

# Police and hospital administration to discuss ER conundrum

*(Daily Miner & News)*

**DATE:** 2013.10.07

Both Kenora area police services are planning to meet with the Lake of the Woods District Hospital to come to an agreement on what should be the standard procedure when a officer brings an injured suspect into the emergency room.

The issue is officers are often anxious to have their suspect treated quickly so they can get back out on patrol.

Since OPP and Treaty Three Police officers work in pairs, when a suspect must wait for hours to be seen by a doctor, there are two less police officers patrolling the community. "The police want to get out of the ER as quickly as possible and we're very sympathetic to that.

And while we want to get our officers back on the street as soon as possible, what we have to keep in mind is that the people they bring in might be unconscious or violent and we need them to be present," said Balcaen.

Besides safety, the hospital's ER is based on a triage system where people who are in most need of medical treatment go first. ER staff are often hesitant to let someone jump in line in front of someone else higher on the triage list just because they're in police custody.

Other patients in the ER who may have been waiting for hours have also objected to letting someone who broke the law go before them.

"If you're a parent with a young child who has been waiting for two or three hours, it is very distressing if someone bumps you.

But there's a balancing act that works not on whether you're a child or in police custody but on the urgency of your need for care," said Balcaen.

The OPP did not have any further information on the meetings with the hospital since they have not taken place yet.