



# Emergency Medical Services



## Strategic Plan 2015-2019

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# Acknowledgements

## Stakeholder Consultations:

### County of Lambton:

Chief Administrative Officer  
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Emergency Management  
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Epidemiologist, Lambton  
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Strategic Plan Steering  
Committee Members  
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### Bluewater Health

Sarnia  
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Chief, Sarnia Fire  
Department  
Chief, St. Clair Township  
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Community Care Access  
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Integration Network  
Lambton College  
Mayor, Town of Petrolia  
Ontario Provincial Police  
SEIU Union - Local #1  
Wallaceburg - Central  
Ambulance Communications

## External Consultants:

Performance Concepts  
Consulting  
Rogers Design

# Executive Summary



## Vision

- Lambton EMS will be innovative leaders in delivering evidence-based paramedicine to our community. We value and recognize our employees as engaged professionals who provide compassionate patient and family centred care.

## Mission

- We provide reliable, compassionate care for a healthy and safe community.

## Values

Lambton EMS **C.A.R.E.S.**

- Collaboration
- Accountability
- Respect
- Empathy
- Service

## Strategic Direction

County of Lambton, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) has conducted strategic planning work through extensive engagement with front-line paramedics, external stakeholders, partners and elected officials.

The main purpose of this work was to define the role of Lambton EMS within the County's governance structure. Using an Appreciative Inquiry approach, the EMS Strategic Plan Steering Committee focused on learning about what EMS does well, what it should be doing, and determining what its preferred future should look like.

In review of local needs and future requirements for service delivery, staff have identified a preferred future, and where it wants to be in the coming years. Concentrating on three key areas over the next four years is preferable to a longer list of recommendations that would overwhelm the process and quickly impair focus.

Our next step will be to obtain guidance to create implementation teams which will have the responsibility of moving the strategic plan to an operational level.

## Priority Areas of Effort:

- **Looking Outward**  
Continual Improvement of Patient Care
- **Looking Around**  
Building the Lambton C.A.R.E.S. Culture
- **Looking In**  
Internal Business Process Improvement



# Introduction

The County of Lambton is an urban-rural area in Southwestern Ontario that is home to 126,000 residents. It has a long history of significant petrochemical industry development, agriculture and tourism services based on the natural assets of the area and close proximity to the United States.

With a staff of 1,265 The Corporation of the County of Lambton is responsible for a wide variety of programs and services ranging from public works to long-term care, to child care, to provincial court services. These services are governed by County Council, which consists of 17 representatives from the 11 local municipal partners.





## History of Service

Lambton Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department was created in December 2000 following the download of provincial services to Upper Tier Municipalities.

As part of the Public Health Services Division, the EMS Department is mandated to provide land ambulance services to the residents of Lambton County. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is legislated to fund up to 50% of eligible approved costs. In 2015, the gross budget for Lambton EMS was \$14.7 Million.


In 2008, Lambton EMS was the first ambulance service in the province to introduce a Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) device. More recently, Lambton was among the first group to implement prehospital pain control medications.

This highlights a few of the accomplishments achieved. See the table below for more.

Pre-2000	Current Day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 base locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 base locations</li> <li>• 3 of the original locations replaced with new facilities</li> <li>• 1 new facility projected for 2015</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24 hr coverage in Sarnia only; other locations served by “call-back” at night</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24 hour coverage throughout the entire County</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Care Paramedic (ACP) and Primary Care Paramedic (PCP) skill levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACP paramedics able to practice throughout the County</li> <li>• PCP skill set now includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) to assist breathing</li> <li>- Intravenous (IV) starts and medication administration</li> <li>- New medications to provide symptomatic and pain relief</li> <li>- Enhanced defibrillation skills and technological capabilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic stretchers for patient transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power-assisted stretchers and additional equipment have been introduced to enhance patient comfort and safety, while at the same time, ensuring the continued safety and health of Paramedics.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrades to fleet to ensure patient and Paramedic safety, including back-up cameras, GPS location abilities, ergonomically designed vehicles, and WiFi abilities to enhance patient care reporting.</li> <li>• Expansion to the fleet to include 3 Emergency Response Units, and Emergency Support Unit to assist with multi-casualty incidents, and a decontamination trailer for potential hazardous material incidents.</li> </ul>



# Profile: Lambton and EMS



**52%**  
of ambulance calls  
in Lambton were  
people aged 65  
and older.

## Demographics

Although the overall population is expected to remain stable, a population group called the baby boomer generation, born 1946-1965 (age 50-69 in 2015), is now entering their retirement years. This group represents 29% of Lambton's population<sup>1</sup> and signals a shift to an aging population.

