



PIERCE COUNTY FIRE COMMISSIONERS' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES March 28, 2019

East Pierce Fire & Rescue – 18421 Veterans Memorial Dr., Bonney Lake

CALL TO ORDER – FLAG SALUTE

President O Harra Buttz called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the flag salute.

WELCOME and THANK YOU TO HOST

President O Harra Buttz thanked East Pierce for hosting tonight's meeting. Chief Backer welcomed everyone to East Pierce Fire & Rescue. Excited with their 80 million dollar bond having passed, replacing stations, fire engines and other vehicles as well. 5 stations being replaced. Also purchasing land for a new station in Milton as well as improving staffing levels. 24% increase in staffing levels in the last 3 years. Huge leap in firefighter safety.

ROLL CALL – SELF-INTRODUCTIONS

Roll was taken with self-introductions, according to the sign-in sheet, 9 Districts were represented by 21 attendees made up of Commissioners, Chiefs, Secretaries and/or visitors. President O'Harra Buttz commented that there seems to be fewer in attendance. What can we do to improve attendance? Encouraged everyone to reach out to fellow Commissioners and encourage them to attend. Any ideas and suggestions please email or call her.

PROGRAM – A/C Russ McCallion update on Community Paramedicine

Vice President Sutich introduced A/C McCallion to give us an update on EMS. 5 updates on 5 hot topics in EMS. Financing more so than operational. Ground Emergency Medical Transport program (GEMT) – 70 million dollars state wide. Substitute HB1358. Moment of silence for backboards – shown that worsen patient outcome. Couple of exceptions. GEMT spearheaded by WFC and Keith Wright from CPFR. 50% of all patients we see are Medicare, 20-25% are Medicaid and rest are covered by private health insurance. Medicaid pays approximately \$115.00 per transport. Take true cost of transport, add all up, spend about \$3-4,000 per call we go on. State reimburses 50% of costs. Anticipation of 70-80 million dollars state-wide. \$50,000 per week in revenues here at EPFR. Back payments still due from previous fiscal years back to 2017. Good program that is doing well. We are the first state to be able to get our non-transport costs included. King County had a push to pass a reimbursement program for CARES programs. Reimbursement of funds for base rate of Medicaid, \$115.00, for those not taken to a hospital. Off sets GEMT revenues. Revenues wouldn't be worth all the paperwork. Something a little more substantial is to try a 5 year pilot, details released in June which will allow us to take to doctor's offices, etc. and utilize TeleHealth, pay Medicare base rate fee. A lot of work to do. RFP's in June and due in September, will need State DOH to provide variances from RCW and exemption to transport to other than hospital ED's. A lot of work to do in a short amount of time. Flu season is still going very strong. Community Paramedicine – EPFR, WPFR, CPFR, GFR, OVFR and GH have worked with NPN with high utilizers. Is there a way we can identify those with unmet needs, refer to NPN who would identify who the payor would be and have care managers, etc. to reduce unnecessary 911 calls. Started study several years ago. Qualus Health looked at program. Saw 170 some patients, looked at 12 months before and then 12 months after enrolled. Call volume reduced and they were amazed by a 7 million dollars in Medicare savings. Successful program partnering with NPN. For CPFR in 1 year based on number of patients estimated a reduction of 510 unnecessary 911 calls. NPN has been bought by Davita and no longer going to support this program after the end of this year. May 7th Medicare Safety meeting. Community Paramedicine programs, some call CARES, etc. Goal is to connect patients with resources. No standardized

reimbursement model. Still challenge to find funding for these programs. EPFR working off of a cost avoidance model. The fact that we are still working independently – 9 separate ALS agencies in Pierce County – we need to be able to work together unified and more effectively so we can better work with Molina, etc. Collaborate and work together and not duplicate efforts, etc. Open to questions. Association thanked A/C McCallion for his presentation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President O’Harra Buttz added guest speaker gifts under Old Business. Commissioner Gorder moved and Commissioner Kadow seconded to approve the agenda as amended. MOTION CARRIED.

