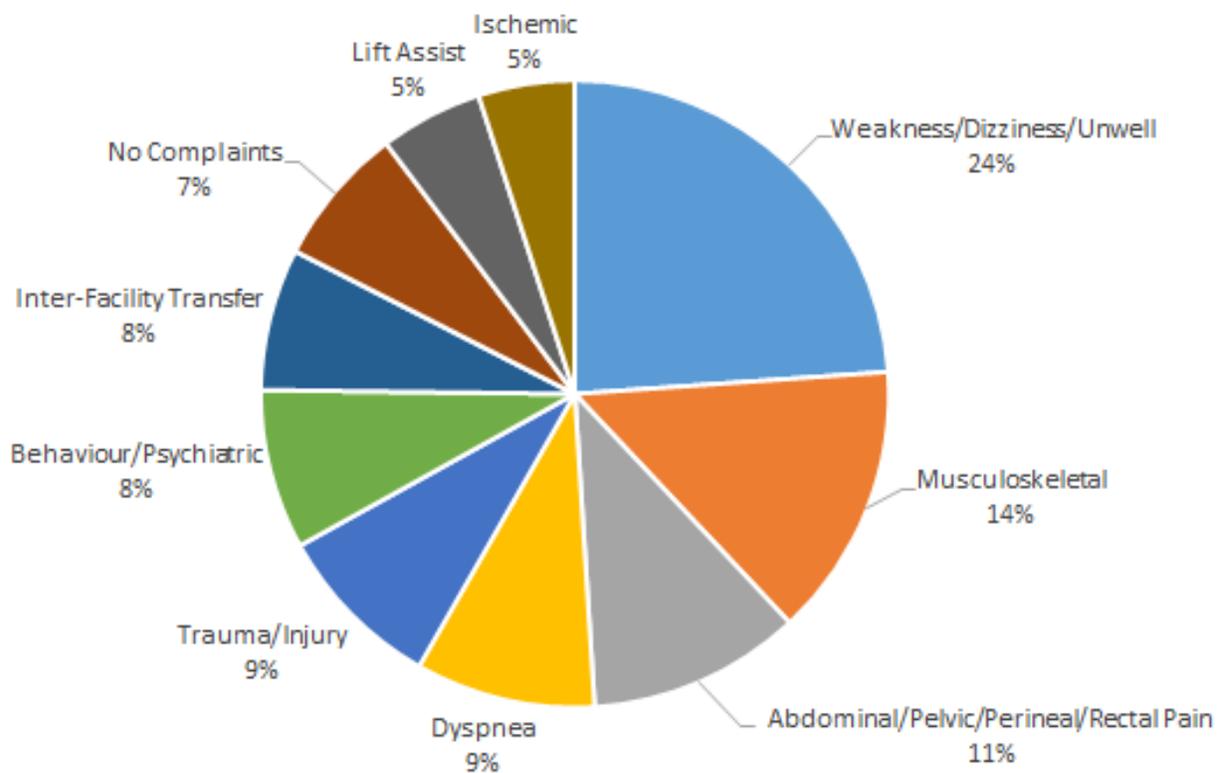


No data available for 2019

# Program Development

## Call Type

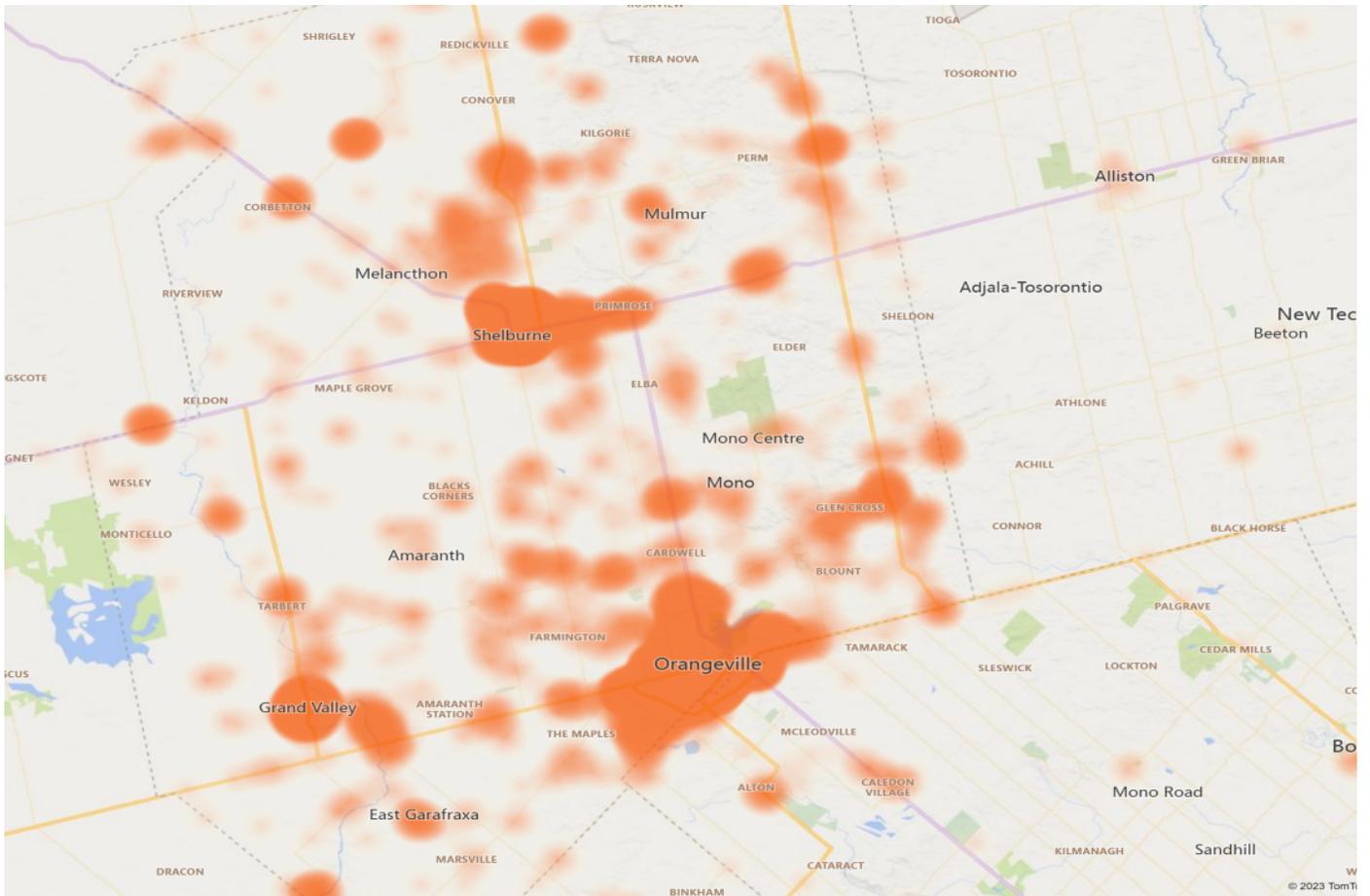
DCPS remains committed to promoting and supporting improved clinical care, safety and quality. When a member of the public requires immediate medical care, an entire team of dedicated, highly qualified people come together to provide the highest level of care possible. The Paramedic Service uses the data collected from electronic Patient Care Reports (ePCR's), Ambulance Communication Centre and various hospitals that receive patients from DCPS to assist with the decisions that will impact the direction of the service in the future. All data collected during a Paramedic's duties are protected under the Personal Health Information Protection Act.



# Program Development

## Call Locations

This past year, DCPS partnered with HGlobal, who is leader in data analytics for paramedic services. This new partnership has brought more data to help leaders make better informed decisions. Moving forward this data will help to shape the future of vehicle deployment, shift patterns and ambulance utilization. The image below shows the concentration of calls to specific areas with the darker orange colour reflecting increased call volume for the area.



