



Report To:	Program Planning Committee
From:	Robert Smith Chief of Paramedic Services
Date:	September 26, 2018
Re:	Paramedic Services Technology Advancement - Issue Report

## **Background**

Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Paramedic Services is responsible for the direct delivery of paramedic services throughout the member communities, including associated documentation compliance as set out in legislation.

Over the past number of years, quality assurance and continued quality improvement have been positively impacted through advancements in technology. Paramedic Services has adopted programs such as vehicle GPS tracking, Driver Behaviour Modification, electronic patient records systems, and wireless connectivity with hospitals for dissemination of diagnostic information. In the future, organizations such as ours will explore programs that help mitigate the impact of geography through video conferencing with the Physicians.

Since inception of the service, a number of technologies have been explored and purchased.

## **History**

Paramedic Services has utilized JBS Scheduling Software since 2005. There is an annual licensing cost of \$1,500, and historically, this cost was simply attached to an available cost centre.

In 2017, Paramedic Services collaborated with Integrated Social Services and Information Technology to implement a web based program that tracks fleet maintenance and inspections as well as inventory control. This program allows for real time inspection records assessments and improves the system efficiency with respect to the understanding of breakdowns. The program has been adopted into the new maintenance

program with the City of Greater Sudbury and allows real time tracking of fuel purchasing by clients and internal staff. Operative IQ continues to be implemented in a staged process, and has an annual budgeted cost of \$14,000 to Paramedic Services. Historically, these costs were managed within vehicle and equipment cost centres.

In 2014, Paramedic Services implemented a program that allowed for tracking of paramedic licensing and certification, and operated as a learning management system (LMS). Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB assisted the vendor in system design, and beta tested product, allowing for a significantly reduced annual product cost. In 2018, that beta relationship ended, and Paramedic Services paid \$6,500 for the solution. In 2019, we expect a cost near \$7,000.

In 2018, following the implantation of Interdev I-Medic for patient records, Paramedic Service also purchased Interdev Radius as our Community Paramedicine (CP) documentation tool. The annual cost of \$12,500 was paid for by the Northeast LHIN as a one-time expense. Moving forward this documentation solution for CP programs will have an annual cost.

### **Financial Implication**

Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Paramedic Services has implemented technology solutions over the years, intended to improve the quality of service delivery, and in doing so has spent budget dollars. In 2018, the service expended approximately 48K on software solutions, while the Northeast LHIN furnished a further \$12,500 in one-time funding. The proposed activity for 2019, included collapsing some solutions into a single vendor, and adding other solutions from that vendor into the suite of products, and moving to some new products intended to advance the system.

### **Current Issues, Benefits and Risks**

The implementation of technologies to assist in improving system efficiency, and overall quality does require some investment. As has been stated, these investments have taken place using a logical methodology to ensure that outcomes are met at a desired level.

The challenge to program advancement often relates to ensuring planning and vision are commensurate with technology. Often capacity for change is set by the Province of Ontario. When the organization plans for advancements, it is necessary to consider a willingness of the province to partner. Often this factor results in a more reactive outcome.

Paramedic Services wishes to leverage system ability through use of fewer vendors. Migration of the HRIS/LMS solution to Interdev Cert'n will allow for single employee sign on and review. The addition of Interdev MDocs into the suite of products, at an annual cost

of \$12,000 will allow for staff to migrate from SharePoint and paper reports, linking systems.

While the CP documentation tool (Radius) was funded by the North East LHIN in the current year, such a funding commitment can't be annualized. As such, the 2019 budget includes this cost.

Finally, the introduction of a program with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care that will allow bidirectional information sharing between the communication center and paramedics, meaning that much of the I-Medic patient record is auto populated, resulting in a reduced time on task for documentation. Additionally, this system will link to the service's AceTech GPS system, allowing real time documentation of vehicle status. The third benefit of this product is its real time feed of call data to the Paramedic Superintendents and senior team, allowing system tracking. The initial cost for this program has been quoted by Interdev at \$48,000, with annual costs moving forward of \$38,000 plus annual increases.

The 2019 budget proposal is for a \$110,000 allocation for technology solutions, a \$50,000 increase over current costing.

Paramedic Services has implemented technology solutions over the years since inception, and has done so for the most part in a measured manner. Investments have been attached to other programs, or cost centers. As such, a clear direction of technology evolution has been less clear. Paramedic Services is proposing that technology system solutions be managed on a specific budget line that will evolve based on emerging needs, and also that implementation of new programs be brought forward as part of the annual budget process.

Paramedic Services has requested that technology solutions related to Community Paramedicine programs be funded by the LHIN directly in an annualized manner.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff are recommending that this report be accepted by the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Program Planning Committee and the Board. Staff are requesting that the Board direct the Finance Committee to consider implementation of the technologies as part the 2019 budget deliberation.