MINUTES OF February 28, 2019 MEETING and Treasurer’s Report – See attached

It was moved by Commissioner Egan and seconded by Commissioner Mitchell to approve the February 28, 2019 minutes and the Treasurer’s Report (see attached copy on backside of Agenda) as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

SGT. AT ARMS – NAME BADGES

Commissioner Allison not here tonight.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

REGULAR REPORTS:

a) Regional Representative Report – Gene Dobry

Reported Thurston County Association is having the same issue with attendance as here. Seems like the young, new Commissioners don’t attend. Fireline came out the first of the month. Remind everyone of PDC filings by 15th of April. Favorable comments that attended Clear Water resort training. Much preferred than Ocean Shores facilities. Will be there again next year. Chelan training on June 1st and next State wide association meeting is April 27th.

b) Legal - Joe and/or Eric Quinn

Joe reported Eric is going to report tonight. Thanked Kevin Gorder for attending in Spokane. Attendance was not that great. Got great feedback from those that did attend. Eric stated he has nothing to report. Vice President Sutich reminded everyone of the 4 year training for Open Public Meetings and Public Records.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

a) Fire Chiefs Association - Dan Rankin / Tom Sutich

No report, neither attended.

b) Legislative - Dale Mitchell

Reported met last week. Covered a lot of issues. All risk mobilization has passed the House and going to Senate. Tomorrow you should get an email with updated legislative issues. Pension benefits for Volunteer Firefighters had a lot of support and thinks it has gone through. 1894 is dead. April 28th is the end of the session.

c) Bates Technical College - Dan Rankin

No report.

d) Fund Raising Activities - Ed Egan

Commissioner Egan had Eric Quinn draw the winning ticket. Commissioner Eckroth had the winning ticket and won \$32.50.

e) Annual Picnic –Bill Eckroth and Arlene Dannat

President O’Harra Buttz stated last meeting Commissioner Dannat had suggested not having the picnic this year due to the low attendance the last couple of years. Up to the body to decide. Commissioner Eckroth offered up CPFR Station 60 for location. Vice President Sutich moved to suspend the picnic this year and just have a meeting and bring in Andrew Neiditz as a speaker. Commissioner Eckroth seconded the motion. Commissioner Egan spoke against that and suggested if there is a grill some of us could step up and we could BBQ hamburgers. Discussion followed. Commissioner Sutich withdrew his motion and Commissioner Eckroth withdrew his second. Commissioner Rankin moved to do a potluck picnic on July 25th at CPFR Station 60, Commissioner Gorder seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED. Commissioner Dannat will start a sign up sheet at the next meeting.

f) Annual Banquet – DORMANT - Mike Cathey

g) Scholarship & Education - Tom Sutich / Stan Moffett

No report.

h) Awards Committee – DORMANT – Sheila Niven

i) Membership – Kevin Gorder

No report.

j) Programs – Tom Sutich

Reported April speaker will be Jody Ferguson, new Director of DEM.

k) Sunshine - Arlene Dannat

Reported flowers sent to Gustafson wife’s memorial service and a card was sent to Secretary/Treasurer Denise Menge for her 30 years of service at CPFR.

l) NAEFO – Gerry Gustafson

No report.

m) Nominating – DORMANT - Dan Rankin / Sheila Niven

n) Audit – DORMANT - Dan Rankin / Margaret O’Harra Buttz

o) SS911 Committee – Dan Rankin

Reported meeting was short. May have Executive Session for finalizing of building. Policy Board voted on 1 year contract. Start April 9th, Andrew presenting to 6 agencies on new governance.

OLD BUSINESS:

SS911 Representative Election Committee

Vice President Sutich stated the following process was approved at last months’ meeting:

1. Two (2) year term
2. Elect Director and alternate
3. No one from Central Pierce or West Pierce (at this time)
4. Approve process at February meeting

5. Nominations held at March and April meetings
6. Election during April meeting
 - a. Top vote getter = Director
 - b. 2nd highest vote getter = Alternate
7. Term begins in July 2019

If someone that is nominated that is not present, Vice President Sutich will call them before the next meeting. Nominations for representatives were open to the floor.

Commissioner Werner nominated Commissioner Kathy Kadow, Commissioner Grubaugh seconded the nomination. NOMINATION ACCEPTED.

Commissioner Mitchell nominated Commissioner McElligott, Commissioner Gorder seconded the nomination.

