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Paramedics have increased capabilities with new laptop

By Abby Camron

New technology installed by Emergency Health Services (EHS) will see East Hants residents in even safer hands. OnBoard Mobile Gateway is a new service available to paramedics, making a huge difference to many. Tony Morris, vice president of marketing for In Motion Technology says Nova Scotia is leading the pack when it comes to health care providers.

"The folks here are really the leading edge in terms of providing services in a very challenging environment," he said.

EHS services all of Nova Scotia and has a vast geographical area to cover, making it difficult to always respond quickly. But with the Mobile Gateway, the technology is making it easier for paramedics to reach an emergency scene.

"Having to cover such a large geographic area, a key element is computer operated dispatch for vehicle location and in order to do that, you need GPS to tell you where the vehicle. That's one of the things gateway provides," said Morris.

The technology is being praised by local paramedics. Steve Leadlay says it's a little thing that makes a big difference.

"Something simple like the GPS being able to dispatch the closest unit makes response time that much faster," he said.

The rugged Panasonic laptop is provided with a signal from a WiFi box, implanted directly into the ambulance so remote areas without strong signals are no problem for the paramedics.

"It's a rugged black box, which goes in the ambulances and provides the information and communication gateway for a whole range of devices in the vehicles," said Morris.

With the machine, paramedics can also be in contact with hospitals, providing the patient's vitals and health information. It can also tell paramedics the patient's history almost immediately, indicating whether it's a reoccurring health problem or not.

Morris says although Nova Scotia wasn't the first province to get on board with the technology, they are a leader for the Atlantic provinces.

"It really gave us a chance to showcase a lot of our capabilities and show how an organization can operate more efficiently, but also, to really help the community," he said.

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