



MEDIA RELEASE

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Budget 2007 Results in Deficit for Emergency Health Services

2007/04/04 – The Paramedic Association of Manitoba is disappointed that Budget 2007, introduced Wednesday afternoon by Finance Minister Greg Selinger, fails to address much needed improvements in Manitoba's emergency medical services system.

Budget 2007, touted by Selinger as a budget that would ensure Manitobans received "better, faster health care delivered closer to home" made no commitment to strengthening Manitoba's pre-hospital emergency health services, a component of the healthcare system that could, if used to its fullest potential, actually help reduce the burden on Manitoba's emergency departments.

"The efficiencies and increased productivity that could be realized by reorganizing within our current health system would go a long way toward fixing health care delivery" according to Eric Glass, Chairman of the Paramedic Association of Manitoba. "Health dollars spent on strengthening education for paramedics, improving the level of ambulance service across the province and addressing inconsistencies within our current EMS system would allow us to make real improvements in the way we deliver emergency health care". Glass adds "A strong pre-hospital emergency medical services system would improve patient outcomes, reduce the burden on our emergency departments and really ensure that Manitobans get better, faster health care. It's unfortunate that the recommendations we've been making to government in these areas appear to have been overlooked in this particular budget."

Expecting this to be the last budget before a provincial election, the Paramedic Association of Manitoba anticipated a commitment from the government that would ensure Manitoba had a strong and sustainable emergency medical services system province-wide. "We had hoped to see a plan that would better integrate EMS into our health care system rather than react to deficits and problems as they arise."

The Paramedic Association of Manitoba has been encouraging the provincial government to increase funding for education, address inconsistencies across the province in terms of patient care and look at alternatives for service delivery that would ensure resource utilization is both effective and efficient.

The Paramedic Association of Manitoba is the professional association for paramedics licensed to practice in Manitoba, promoting excellence in pre-hospital emergency medical care.

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