Commissioner Rankin nominated Commissioner Sutich, Commissioner Coleman seconded the nomination. NOMINATION ACCEPTED.

Nominations will take place again next month and then voting.

Speakers Appreciation Gift

Commissioner Egan put together 5 different coins/tokens as examples of what could be done. Might cost around \$10.00 each or so. Could design one of these and Commissioners could buy at cost if interested and then have for giving to speakers, etc. Or could do travel mugs. Open to suggestions. Majority were in favor of the coins. President O'Harra Buttz asked for volunteers to help.

NEW BUSINESS:

Nothing at this time.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Commissioner Eckroth reported retired Battalion Chief Garden has a small brain bleed. He is at Tacoma General Hospital.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Submitted by:

Denise Menge,
Secretary/Treasurer

2019 Meeting Dates and Locations:

January 24, 2019 - FPD # 5 – Gig Harbor – 10222 Bujacich Rd NW

February 28, 2019 – FPD # 6 – Central Pierce – 17520 22nd Ave E, Tacoma

March 28, 2019 – FPD # 22 – East Pierce – 18421 Veterans Memorial Dr, Bonney Lake

April 25, 2019 – FPD # 13 – Browns/Dash Point – 4815 Wa-Tau-Ga Ave NE

May 23, 2019 – FPD # 18 – Orting Valley – 401 Washington Ave SE

June 27, 2019 – FPD # 16 – Key Peninsula – 8911 Key Peninsual Hwy KPN
July 25, 2019 – Potluck – CPFR Station 60 17520 22nd Ave E
August 22, 2019 – FPD # 21 – Graham – 23014 70th Ave E
Sept. 26, 2019 – FPD # 17 South Pierce – Sta. 171 302 McNaught St, Roy
October 24, 2019 - NO MEETING – STATE CONFERENCE
November 21, 2019 – FPD #3 – West Pierce – 5000 Steilacoom Blvd SW
(3rd Thursday due to 4th Thursday being Thanksgiving)
December 5, 2019 – NO MEETING – ANNUAL BANQUET

Pierce County Fire Commissioners: 2019 Report on EMS Programs



*Pierce County Fire Commissioners Meeting
March 28, 2019*

*Russ McCallion
Assistant Chief/EMS
East Pierce Fire & Rescue*

Updates on EMS Programs/Projects

- GEMT (Ground Emergency Medical Transport) Funding
- SHB 1358 Funding for Medicaid Patients referrals
- Proposed federal "ET3" Pilot Program to pay EMS when we DON'T take Medicare patients to the hospital
- NPN/Community Paramedicine Project Patient Outcomes
- Community Paramedicine/ "CARES" Program Updates
- Questions from the Fire Commissioners



GEMT Funding Update

- GEMT (Ground Emergency Medical Transport) funds are being distributed to participating departments by WA HCA
- Program was driven by WA Fire Chiefs—efforts led by Keith Wright, CPF&R
- GEMT program goal: increase Medicaid transport reimbursement funding
- Impact:
 - Dramatic revenue increase
 - EPF&R—increase from \$115 per Medicaid patient to @\$2,300
 - Payments from prior fiscal years still being processed by HCA.



SHB 1358—2017-2018

- *“Concerning reimbursement for services provided pursuant to community assistance referral and education services (CARES) programs.”*
- Legislation directing WA Health Care Authority (HCA) to develop method for paying fire/EMS for providing CARES (i.e. community paramedicine) interventions.
- Limited to Medicaid patients only (@20-25% of total EMS patients)
- HCA proposal to pay Medicaid BLS rate for enrolled patients (@\$115)
- HOWEVER...they would count that as income for GEMT calculations... decreasing revenues for GEMT
- 1358? Not worth participating



New CMS “ET3” Pilot Program

- Medicare (CMS) will fund 5 year pilot program for EMS to provide services, referrals & transport to clinics and MD offices.
 - “Maybe we’ve had the wrong incentives for EMS...”
- RFPs will be released in June with applications due in September.
- CMS reporting requirements focused on patient safety.
- Collaboration & cooperation is essential: WA DOH, MPDs, healthcare systems, clinics & urgent care centers, physician groups, telemedicine providers.
- Costs vs. Benefits: new, modest revenue stream with potential to decrease hospital and ED overcrowding.
- Lots of work—little time.



