

# Emergencies of Care

## Firefighter Involvement in Emergency Health Care

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## Toronto Fire Services Medical vs. Fire Call Volumes

YEA R	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Medi cal	52,81 2	55,51 6	59,97 5	64,02 1	65,72 1	64,38 3	72,64 5	73,14 0	75,11 7
<b>% of total</b>	<b>46.2</b>	<b>48.66</b>	<b>51.41</b>	<b>50.39</b>	<b>49.3</b>	<b>49.3</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>53</b>
Fire	10,11 9	9,680	9,959	9,525	9,259	8,724	9,362	8,719	9,543
<b>% of total</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Total calls</b>	<b>114,3 14</b>	<b>114,0 86</b>	<b>116,6 49</b>	<b>127,0 55</b>	<b>133,2 67</b>	<b>130,5 00</b>	<b>140,5 16</b>	<b>139,3 68</b>	<b>142,5 15</b>

# The Study

- In the absence of systematic detailed data collection by Toronto Fire Service, to qualitatively assess:
  - A) who is receiving response
  - B) why response is requested
  - C) what interventions fire fighters are providing



# Methods

- Semi-structured interviews with 60 fire fighters
- Work observation at 13 fire halls selected to represent neighbourhoods across city
- Data collection on 90 separate emergency medical responses
- Review of available data in OFM and Fire Services reports
- Archival research on changes to health care, social services, fire, ems pop. economy etc from 1995-2008



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<b>NUMBER ( OUT OF 90)</b>	<b>PATIENT DESCRIPTOR</b>
52	Indications of a physical /developmental disability
54	Over 65 years
71	Male
47	People considered non-white
61	Indications of Poverty/ low income
78	Indications of chronic health concerns not directly related to physical disability

# Firefighters Interventions

Interventions	Number ( out of 90 responses)
Attend patient prior to paramedics	76
Assess, ask questions and/or some physical exam	81
Check on someone who has collapsed, passed out or reports trouble breathing	57
Resuscitate, revive, administer oxygen	19
Physically lift, move, carry	66
Provide comfort, reassurance	41
Provide paramedic support	49
Provide care, comfort, assessment to others at site ie, family members	20
Collect personal belongings, medications etc for assessment and/or transport	22

# Emergency Medical “Regulars”



“...there’s [ for – profit long term care facility] nearby which is a senior’s, sort of, assisted residence and ... that just went up and there’s talk of another one going in and so. Like, the call volume there is high. You’re there fairly regularly... You know if anyone presents with more than a simple cut or something, you know they’ve got their protocol.”

... - it's just the people that kind of slipped through the cracks. Like they don't have - they've got health problems - often there's some form of psychological or emotional problem. They don't have a big support net and you know they just can't cope. And a lot of that picked up a bit a few years back when they started, kind of, phasing down a lot of programs, like disability or mental health and you know mainstreaming people back out into the public. And yeah, there was marked increase, like almost the day that policy went into effect. And they're - yeah pretty much every station you go to has their ones like that.

# What's Going On?

Fire-based Medical Calls	Population	Poverty	Seniors Aged 80-84
42% increase between 1999-07	6.64% ( high estimate) increase between 01-06	10% increase between 01-05	30% increase between 01-06

Are Fire Services becoming a health care service? Is this policy or an accident of policy? Whose policy?



Thank you!

For more information,

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