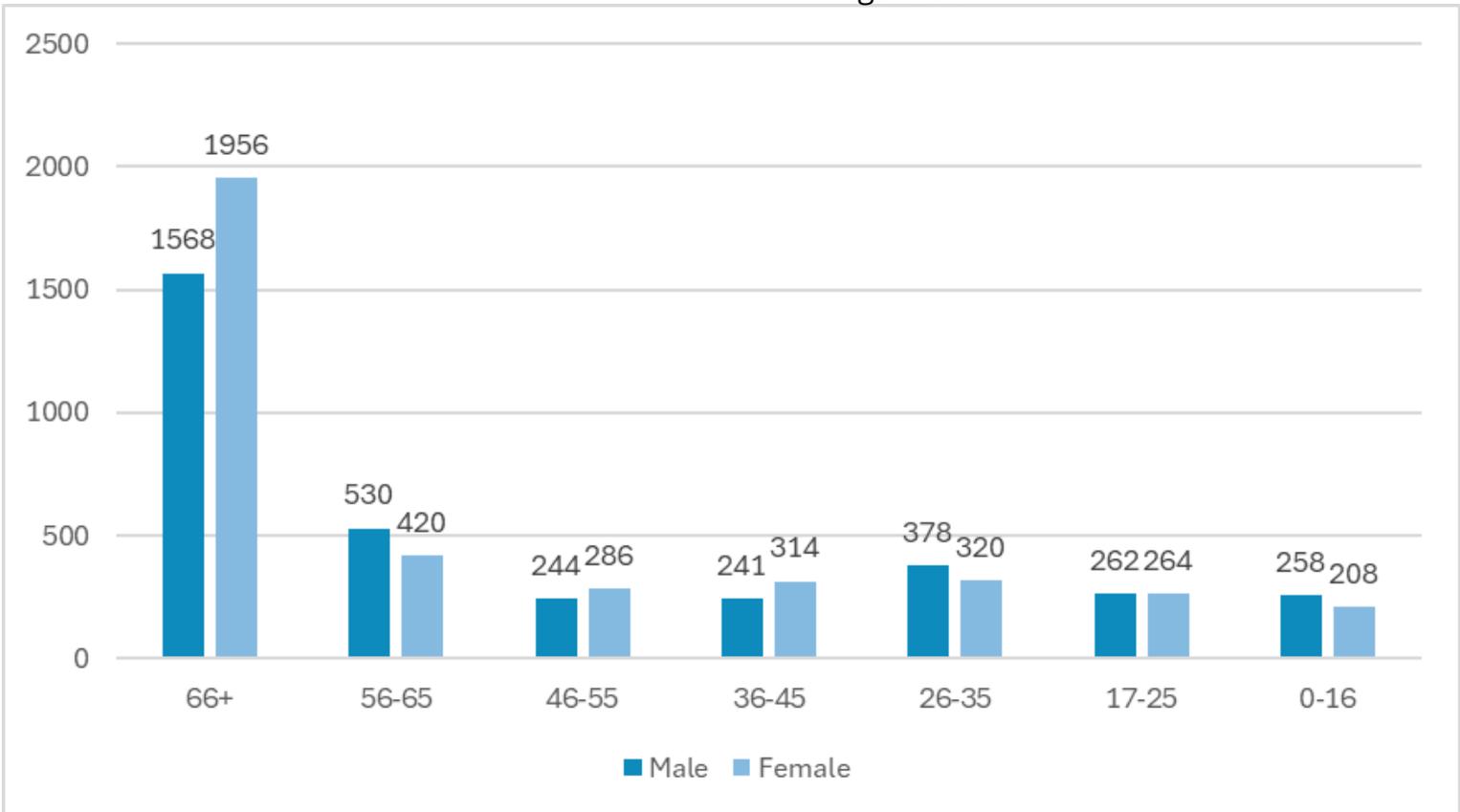
# Program Development

## Patient Demographics



Canada is experiencing an aging population, which increases demand for healthcare services. Paramedics Services are not an exception. This demand is driving the need for innovative models of care to help support all patients in their time of need. According to the 2021 census, patients over 65 years of age accounted for 16% of the Dufferin population, and in 2023 they represented 47% of the total call volume.

The graph below shows the total call volume for 2023 by age range and gender.



# Program Development

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## Clinical Programs

In cooperation with various community partners, DCPS participates in regional and provincial programs aimed at improving patient outcomes. Currently, DCPS has seven programs in operation including Acute Stroke Bypass, ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) Bypass, Code STEMI, Paramedic Referral, Palliative Alternative Destination, Palliative Alternative Treatment program, and Trauma Bypass program.