NW Physician Network / Community Paramedicine Collaboration: Analysis of Patient Outcomes & Impact on EMS & Healthcare System Workload

Volume 6, Issue 2

February 2019

Population Health NEWS

Innovative Collaboration between a Local IPA and County Fire Districts Shows Significant Outcomes

by **Melissa Haney**

In October 2014, Northwest Physicians Network (NPN) a local independent physician association that is part of [DaVita Medical Group](#), and six Pierce County Fire Districts, including East Pierce Fire and Rescue, West Pierce Fire and Rescue, Central Pierce Fire and Rescue, Graham Fire and Rescue, Orting Fire and Rescue, and Gig Harbor Fire and Rescue, joined together to form Pierce County Community Paramedicine Collaboration. The aim of the collaboration is to help identify high utilizers of emergency medical services and when appropriate, refer them to their primary provider systems for

A Pierce County Paramedicine Collaboration:

Partnering to Connect High Utilizers of Emergency Systems to Resources to Improve Patient Outcomes and Reduce Unnecessary Utilization of Emergency Medical and Hospital Services

Qualis Health Project Review & Outcome Analysis

September 2018



Qualis Health

Population healthcare consulting organization, partnering with our clients to improve care for millions of people every day. Working with public and private sector clients to advance the quality, efficiency and value of healthcare.

In April 2018, Qualis Health and HealthInsight announced a formal merger, combining the two organizations and operations across the U.S. Both Qualis Health and HealthInsight have been engaged in healthcare quality consulting and providing quality improvement services for more than 40 years.

The Medicare Quality Innovation Network - Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) for Idaho and Washington

QIO Program

Led by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) Program is one of the largest federal programs dedicated to improving health quality at the local level.

The program aligns with the six CMS Quality Strategy goals:

- Make care safer by reducing harm caused in the delivery of care.
- Strengthen person and family engagement as partners in their care.
- Promote effective communication and coordination of care.
- Promote effective prevention and treatment of chronic disease.
- Work with communities to promote best practices of healthy living.
- Make care affordable.



The Project Team

In 2014 Northwest Physicians Network (NPN) and six fire districts located in Pierce County, Washington

- Central Pierce Fire and Rescue
- East Pierce Fire and Rescue
- Gig Harbor Fire and Rescue
- Graham Fire and Rescue
- Orting Fire and Rescue
- West Pierce Fire and Rescue

banded together with a other local healthcare & community support organizations to tackle the problem of overuse of EMS and ED services.

Partners

Community Partners
 APS, Elder Care Consultants, Health Homes, Home & Community Services, MCIRT, MOCT, PATH, PACT, Pierce Count Aging and Disability Resource Center, RRC, STAR


Law Enforcement
 Lakewood Police Department, Pierce County Probation, Police Mental Health Co-Responders, Puyallup Community Police

Medical Providers
 CHI Franciscan, Community Healthcare, Concerto, Multicare, Northwest Physicians Network, NW Integrated Health, SeaMar

Payers
 Amerigroup, Coordinated Care, Molina, Opjum, United Healthcare

Behavioral Health Providers
 Greater Lakes Mental Health, Healthcare Comprehensive Life Resources, Multicare Behavioral Health

Qualis Health was asked to assist in reviewing the project’s method and analyzing data collected for an impact assessment.



The Project Goal

Reduce the burden of potentially unnecessary EMS and ED utilization in Pierce County, Washington.

Referrals


- **Communication:** develop a secure communication & referral pathway
- **Flagging Patients:** method to flagging & referring patients for case management.
- **Matching Patients to Appropriate Healthcare Systems:** NPN searched the participating hospitals’ EMRs to identify the patients’ payer, care team and hospital usage in the last 12 months.
- **Connecting to Case Management or Primary Care:** Once the patient is matched to a healthcare system, NPN refers them to that system’s case management services.
- **Extra Encouragement:** if needed a representative from their fire district and their case manager may personally follow up with the patient
- **Obtaining Services:** case manager assisted the patients in getting the healthcare and/or community support services necessary.

