

Paramedic Services Back Care Program Update



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Community Services Committee
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Overview

- Repetitive Lifting / Strain Injuries
- Effects on Paramedics
- Back Care Program
- Awareness
- Education
- Power Solutions
- Next Steps



Responding to Calls

- Over 25,000 patient transports annually
- Each call requires:
 - Unload stretcher and equipment from the ambulance
 - Adjust stretcher height to load or unload patient
 - load patient, equipment into the ambulance for transport
 - Unload patient at hospital
 - Adjust stretcher height to transfer patient to hospital



Physical Demands on Paramedics

- Call requires approx. 8 lifts
- Patient weight **176 lbs.**
- Total combined weight (patient, cot, medical equipment) is **385 pounds**
- 1.5 tons / call
- 9 tons / shift



Accumulative Impact of Lifting

- 2013 to 2015, 30% of Paramedic injury claims were attributed to lifting cots
- Total claim costs attributed to lifting stretchers 2013 to 2015 is \$240,000

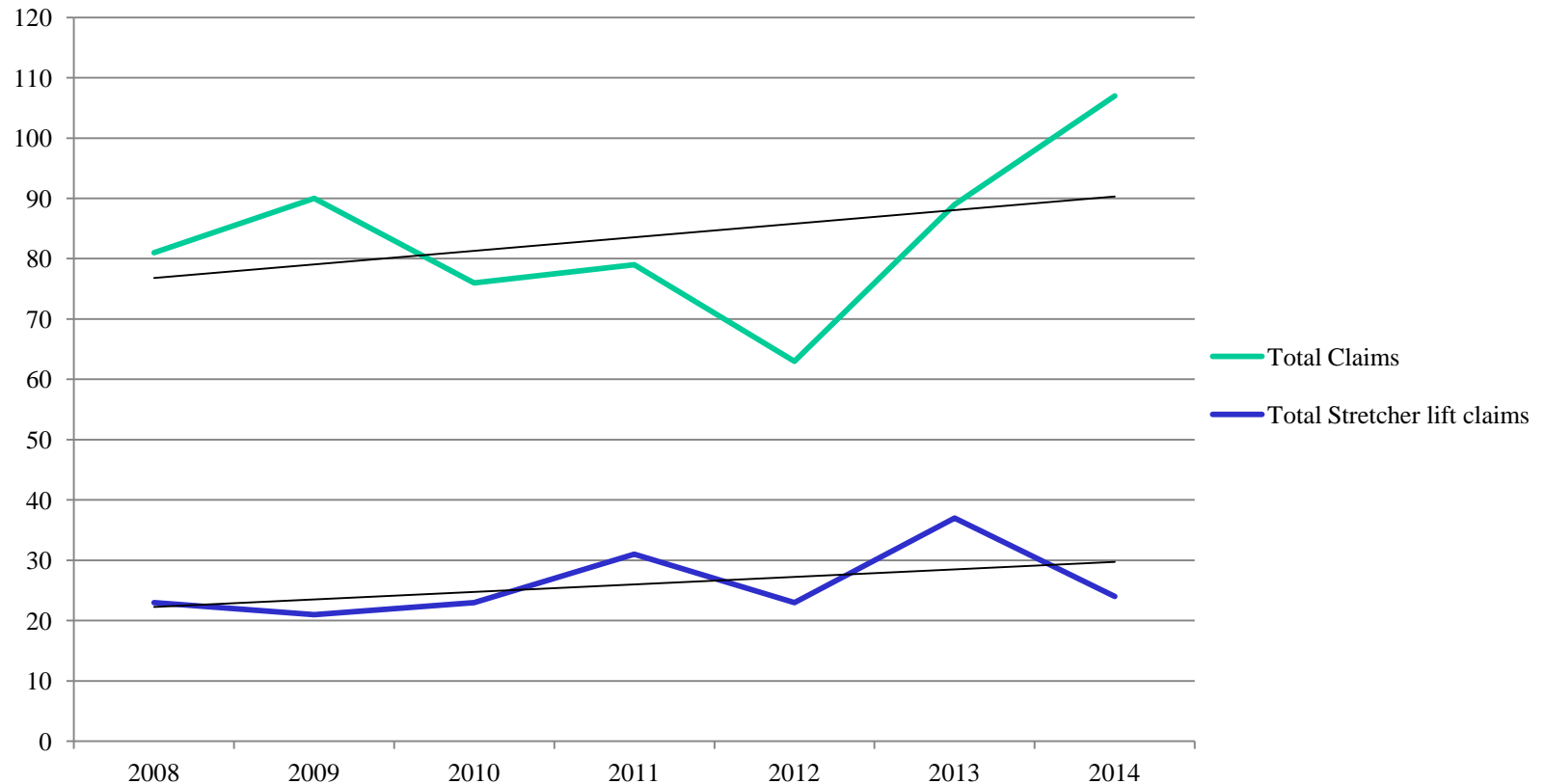
Human impact:

- Acute & chronic pain
- Loss productivity
- Negative impact on quality of life
- Potential loss of career
- Depression



Injury Statistics 2008 – 2014

Total Claims vs. Stretcher Lift Claims



Potential Cost of WSIB Claims

Cost avoidance of future potential repetitive strain type injuries can be significant.