The **Acute Stroke Bypass** program is a provincial program that transports specific patients suffering from an acute stroke to a hospital that specializes in the treatment of these patients.

**STEMI Bypass** is a program within Dufferin County that transports patients suffering from STEMI to Southlake Regional Hospital for a life-saving procedure referred to as Primary Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI).

**Code STEMI** occurs when patients present to HHCC ED suffering from a STEMI. These patients are also immediately transferred to Southlake Regional Hospital for Primary PCI.

**Paramedic Referral** involves referring those patients who are most vulnerable and consistently high users of the health care system to alternative sources of health care. This helps patients receive the right care, at the right time in the right place.

The **Palliative Alternative Destination** is a pilot project approved by the Ministry of Health which enables paramedics to transport patients at end-of-life to the hospice of choice. In coordination with our partners at Bethell Hospice and Matthews House Hospice, paramedics are able to support a patient's wishes for end-of-life care.

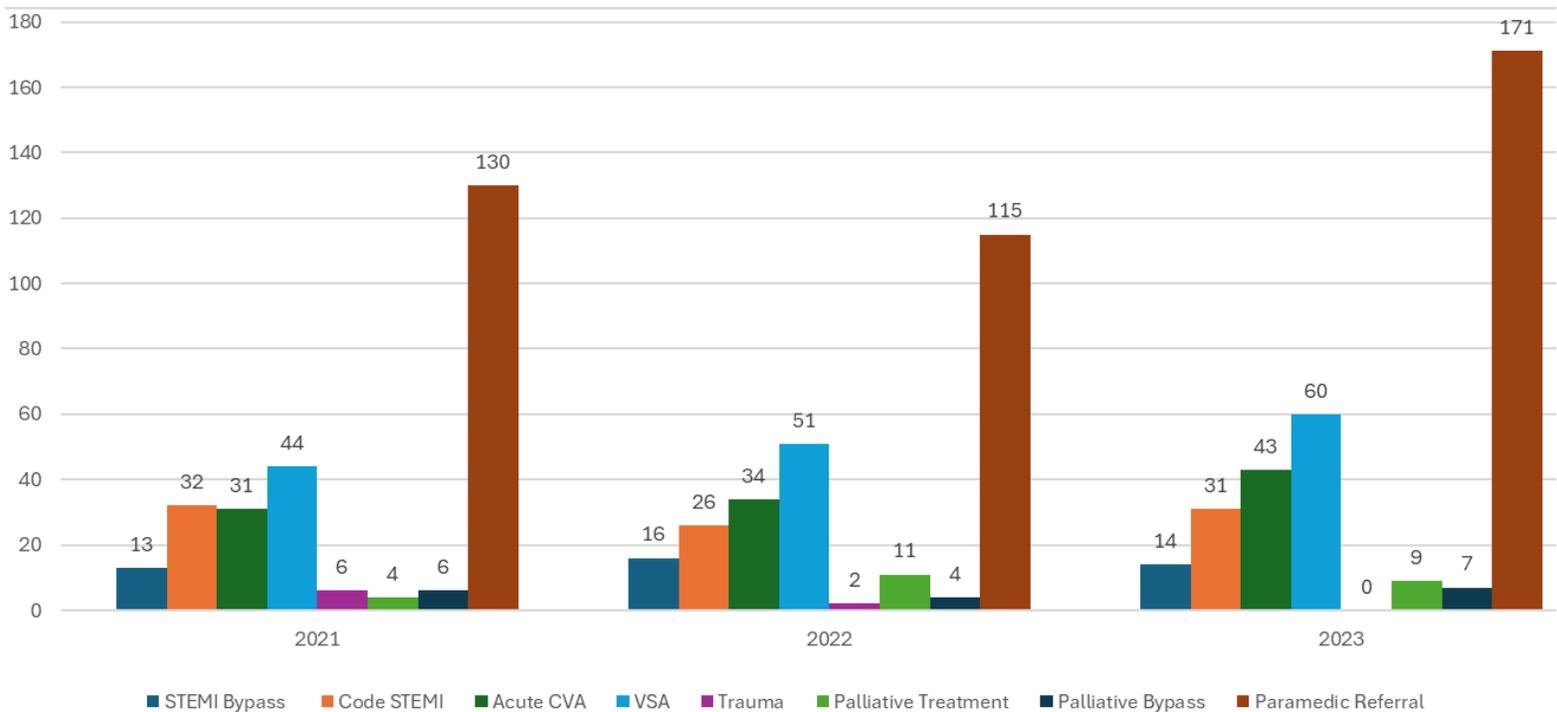
# Program Development

## Clinical Programs

The **Palliative Alternative Treatment** program is a research project in collaboration with our base hospital, CPER, that provides the highest-level of evidence-based care to palliative patients. These patients are then connected with their Primary Care Physician and Palliative Care Team to ensure a seamless transition.

