



Report To:	Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board
From:	Paul Myre Chief of Paramedic Services
Date:	June 24, 2021
Re:	2021 Deployment Plan Pilot Update - Issue Report

## **Background**

In the fall of 2020, then Chief Rob Smith brought a proposed pilot to the Board that would see the movement of both Chapleau and Gore Bay Paramedic Services stations to a 24/7 deployment for 14 weeks and a 7 day per week 12-hour/day transport ambulance out of the Little Current Paramedic Services station also for 14 weeks. Staff have remained cognizant of the current fiscal climate and the many unknowns that surround it. Staff have continued approaching the planning process in a very prudent manner and continue to assess the viability and practicality of deploying this pilot during an unprecedented period of uncertainty.

## **Current State**

While planning on all three models are on-going, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and staffing pressures have presented a need for re-evaluation of the risk-benefit ratio with deploying these pilots. Staff believe that it would not be prudent to deploy the three pilots at this time as much of our Paramedics have yet to receive the second injection of their COVID-19 vaccine and we anticipate some operational pressures due to the reported varying side effects that accompany the second dose. Staff had attempted to mitigate these impacts by strategically staggering first dose vaccines for Paramedics to avoid anticipated increased sick time and the inevitable mass staffing shortages that would ensue. However, due to the increasing and stable supply of vaccines, the province recently pivoted on the 120-day sequencing time frame and have moved up front line health workers to receive their second dose effective immediately. We have attempted to work with our Public Health partners with the hope to balance the importance of vaccinations and the provision of emergency services but due to the rigidity of the vaccination schedule, a controlled staggered approach is not possible. Staff believe the consequences of potentially disrupting the sequencing for our Paramedics to be

vaccinated far outweigh the cost of managing staffing pressures. That being said, the risk of having a mass staffing shortage which could potentially quickly cascade into having to down-staff ambulances is a risk that we need to prepare for and take necessary measures to mitigate impacts as best as we can.

## **Conclusion**

Staff are seeking approval to defer the pilots until at least the Fall of 2021 where we anticipate a more stable workforce to support staffing requirements. Staff will continue to re-analyze the proposed models during the deferral to assess their feasibility and whether or not we should course correct given the new normal.