49 year old, accommodated in lower paying job

- Total potential cost \$151,660 + Admin
– **\$204,741**

53 year old, not able to accommodate in any job

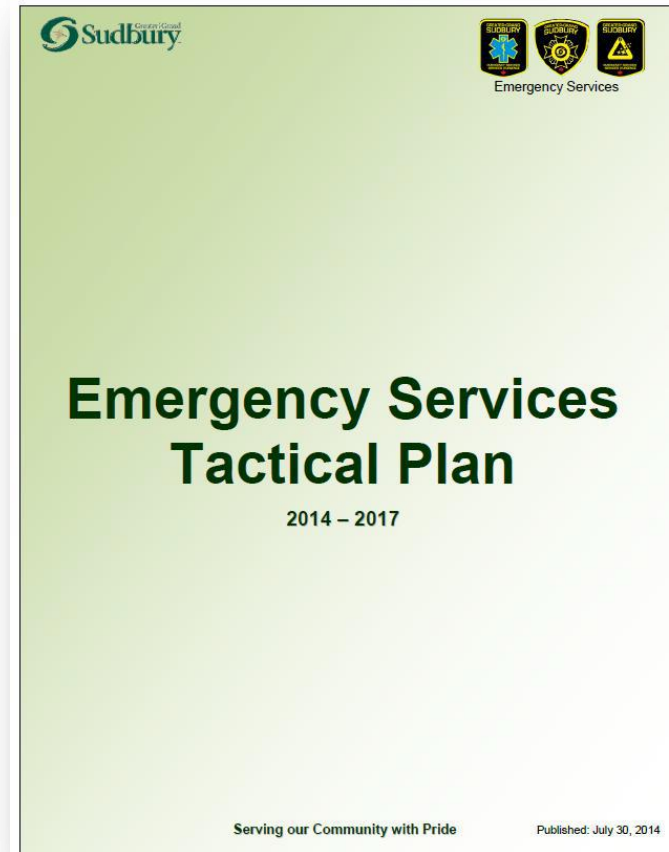
- Total potential cost \$367,750 + Admin
– **\$496,462**



Strategic & Tactical Plan

Back Care Program key priorities:

1. Improve the awareness of Health and Safety (working safely)
2. Education and training on physical back health and mental health for Paramedics...(linkage between mental and physical health – we need a holistic approach)
3. Find alternative powered solutions to reduce the accumulative effects of lifting, while improving patient safety



Improve Awareness

Fall Training 2014

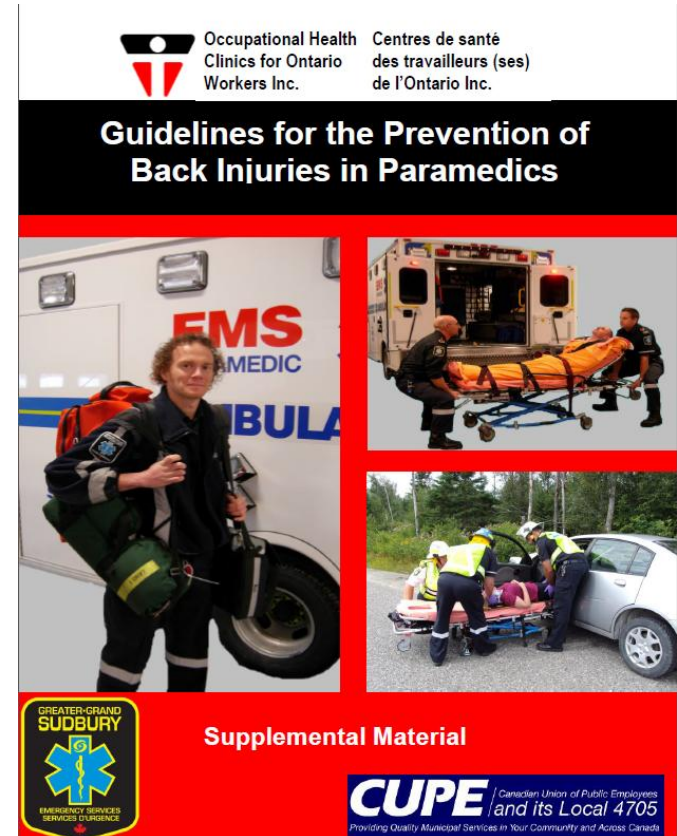
- proper body mechanics use of the larger/stronger muscle groups
- proper positioning of the medics utilizing patient handling equipment for most efficient completion of the activity
- Effective communication between partners when lifting



