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For Immediate Release

PARAMEDICS FLATLINED BY MANITOBA ROADS

Congestion and crumbling infrastructure impact vital front-line services

WINNIPEG, MB – A bump in the road or a traffic jam may be a nuisance for Manitoba motorists, but for paramedics, it is a critical factor in accessing and caring for patients during an emergency crisis.

“Uneven road surfaces and traffic congestion are annoyances Manitoba motorists have learned to accept,” says Mike Mager, President and CEO of CAA Manitoba. “What we forget is the different types of road users, and how these minor annoyances for us, can seriously impact the care and comfort of those in need of medical care.”

Midway through CAA Manitoba’s third annual Worst Roads campaign, Mager says in addition to our cars, our healthcare system is also adversely affected. The Paramedic Association of Manitoba agrees.

“The condition of our roads should not be a factor in how patients are assessed, treated and transported in a time of need, but in this province, it is.” Says Jodi Possia, Chair of the Paramedic Association of Manitoba.

In Manitoba, nearly 150,000 patients are transported by ground ambulance each year. In these critical moments, paramedics are forced to consider the route they take, to and from a call. More than 10,000 of those transported are across Manitoba highways from rural hospitals to Winnipeg.

“Having to take an alternate route because of traffic congestion or road conditions is a daily issue for paramedics,” says Possia. “Poor roads make it very uncomfortable for patients and can limit the procedures we do while en route to the hospital – especially while travelling hundreds of kilometres to bring a patient into Winnipeg. ”

Halfway through CAA’s Worst Roads campaign, over 2,700 votes have been cast for over 300 roads in our province, citing complaints such as potholes, cycling safety and traffic congestion.

Manitobans have until April 23 to vote for their Worst Roads by going to caamanitoba.com/WorstRoads. After the campaign closes, CAA Manitoba provides the data to all levels of government, hoping to put the top 10 roads on the fore of government agendas.

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