

Gary Carr fed up with ambulance dispatch centre

Region chair wants to see changes in call centre management, or move to Niagara dispatch office

ALEXANDRA HECK
aheck@metroland.com

Halton regional chair Gary Carr is calling on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to make changes to the management of the Mississauga 911 dispatch centre, after struggling for years with complaints about delays.

He says that management has played a key role in delays with calls being sent to Halton paramedics, and if the province cannot rectify the situation he wants calls to be directed to Niagara instead.

Ambulance calls for the Halton Region are directed through a dispatch office in Mississauga, which is run by the province.

He says the average wait time for a call to go through the centre is nearly two minutes longer than its counterparts like Niagara,

which is run by the Region of Niagara.

Carr says these wait times are unacceptable.

"Those two minutes, when you're talking about a stroke or a heart attack, is a long period of time," he said, explaining that patients see the EMS services as being delayed, while the delays start at the dispatch centre.

As both chair of Halton Region, and a member of a working group on the issue with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Carr has been lobbying the province to make changes to the system for years.

New technology for the Mississauga centre was set to be introduced in March.

However, these upgrades, set to be the first of their kind in the area, have been delayed, leading the region to send an official letter to the province urging them to take action.

"If you can't fix this problem, then we would like to go to Niagara," said Carr. "They've had a great deal of concerns between management and their labour. This has been going on for years."

When Deb Mathews and subsequently Eric Hoskins were ministers of health,

Carr would send recorded statistics of delayed ambulance calls.

"Virtually every time we had a delay, it went back to the call centre," he said.

This, he plans to continue with the new minister, Helena Jaczek.

"There are life-saving services, you have to make sure that you're doing everything that you can to get the technology up," said Carr.

When representatives from Halton toured the Niagara dispatch centre, they asked whether there is a possibility of transitioning over.

"The management at that one is much better than the one at the province," said Carr. "The province is not as good as it should be for whatever reason."

Carr will be requesting a meeting with the new minister of health and long-term care, where the call centre will be one of the key issues he hopes to address.

"They need to make changes with the management of their operation centre," said Carr. "This has gone on too long, if you can't fix it with the people you've got, then replace them."

**MODERNEYES
OPTOMETRY**

You are Invited!

**One-Day
SALE**

**2nd
ANNIVERSARY**

Snacks

Sat. April 14, 11am-4pm

EVENT

Prizes

**Personal
Stylists
Onsite**

View the entire collection of sunglasses and frames:

Maui Jim

orgreen

etnia **BARCELONA**

RSVP at
moderneyesoptometry.ca

CIBC Plaza in Georgetown South
905.873.2077

Schaefer Optometry Professional Corporation

Buy 1, Get the 2nd at 50% OFF

5 DAYS ONLY!

Valid from April 5-9, 2018

Don't miss out on this limited time offer!

**A HOME INSPIRED
369 MOUNTAINVIEW ROAD
GEORGETOWN
905-877-4500**

Benjamin Moore®
Paint like no other.™

