



MEDIA RELEASE

October 15, 2018

LOCAL COUNTY AMBULANCES SAVE LIVES F.A.S.T.

To increase awareness of the symptoms associated with strokes, the Lanark County Paramedic Service has partnered with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada to raise awareness about strokes. There are now F.A.S.T. decals on the sides of Lanark County ambulances.

F.A.S.T. is the acronym that helps people to remember the major signs of strokes:

Face – is it drooping?

Arms – can you raise both?

Speech – is it slurred or jumbled?

Time – to call 9-1-1 right away

Stroke is a medical emergency. The ability to recognize the FAST signs of stroke and act fast by calling 9-1-1 can mean the difference between life and death - or the difference between a full recovery and lasting disability.

Placing the new F.A.S.T. decals on all Lanark County ambulances also serves as a reminder that calling an ambulance is of the utmost importance if you think someone is having a stroke. Every year, many people in Lanark County attempt to drive a suspected stroke victim to the nearest hospital. While this is well meaning, it amounts to delays in getting the patient to a designated stroke centre.

Every minute after a stroke, 1.9 million brain cells die, and the results of a long delay can be catastrophic. Early stroke management is a complex process and is best handled by medical professionals. In 2016 in Lanark County, only 50% of all patients who needed acute stroke care arrived at the designated stroke centres by ambulance from the community. The provincial average is 59%.

Paramedics can rapidly assess patients and decide which hospital has the most appropriate facilities for the patient's condition. They can even pre-notify the hospital to ensure that the patient has immediate access to urgent imaging, diagnosis, and treatment. With the help of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Lanark County continues to increase public awareness of the signs of a stroke, stressing the importance of calling 9-1-1 F.A.S.T.



Cutline: Lanark County ambulance now have F.A.S.T. stickers.

Media Contact:

Jane Adams

Communications Lead

Almonte General Hospital

613-729-4864

jane@brainstorm.nu