

FONOM

The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities

January 18, 2017

Honourable Dr. Eric Hoskins
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
10th Floor, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4
SENT VIA EMAIL:
Eric.Hoskins@ontario.ca

RE: Patients First: Expanding Medical Responses Discussion Paper

Dear Minister Hoskins,

The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) would like to reaffirm its strong opposition of the proposal to expand medical response for fire services as expressed within the survey administered to stakeholders regarding the *Patients First: Expanding Medical Responses Discussion Paper*.

While we appreciate that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) consulted municipal stakeholders including FONOM, we are deeply concerned that the proposal will move forward without a full understanding of the impacts to municipalities and the broader health care system.

Firstly, there is no evidence that expanding medical responses by certified paramedics while on fire service would improve patient outcomes. It appears that there has been a lack of due diligence to examine the significant labour and risk management issues associated with the proposal.

The *Discussion Paper* indicates that any implementation of the proposal would be on a voluntary basis. However, it is evident based on past practice, that this will not be the case. The 24 hour shift pilot for fire services was initially voluntary, however, given the current interest arbitration system, the 24 hour shift was imposed throughout the province.

FONOM

The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities

Furthermore, we are struggling to comprehend why the Ministry is focusing their efforts on expanding medical services to improve patient outcomes when there are other areas that require modernization and improvements that municipal governments have been asking for years to address, including land ambulance and ambulance dispatch issues.

Minister, we ask that this proposal not move forward and that Ministry efforts be focused on addressing other important health care issues such as land ambulance. The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) looks forward to working with you and your Ministry on improving the health care system for northern communities.

Sincerely,



Alan Spacek
FONOM President

cc: Premier of Ontario, Honourable Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Municipal Affairs, Honourable Bill Mauro
Association of Municipalities of Ontario, President Lynn Dollin