

MILFORD AMBULANCE SERVICE

2015 Town Report

Milford Ambulance Service continued its ongoing charge of providing emergency ambulance coverage to the Town of Milford in a proud and professional manner during 2015.

Activity

Milford Ambulance Service responded to a total of 2,082 calls, an unprecedented increase of 309 calls, compared to 2014. The increase is attributable to a general increase in emergency requests, including, sadly, the heroin epidemic. Further, an increase in patient transports out of the Milford Medical Center was seen, reversing a decline seen in 2014, to round out the increase. Of the 2,057 patients evaluated and/or treated, 1,445 patients were transported to the hospital of their choice, while 597 patients refused transport. The surrounding communities of Amherst, Brookline and Wilton provided mutual aid ambulance coverage to Milford on 62 occasions when both of the Service's ambulances were unavailable.

Requests for aid were handled in a timely, professional, and compassionate manner, as the Service is known for, including a cardiac arrest save in December. The patient was revived by ambulance personnel twice prior to arrival at the hospital where the patient underwent cardiac catheterization to open an occluded coronary artery. The patient was subsequently discharged from the hospital without deficit after a brief stay.

The department performed Rapid Sequence Intubation (RSI) on two occasions to secure difficult airways when a patient is unable to maintain their own airway due to a medical or trauma-related issue. RSI certification is a multifaceted process, wherein both paramedic and EMT providers, along with the department, must meet prerequisites for training, proficiency, and competency in skills and equipment.

In late 2015 the department received approval from the NH Bureau of EMS for trained paramedic providers to perform Surgical Cricothyrotomy in difficult or failed airway situations. Surgical Cricothyrotomy is the act of creating an opening in the anterior neck to insert a breathing tube directly into the trachea when other means have failed, or due to facial trauma, allergic reaction, or any other medical condition that occludes a patient's airway.

These capabilities will provide patients with advanced care that few EMS services in the state can provide.

The department newsletter Vital Signs was reintroduced with enhanced and expanded content to provide another avenue of communication to department employees. In addition to department related material, expanded material includes American Sign Language vocabulary, NH EMS Protocol review, EMS tips and tricks, as well as medication reviews covering both EMS medications and over-the-counter drugs/medications.

The department received donations of a Laerdal SimMan and infant high-fidelity training manikins from Southern NH Medical Center to enhance the quality of department training.

The manikins can be configured to provide immediate feedback to provider interventions, with the ability to simulate a patient with traumatic injuries, cardiac emergencies, and other, various, medical emergencies.

Facility

The Ambulance facility has been in operation for over two years and continues to meet Department and community needs. An increasing number of community organizations are using the Community Room for meetings. Very few issues have arisen, and have been appropriately addressed in a timely fashion.

The Department has utilized the Community/Training Room for monthly and quarterly department training sessions in addition to hosting an EMT course lasting five months. The setting and audio-visual equipment adequately facilitate an environment conducive to learning.

Regarding the aforementioned Laerdal SimMan and infant high-fidelity training manikins, a section of the training room will soon be reconfigured to imitate the patient compartment of the Department ambulances in order to create a more realistic learning environment, similar to that which a provider would utilize during transport of a patient.

Vehicles

The two front-line, 2013 model-year ambulances, placed in service in mid-December 2013, are in good mechanical - and working order. In two years of operation, the 3A and 3B ambulances have travelled 60,837 and 35,904 miles respectively.

The 2001 ambulance was pressed into service on several occasions when one of the front-line ambulances underwent maintenance. Additionally, the 2001 ambulance was loaned out to Wilton on several occasions when one of their ambulances was unavailable due to maintenance. Having a ready spare ambulance allows for uninterrupted response when an ambulance is out of service. Further, the ready spare ambulance allows the Department to support our mutual aid partners and reduces their need to call on the Department for response.

The 2002 Expedition, serving as the Paramedic Response Vehicle (PRV), was taken out of service in October due to a major mechanical breakdown. The cost of the repair would be prohibitively expensive in light of the scheduled removal from service in Spring, 2016. In light of this development, the 2016 swap-out of the vehicle with the former police department Supervisor vehicle - a 2010 Explorer - was moved forward. In December the vehicle was repainted with the removal of police department emergency warning devices and installation of ambulance emergency warning devices initiated. Installation of graphics will complete the changeover in late January.

Personnel

MAS is a combination department whose staffing consists of 43 volunteers, 6 part-time and 6 full-time personnel in addition to 13 per-diem paramedic providers. Volunteers, composed of

National Registered Emergency Medical Technicians at the Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced levels, continue to be the backbone of the Service, providing 60% of weekly shift coverage. During 2015, 43 volunteer providers were scheduled for over 17,891 hours of shift coverage.

In 2015, the Service recruited 20 new providers. The new attendants completed, or are in the process of completing, the Department Field Training Program (FTP). The FTP is a Department-initiated program designed to orient new members to Milford Ambulance Service operations and assist trainees in applying their EMT skills in the field. Efforts continue toward recruitment and retention.

Two providers of the Department upgraded their certifications during the year. Michael Fiore and Chenais McConnell upgraded to Paramedic from Advanced EMT, while seven providers--Brian Alley, Richard Jordan, Christopher Kelleher, Steve Nasta, Marc Ryan, Carsten Turner, and Evan Young--upgraded to Advanced EMT from Basic EMT.

The Department created a new position of Clinical Educator to oversee development and delivery of EMS education. Andrew Mason, NRP, was appointed to this position. The Clinical Educator is responsible for implementing changes in EMS education standards, recertification format, and delivery, including NREMT refresher training known as the National Core Competency Program (NCCP). NCCP is a paradigm shift in recertification training format that allows instructors increased flexibility in delivery of required training.