An aging population will place increased demands on the health system, including the use of ambulance services.

In 2013, residents aged 65 and older represented 20% of Lambton's population<sup>2</sup> but accounted for 44% of hospitalizations<sup>3</sup> and 52% of ambulance calls.<sup>4</sup> This impact is even more pronounced in chronic disease conditions where people 65 years and older account for 63% of hospitalizations for the most common chronic conditions.



**44%**  
of hospitalizations  
in Lambton were  
people aged 65  
and older.

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## Our Paramedics and EMS Department

The EMS Department has more than 140 full and part-time paramedics. Providing emergency medical services to the residents of Lambton County is a 24/7 operation and during each 12 hour shift, 20 paramedics provide service from nine locations throughout the County.

Ambulance stations are located in Brigden, Bright's Grove, Corunna, Forest, Grand Bend, Petrolia, Sarnia, Thedford, and Watford. This high level of coverage allows the EMS Department to provide greater emergency medical resources to Lambton County compared to other similar sized municipalities in Ontario in terms of ambulance hours for both the geographic area and population numbers.<sup>5</sup>

In 2014, paramedics responded to approximately 23,250 calls for medical assistance and to provide emergency coverage, while meeting the emergency medical needs of the residents of our County. Lambton EMS has also been recognized for several program achievements:

- A number of paramedics trained in the operations level HAZMAT (hazardous materials) and DECON (decontamination) procedures.
- In 2008, the first ambulance service in Ontario to introduce pre-hospital use of a CPAP device.
- Looking beyond the traditional emergency work of paramedics, the Community Referral by EMS (CREMS) program was implemented in 2010 to support direct patient referrals to community services to help them live safely and independently in their homes.

Our Paramedics and the EMS Department are well positioned to address the challenges posed by changing demographics.

### Sources:

1. Statistics Canada (2011), Census: Generations in Canada. Website: [https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/as-sa/98-311-x/98-311-x2011003\\_2-eng.cfm](https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/as-sa/98-311-x/98-311-x2011003_2-eng.cfm)
2. Population Estimates [2013], Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH Ontario, Date Extracted: [April 20, 2015]
3. Inpatient Discharges [2002-2013], Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO, Date Extracted: [March 12, 2015].
4. Lambton EMS Ambulance Call Report database (unpublished data)
5. Data provided by Todd MacDonald of Performance Concepts Consulting

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## Looking Outward

# Continual Improvement of Patient Care

Design and implement a multi-year evidence-based Paramedic skills maintenance and community paramedicine program.

- Develop a program of education, training and operational initiatives focussed on continual improvement of patient care.
- Identify the evolving needs of an aging population, and design programs to respond to them within our community.
- Continue to work with our community partners to ensure we provide compassionate patient and family-centred care.

## Looking Around

# Building the Lambton C.A.R.E.S. Culture

Design and implement an ongoing communications and recognition program that addresses Lambton EMS Paramedics and external stakeholders/partners.

- Ensure that Lambton EMS practices remain grounded in our Mission, Vision and Values.
- Inform and educate all Lambton EMS employees about our desired Just Culture, to ensure a cooperative, safe environment for Paramedics to continue to work and learn from each other on a daily basis.
- Develop a program of initiatives focused on employee recognition, both ceremonial and integrated, into daily management or operational procedures.
- Develop and execute a communications plan with internal and external stakeholder components, including social media tools and tactics, so all partners are engaged and valued in the process.

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# Priority Areas of Effort

## Looking In

# Internal Business Process Improvement

Develop an evidence-based business case to address the performance challenges within the current supervisory model.

- Ensure the Operations Supervisors are given the tools and resources they need to provide efficient and effective support for our Paramedics on a daily basis.
- Develop options that incorporate stores/logistics and administrative scheduling functions.
- Further develop and define the current EMS organizational service delivery model to identify efficiencies and address gaps.
- Execute financial analyses of forecasted savings from a restructured model.

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# Emergency Medical Services

We provide reliable,  
compassionate care  
for a healthy and safe  
community.

**Administration**  
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