



# Association of Manitoba Municipalities

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**HEALTH, SENIORS,  
AND LONG-TERM CARE**

**JULY 10**

**2024**

# SUMMARY OF MUNICIPAL PRIORITIES

The AMM appreciates the opportunity to meet with Minister Uzoma Asagwara and representatives of Manitoba Health, Seniors, and Long-Term Care. The AMM encourages the Province to consider municipal concerns as well as the effects of funding decisions on local communities throughout the budget process. This document outlines the AMM's position and recommendations on a number of important municipal issues relevant to the Health, Seniors, and Long-Term Care portfolio. The AMM looks forward to working with the Province to strengthen provincial-municipal growth and partnership opportunities.



Plan for  
Healthcare  
Transformation

- **Consult with municipalities when implementing healthcare system changes to reflect community needs**

Recruitment  
and Retention of  
Healthcare  
Professionals

- **Expedite a comprehensive strategy to recruit and retain healthcare professionals throughout Manitoba.**



Community  
Capital  
Contributions for  
Health Facilities

- **Clarify the community capital contributions formula, including in-kind contributions for health facilities and move toward funding all health facilities provincially.**

Medical First  
Response  
(MFR)

- **Provide municipalities with all the essential tools and resources to effectively implement a Medical First Response (MFR) Program.**



## Plan for Healthcare Transformation

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### RECOMMENDATIONS



***Consult with municipalities when implementing healthcare system changes to reflect community needs.***

The AMM has long called for the Province of Manitoba to unveil a comprehensive healthcare system plan with a specific focus on addressing challenges in rural health-care facilities.

Recent initiatives aimed at reducing emergency room wait times, investing in additional beds to alleviate congestion, and conducting the '*Listening to the Front Lines' Health-Care Tour*' signify positive initial steps toward improving the Manitoba healthcare system. While we commend these efforts, it remains imperative that the overall healthcare transformation plan be disclosed.

Moreover, the AMM acknowledges the agreement in principle between Manitoba and Canada on healthcare transfers, paving the way for the first bilateral agreement. These agreements will provide Manitoba with **\$1.2 billion over 10 years** to address its unique healthcare needs. This funding will help expand access to services, support healthcare workers, reduce backlogs, increase mental health and substance use support, improve licensing and credential recognition, and modernize health systems.

Recognizing that Manitoba and Canada announced a deal in February to infuse **\$633 million** into the Province's health system and committed to a decade-long collaboration to improve healthcare, the AMM urges the Province to incorporate local insights and feedback throughout the implementation of these changes. It is imperative that the new system aligns with municipal needs. The AMM would appreciate an update on the provincial healthcare plan and strongly encourages the Province to engage municipalities in this critical discussion.

## Recruitment and Retention of Healthcare Professionals

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ ***Expedite a comprehensive strategy to recruit and retain healthcare professionals throughout Manitoba.***

Currently, more than **90 per cent** of Manitoba municipalities are reporting doctor shortages while nearly **95 per cent** are allocating financial resources to recruit and retain health practitioners in local communities, despite healthcare being a provincial responsibility. In fact, recent news headlines highlight rural emergency rooms dealing with closures, reduced hours, and a scarcity of medical lab technologists in well-equipped healthcare facilities.

The existing staffing shortages are putting strain on the overall system, underscoring the urgent need for accessible and dependable health care in all our communities. The AMM appreciates the provincial commitment to address staffing shortages through the implementation of the Health Human Resource Strategy, as outlined in the Ministerial Mandate Letter. However, local communities still face challenges in attracting and retaining healthcare professionals. The commitment to hire 400 doctors over five years, along with 300 nurses in Winnipeg, with a corresponding commitment to rural and northern Manitoba, and an additional 200 paramedics and 100 homecare workers, is a positive step toward resolving the staffing crisis in healthcare. Thus, it is vital to implement a swift and comprehensive strategy to guarantee equal access for all communities to attract and retain healthcare professionals.

