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Another Budget Shoe drops today

Municipal governments are receiving another provincial budget impact today. The cost shared ambulance grants are now frozen at 2018 levels. Due to the yearly funding lag, it should be noted these 2018 levels are actually based on the province's 2017 funding allocation. Any growth in service costs contained in municipal 2019 budgets will fall to municipal taxpayers.

AMO is doing cumulative impact analysis as fiscal information becomes available for all affected service areas such as public health and child care. The impacts will be weighted against the Budget's comment that changes and costs need to be sustainable for both orders of government^[1]. AMO's Board will be considering a full response to the Province.

Municipal governments already contribute at least \$2.1 billion to health services, from mandated cost-shared ambulance and public health to filling gaps such as on mental health, physician recruitment and the opioid crisis on the ground.

As well, in today's funding letter the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care stated that "as the ministry advances its plan to modernize emergency health services in Ontario, we will work directly alongside municipal partners to engage in meaningful discussions about protecting and enhancing emergency support services across Ontario".

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[1] The Ontario Budget stated that the province is: "Being a true provincial partner that listens to the needs of communities while ensuring financial sustainability for both the Province and municipalities". Page 149.

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