The **Trauma Bypass** program is in collaboration with Sunnybrook Health Sciences, which allows paramedics in Dufferin County to transport severely injured trauma patients directly to a Level 1 trauma centre, so that the patient can receive the best care possible, in a timely manner.

The graph below shows the number of calls which resulted in a program being utilized from 2021 to 2023.



# Program Development

## Quality Assurance



As mandated by the Ambulance Act of Ontario, each Paramedic Service must have a vigorous Quality Assurance Program that oversees the daily activities of all Paramedics employed by the service. DCPS currently exceeds all mandated requirements for a Quality Assurance Program by completing audits of 100 per cent of ePCR's, on scene paramedic evaluations, yearly performance appraisals and quarterly performance reports. This program leads to DCPS providing the highest level of evidence-based care to the residents and visitors of Dufferin County.

## Education

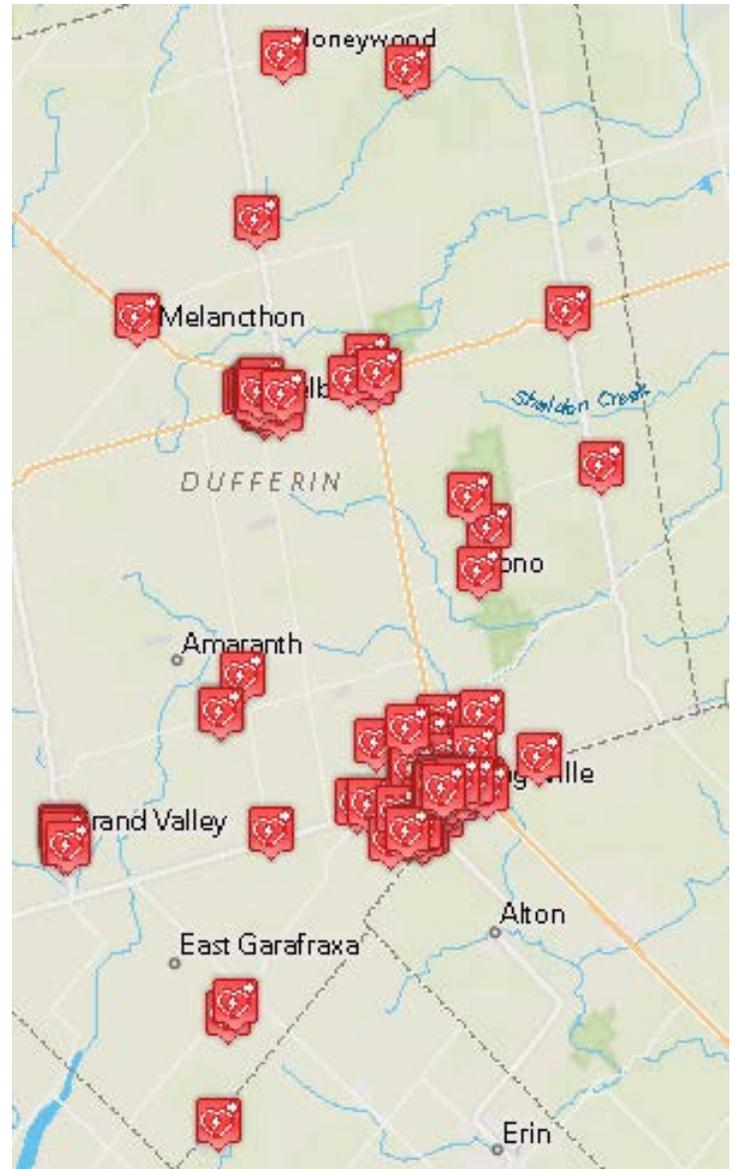
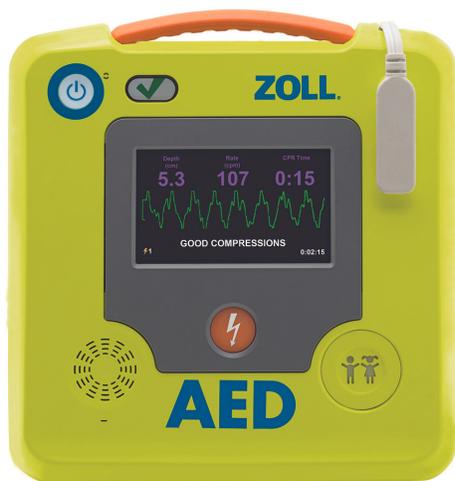
All Paramedics must complete various types of education on an annual basis in order to maintain their paramedic certification. Every year, our Paramedics undergo an Annual Practice Review conducted by the base hospital and must complete additional Continuing Medical Education. In addition, paramedics must complete service related training specific to new equipment and emerging trends.