These individuals, who contribute to the Service on a daily basis, make the Service second to none in the State. The citizens of Milford can be proud to have these individuals caring for them and available at a moment's notice.

Education

2015 saw the continuation of Service involvement in community education programs, staff training, and development, as well as participation in the development of future State of New Hampshire EMS initiatives, provider protocols, and administrative rules.

Community Education and Outreach: MAS continued to expand its community education program geared toward injury prevention.

Service personnel assisted both Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts in obtaining their First-Aid Merit Badges. The Scouts received hands-on training on how to splint a fracture, control bleeding, and call for assistance, along with other first-aid information.

The Service held numerous CPR classes for the general public and town employees and certified 82 individuals throughout the year, including the Police Department staff.

The Department conducted 14 child safety seat inspections in accordance with national certification through the Safe Kids Coalition, including a Car Seat Safety Check event in June. Car seat checks are available by appointment, which can be made by contacting the Department directly.

The Department held a Spring EMT course. The course lasted 5 months, for over 150 hours of in-class education. The course generated three new volunteer providers, two of which eventually moved in to part-time positions and are actively providing shift coverage and service to the community.

Another Citizens' EMS Academy was held by the Department to expose citizens to the Department and EMS operations to better understand the role of EMS, what an EMS response entails, what a patient may expect to occur during a call, and education on medical- and trauma emergencies. Participants will be provided the opportunity to obtain CPR/AED certification and ride along as observers on ambulance calls.

Training

Training and education are on-going activities for EMS providers that allow providers to keep abreast of the latest developments and best practices, as well as to maintain skill set competencies.

Staff participated in monthly and quarterly education training, which covered patient assessment, cardiac care, airway management, spinal motion restriction, Narcan (naloxone) administration, drug recognition, personal safety, and other topics. The Department held a 24-hour EMT Basic Life Support (BLS) refresher course and a separate Advanced Life Support (ALS) refresher course for Department providers to satisfy biennial certification and licensing requirements.

The Department received certification to perform emergency Surgical Cricothyrotomy after developing and implementing NH Bureau of EMS prerequisite training. Surgical Cricothyrotomy is an emergent intervention of last resort to establish an airway for patients in failed airway situations or who have significant facial trauma precluding typical means to secure an airway.

Additionally, the Department's RSI and Paramedic Interfacility Transfer (PIFT) biennial recertifications were approved by the NH Bureau of EMS for another two-year cycle, thereby continuing this advanced level of service offered by the Department to town residents and guests.

Billing and Revenue

In September the Department contracted with Comstar Billing Service, an ambulance billing agency, to perform ambulance billing on behalf of the Department. Implementation of this service is due to the increased call volume and corresponding increase in invoicing for patient transports, which were being processed by one part-time employee. Revenue from ambulance transports represents approximately 13% of non-taxable revenue received by the town.

Anticipated collectable revenue from ambulance transportation in 2015 is \$627,796 on \$1,007,736 in invoiced transports.

The Department continuously seeks opportunities to reduce overall costs. A specific example is the use of per-diem employees to fill two vacant, authorized, full-time positions. This action realizes overtime and benefits cost-savings without compromising the quality of care provided by the department to you, the citizens of Milford.

Closing Remarks

To the personnel of the Milford Ambulance Service: Thank you for the dedication, professionalism, and quality, pre-hospital, emergency healthcare that you consistently practice and provide. These attributes make Milford Ambulance Service a distinguished department, of which the citizens of Milford can be proud.

On behalf of Milford Ambulance Service, I would like to thank the Town and my many colleagues for their continued support during 2015. The Service will continue to provide quality, emergency, pre-hospital care while continuing to earn your respect, trust, and support in 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Schelberg – BS, NRP
Director



Photo Credit: Leonard Mannino 2014

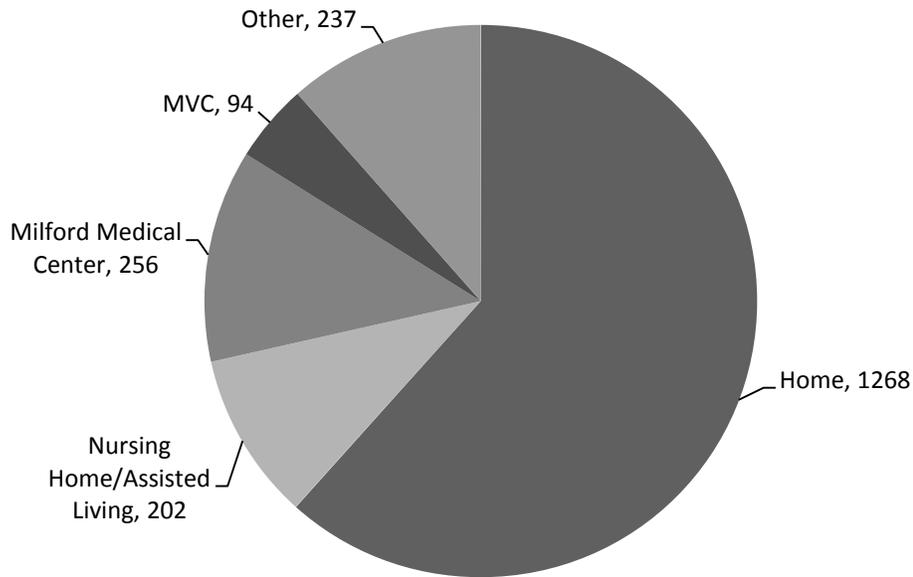
Request for Medical Aid Analysis - 2015

Requests for: Medical aid in Milford: 2,082 Mutual Aid to other communities: 37

Total Patient Contacts: 2,057 Transports: 1,445 No Transports: 597

Narcan administration: 23

Response Location - 2015



Dispatch Reason - 2015

