

Fit to Sit



Across Ontario, crowded hospital emergency departments (EDs) are under pressure to care for an increasing number of patients with limited existing resources.

Wait times for patients brought to ED by ambulance has become an ongoing challenge; tying up Hastings Quinte Paramedic Services during transfer of care, resulting in: delays in patient care, increased risk to patients, and increased

workload, stress and fatigue of staff.

Fit to Sit is a joint program between Hastings Quinte Paramedic Services and Quinte Health, through which patients arriving at Quinte Health hospitals by ambulance will sit in a waiting room chair upon their arrival, if they are well enough to do so.

By being Fit to Sit, you're helping to:

- free up stretchers for others in need
- allow paramedics to return to the community faster to continue providing emergency care

Patients who meet the Fit to Sit criteria are those patients who typically present to the hospital by other means and usually spend some time in the waiting room. Patients who are more acute or require immediate medical attention will remain under paramedic care or transfer promptly to a hospital stretcher under the care of the emergency department.

Some of the criteria for Fit to Sit include patients with a low score on the Canadian triage assessment scale, who are fully conscious, can stand and sit, whose vital signs are stable and are clothed appropriately to be in a waiting room.

The concept of offloading eligible patients from ambulances to emergency waiting rooms is not unique to Quinte Health. Hospitals in London, Niagara, Hamilton and other Ontario hospitals have adopted similar policies.

Quinte Health staff will monitor each patient who is Fit to Sit while they wait to be seen by a physician or nurse. Patients are asked to inform the triage nurse immediately if their condition changes.