Finally, these challenges are further compounded by the province's licensing requirements, which are among the strictest in Canada. Hiring internationally educated nurses (IENs) could help alleviate some of the shortages many communities are experiencing. The AMM recognizes that the Province and the Government of Canada are collaborating to ease the process for IENs to work in the Province, including removing barriers to foreign credential recognition, simplifying the licensing process, and increasing access to programs for educated health professionals. Therefore, we look forward to learning more about this partnership and urge the Province to implement the recommendations from the Immigration Advisory Council (IAC) to accelerate credential recognition and enhance regional settlement incentives for foreign-trained doctors and other professionals.

## Community Capital Contributions for Health Facilities

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✔ **Clarify the community capital contributions formula, including in-kind contributions for health facilities; and**
- ✔ **Move toward funding all health facilities provincially.**

Municipalities continue to struggle to provide funding to health capital projects whose designs and costs are determined by the Province of Manitoba. This policy requires communities to contribute to all local health capital projects while municipalities are typically expected to contribute funding even though **health care is a provincial responsibility.**

The AMM appreciates provincial flexibility towards communities who must fulfill this requirement. However, the lack of clarity in the funding formula, which varies across the province, remains a concern. As the AMM prioritizes traveling throughout the province to meet municipalities one-on-one, we've encountered consistent feedback from local councils regarding inconsistent rates, varying payment schedules, and unclear communications regarding community capital contributions. As the Province undergoes healthcare system changes, it's crucial for the Manitoba government to transition towards provincially funding for all health facilities.

## Medical First Response (MFR)

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✔ ***Provide municipalities with all the essential tools and resources to effectively implement a volunteer-based medical response model.***

For **nearly four years**, our organization and municipalities have been ringing the alarm on the risks to public safety and impacts on emergency response created by the framework established by the College of Paramedics of Manitoba (CPMB), which took effect on December 1, 2020.

In response to these concerns, the AMM wishes to thank the Province for working with our organization, Shared Health, College of Paramedics (CPMB), Office of Fire Commissioner to coordinate a Municipal Medical First Response Planning Workshop. We commend the Province for listening to and addressing the concerns raised by our organization and its members by implementing changes to the Medical First Response (MFR) Program and inviting public feedback on these changes. The 45-day public consultation period, which concluded on May 25, 2024, was a vital step in this process. We eagerly anticipate the proposed amendments, especially the development of an MFR framework independent of the College of Paramedics of Manitoba.

From the outset, the AMM firmly believed that part-time individuals should not be subject to the same training hours, registration fees, and insurance requirements as full-time emergency personnel. Therefore, we welcome the recognition of these differences in the new regulatory requirements, maintaining similar hours to the previous framework before changes were implemented in 2020. Moreover, as we address current healthcare challenges, medical first responders will continue to play a crucial role in ensuring all Manitobans receive timely care until emergency personnel arrive on the scene.

Finally, the AMM welcomes the changes that enable all municipalities to implement a Medical First Response program if they choose. To facilitate a smooth transition to the MFR process, we strongly recommend that the government provide municipalities with all the necessary tools and resources to implement an MFR program.

# Active AMM 2023 Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care Resolutions

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## **AMM Resolution #27-2023: Ending the Downloading of Emergency Medical Service Responsibilities**

### **Sponsor(s)**

Selkirk, City (Interlake)  
Morden, City (Central)  
Steinbach, City (Eastern)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to end the practice of “lift-assist” calls, which is downloading EMS responsibilities on to municipal fire departments and transferring the costs of this health care service onto municipalities.

## **AMM Resolution #28-2023: Medical Assist Calls MPI Reimbursement**

### **Sponsor(s)**

Stonewall, Town (Interlake)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba for the establishment of a cost reimbursement system, similar to the current setup with Manitoba Public Insurance for Motor Vehicle Accident calls, for local municipal fire departments that attend a medical assist call.

## **AMM Resolution #50-2023: Ending the Downloading of Emergency Medical Service Responsibilities - Standing Policy**

### **Sponsor(s)**

Pipestone, RM (Western)  
Elton, RM (Western)  
Grassland, Municipality (Western)  
Morris, RM (Central)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to amend the proposed model for Fire First Response and that it be amended to include dispatch by the Medical Transportation Coordination Centre, ensure municipally-funded First Response services do not require affiliation with the College of Paramedics and allow additional designated acts to be included in the scope of practice for these services.

**\*\* For further information on any resolution, please contact the AMM office.**