

# News Release



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## For Immediate Release

Date: February 28, 2023  
To: Representatives of the Media  
From: Karen Jopling, Manager, Communications & Strategic Initiatives  
Subject: Violence Against Paramedics – Zero Tolerance

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An incident occurred this past weekend where a paramedic and police officer were assaulted.

“Violence against paramedics is an ongoing reality that must stop.”

Chief, Randy Mellow - Peterborough County-City Paramedics

In the past month, as President of the Paramedic Chiefs of Canada, and the Peterborough County-City Paramedic Chief, Randy Mellow was in Ottawa for meetings with staff of the PMO office, Ministers, MPs and Senators to advocate for a number of Canadian Paramedic issues. Focus was put on the issue of violence experienced by Paramedics.

Violence can include physical or verbal violence, bullying and threats, sexual assault, and harassment. Physical violence most frequently includes pushing, punching, scratching, kicking, slapping, biting, or the use of weapons. Sources of violence include patients, family/friend, bystanders, and colleagues.

We are not alone with this issue, in Canada, over 30,000 paramedics and communications officers stand ready to respond to people in need. Each day as they perform these tasks with compassion and dedication, these same individuals are at high risk of being victims of violence and abuse.

“The frequency of incidents of violence against paramedics has risen over the last two to three years. We have already, brought attention to this several times publicly, now, we are applying Zero Tolerance.

Chief Randy Mellow, Peterborough County-City Paramedic

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“Coming from the Health Care system myself, as a retired Registered Nurse, I know of this violence all too well, seen it firsthand. We need to take care of those who are taking care of us! There is no excuse for violence against those who have dedicated their lives to helping others. I know, I speak for all of Peterborough County Councillors, when I say, we demand respect and appreciation for our Paramedics and all those in front-line healthcare. We stand by our Paramedics with the call to Police when these actions take place. Zero Tolerance.”

Bonnie Clark, Peterborough County Warden

In July 2022, 55 per cent of workers polled at Peterborough Regional Health Centre and at Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay have experienced physical violence at work while 52 per cent have witnessed an increase in violent incidents during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

“People don’t understand how dangerous the job can be, just as it can be in other health-care professions.”

Chief Randy Mellow, Peterborough County-City Paramedics

In 2014, in a study of Canadian paramedics, 75% of paramedics reported experiencing violence, with 74% reporting multiple forms of violence. Of the n=1676 paramedic responding, 67% reported verbal abuse, 41% reported intimidation, 26% report physical assault, 4% report sexual harassment, and 3% report sexual assault.

Paramedics Chiefs of Canada [position Statement](#)

A Community call to Action, please help us look after our paramedics, If you see any type of violence against our paramedics. Report it. Also, when you, or a family member, a friend are in the care of our paramedics, be kind as they do their best to look after the patient.

If you have any questions, please contact Karen Jopling, Manager of Communications & Strategic Initiatives at 705-743-0380 ext 2502 or 1-800-710-9586 or by email: [communications@ptbocounty.ca](mailto:communications@ptbocounty.ca)