Back Care Training

Guidelines for the Prevention of Back Injuries in Paramedics:

- Delivered to all Paramedics Jan 2015
- OHCOW in partnership with Sudbury Paramedic Service developed this specialized program to prevent back injuries
- Program broken into separate modules addressing:
 - Understanding your Back
 - Preventing Injuries
 - Challenges to Lifts/transfers



Power Cot – Power Load

- Council approved purchase for the fleet
- Installed by fleet staff in March 2015
- Paramedics comments have been very positive on power cot and load system



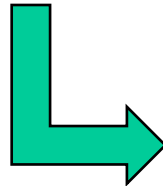
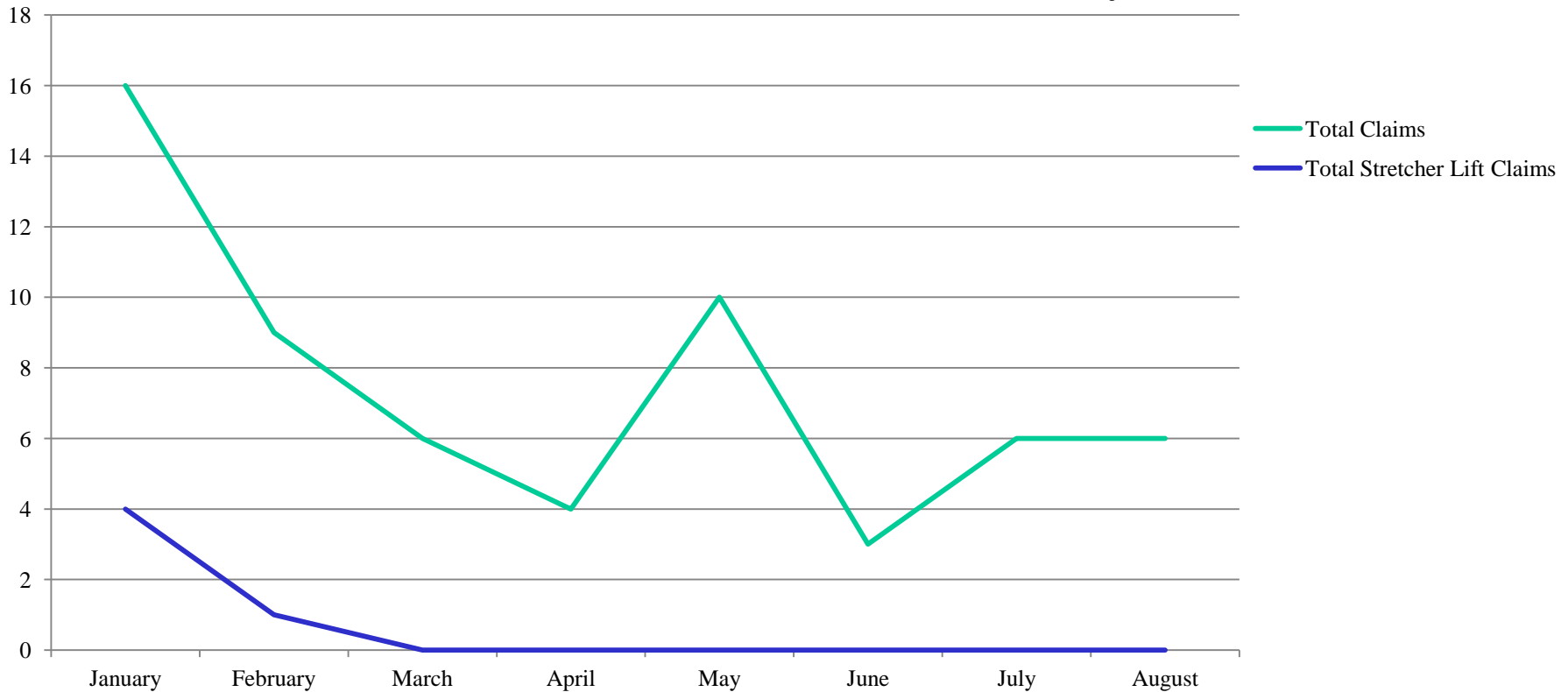
Power Cot & Power Load

- Power cots use battery power hydraulics to raise/lower
- Load system uses hydraulics on a trolley to lock onto and support the cot for loading/unloading
- All cots are bariatric capable
- Each have monitor/defibrillator mounts
- Hard mounted oxygen tank
- 700 lb lift capacity
- Reduces exposure to repetitive lifting by Paramedics with positive results...



Injury Results 2015

2015 Total Claims vs. Stretcher Lift Claims by Month



Next Steps

- Continue to train on proper body mechanics and lifting techniques
- 2015 Fall Training
 - Promote physical fitness
 - proper nutrition
- 2016 Evaluate Power Stair Chair to further reduce exposure to repetitive lifting



Any Questions?