# Program Development

## Public Access Defibrillation (PAD)

Since 2006, DCPS has managed the Public Access Defibrillation (PAD) Program within Dufferin County. Currently, there are over 180 PAD's available throughout the county in various municipal buildings, recreation centre's and public facilities. Since the start of the PAD Program in our county, there have been five (5) lives saved directly attributed to PAD use. DCPS also instituted a PAD loaner program, where anyone can borrow a PAD for a short period of time for family events, weddings, and local public gatherings to ensure the health and safety of all that attend.



# Community Paramedic Program

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The Community Paramedic Program connects the most vulnerable patients to the most appropriate entry into the health care system. By using a number of strategies and offering a patient-centric approach to each patient's particular needs, the Community Paramedic Program reduces the number of unnecessary 911 calls and ED visits, decreases the number of hospital admissions, and shortens the length of stay for patients who need to be admitted to hospital.

In 2021, the Community Paramedic Program received three years of dedicated funding to help support the residents of the County of Dufferin. This funding has since been extended for two additional years which will ensure the most vulnerable clients, receive the needed care in their location of choice. Virtual care options, such as our Remote Patient Monitoring program, provides a level of comfort for patients, who require extra care and immediate response, while their caregiver is unavailable.

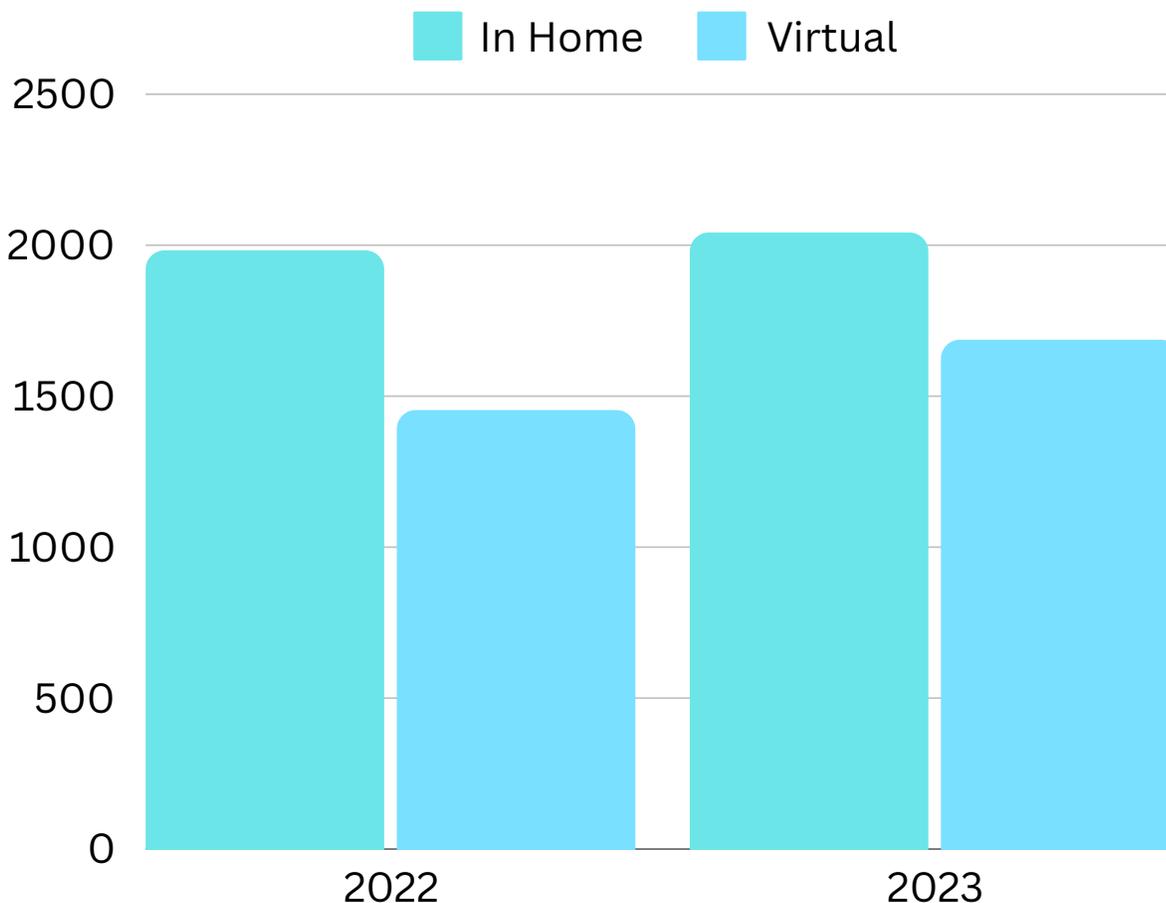
Since 2015, DCPS has worked collaboratively with our Community Partners, including family physicians from the area to ensure that these patients are receiving the best possible care.



# Community Paramedic Program

Community Paramedics accept referrals from a number of our community partners, including Headwaters Health Care Centre, Dufferin Area Family Health Team, Dufferin County Support Services, Telecheck, Home and Community Services, and our paramedics responding to 911 calls. In 2023, we received 280 referrals for Community Paramedic Services and completed 3,000 visits to provide care in the patient's location of choice.