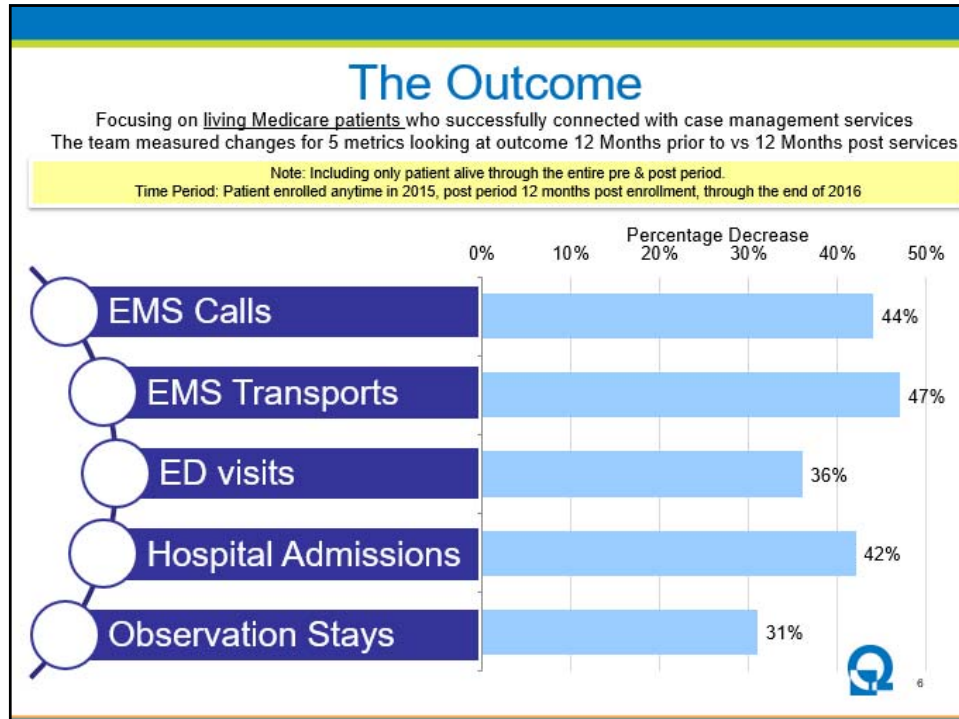
Wellness Meetings

- Meetings for extremely high utilizers (50+ ED visits in one year).
- An interdisciplinary team working together to develop an appropriate plan tailored to the needs of the extremely high utilizer.

Partner Coordination Meetings

- All of the participating organizations are invited to these monthly meetings for shared learning and a case study.





Community Paramedicine Programs

- Community Paramedic programs continue to expand in U.S.
- Work with “High-Utilizer” & “at-risk” patient populations
 - Goal...connect patients with needed resources (and not use 911)
- In spite of demonstrated effectiveness and cost-savings, no standardized reimbursement model has been developed.
- East Pierce is the first fire district in Pierce County to deploy a “Community Resource Paramedic”, FF/PM Jen Killion.
 - Budgeted department funds using “cost-avoidance” model
 - Review of EPF&R operating model



Community Paramedicine Programs

- Other fire districts expect to deploy similar community paramedic (or “CARES”) programs using paramedics, nurses or social workers in next 12 to 24 months.
 - Critical case management support from NPN (who helped in our collaboration) will end December 31st.
 - Fire departments examining alternatives
 - Pierce County fire districts still working in “silos” making it difficult to speak with one voice when working with healthcare organizations.
 - Need to build relationships
 - Need to seek opportunities to collaborate in future...we need to build a Pierce County Medic One Program.




We want to avoid issues that could result in a train-wreck...



Where Do We Go From Here? *Questions from the Commissioners?*

**The significant problems we face
cannot be solved...**



**By the same level
of thinking that
created them.**

*Albert Einstein
(He was right.)*

**We can't forget that in the end, EMS is about
taking care of people, delivering medical
care in a non-traditional setting...**



EMS is...
MEDICINE!

Thank You!



Asst. Chief Russ McCallion
East Pierce Fire & Rescue
rmccallion@eastpiercefirerescue.org
253-377-8640