DCPS Community Paramedics travel to the patient to ensure that they receive the best possible care from the comfort of their home.



# Community Paramedic Program



Through strategic partnerships with local physicians, Community Paramedics are authorized to provide a variety of designated medical acts, assessments, and routine procedures. These skills help to ensure that the patients receive the best possible care. Our unique collaboration with family physicians ensure that healthcare providers have up-to-date, relevant information for seamless delivery of care.

Blood Work

Designated Medical Act

ECG

Exacerbation Management

Initial Assessment

Intravenous Access

Urinalysis

Vaccinations

Wellness Checks

# Community Engagement

DCPS is committed to promoting the profession of paramedics through public education, public relations, community events and fundraising initiatives. It was a great year for the staff at DCPS as we were able to get out and join our community at various events such as food drives, and fundraising events. For 2023, DCPS staff volunteered more than 450 hours in support of our community.



# Patient Satisfaction

They were excellent to me and my husband. They showed care, compassion and were polite & friendly

Paramedics were prompt, courteous & professional. Very satisfied with my treatment

I had the most wonderful experience the night two paramedics came to my home after a fall. I found them to be the most loving, caring, happy, highly competent well-trained individuals, working together as a team

The team was very professional, caring and reassuring throughout the whole experience. The handover to the Emergency Department was done with great care & they were genuinely concerned about me.



### Our Contact



**Phone :**

519-941-9608



**Address :**

325 Blind Line Orangeville, ON  
L9W 5J8



**Website :**

[www.dufferincounty.ca/services/paramedic-services](http://www.dufferincounty.ca/services/paramedic-services)

# THANK YOU!

**@DUFFERINMEDICS**

