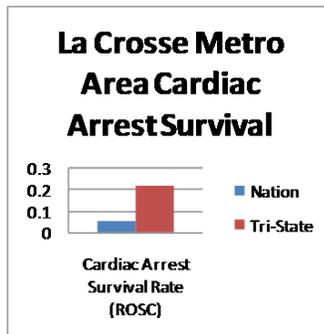


Tri-State Ambulance 2008 Community Report

Clinical Performance and Accomplishments

Cardiac Arrest Survival Rate



According to national data published by the American Heart Association, 5.4 percent of patients who suffer a sudden cardiac arrest in the non-hospital setting survive to be discharged from the hospital(1). **In 2008, the La Crosse metro area covered by Tri-State Ambulance including La Crosse, Onalaska, La Crescent, Holmen, and West Salem achieved an impressive 22 percent survival rate.**

This survive-to-discharge rate is four times better than the national average and is due in large part to an efficient and highly skilled group of paramedics at Tri-State ambulance. Superior medical care by both Gundersen Lutheran and Franciscan Skemp medical centers as well as early CPR and defibrillation by area first responder agencies also contributed to achieving this statistical outcome. Carefully controlling the number of paramedics in the system has enabled the average Tri-State paramedic to treat 4.39 cardiac arrests annually which is more than twice the

national average (2). This high utilization rate helps produce our impressive cardiac arrest survival rate and places our system among the best in the nation.

Advanced Airway Proficiency

One of the most critical skills performed by paramedics is called “endotracheal intubation.” This is an advanced airway technique of placing a breathing tube into the trachea (windpipe) of a patient who is not breathing or is breathing inadequately. Published national studies of paramedic skills across the United States report that the average intubation success rate for paramedics is 75 percent (3), meaning that 75 percent of the time a paramedic attempts to intubate a patient, they are successful. At Tri-State Ambulance, our paramedics achieved a success rate of 81 percent. In those cases where endotracheal intubation wasn’t successful, another type of advanced airway was used allowing Tri-State paramedics to arrive at area medical centers with advanced airways 96 percent of the time.



Two Paramedics on Every Ambulance

Sixty-four percent of the nation’s ambulance services operate with one paramedic on each ambulance (4). At Tri-State Ambulance our commitment is to provide two paramedics on every ambulance so the paramedics can provide advanced treatment to the patient simultaneously and collaborate with one another on the clinical needs of the patient. Tri-State balances having two paramedics on each ambulance with ensuring each paramedic gains enough clinical experience to meet our high standards of quality care. This successful balance helps us achieve a cardiac arrest survival rate that’s four times better than the national average.

Electronic Patient Care Reporting and Tracking

Tri-State Ambulance continues to record and track all patient related data on notebook computers in our ambulances. Electronic information assures

accurate patient records and allows Tri-State Ambulance’s medical director and quality assurance team to provide real-time quality assurance reviews of our paramedics. This system also facilitates accurate retrospective data analysis of all patient care done by our medical professionals. By continuously analyzing patient data, we are able to constantly improve our delivery model.

Innovative “Cardiac Alert” Protocol



Working with both Gundersen Lutheran and Franciscan Skemp, Tri-State Ambulance and our Medical Director continue to utilize our “Cardiac Alert” protocol which allows paramedics in the field to activate the hospital cardiac catheterization teams prior to the patient arriving at the hospital. This early activation significantly reduces the time between when a patient’s heart attack is diagnosed and the time the patient receives definitive intervention at the receiving hospital. With heart attack patients, every minute is crucial to survival and long-term heart health.

Specialty Care Services and Training Level

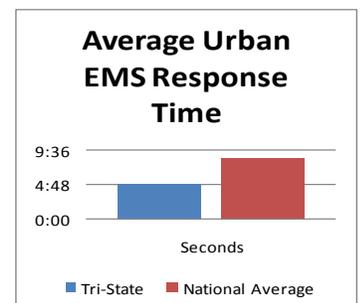
In addition to our high clinical performance and skill utilization, Tri-State Ambulance continues to embrace and implement the latest industry life saving procedures, medication, and services. Tri-State Ambulance, in conjunction with Gundersen Lutheran, offers critical care interfacility transports from smaller hospitals back to Gundersen Lutheran or Franciscan Skemp. This service utilizes critical care trained paramedics and nurses to create a mobile intensive care ambulance. Nearly half of Tri-State’s paramedics are trained to this critical care level; these are the same paramedics who respond to 9-1-1 calls in the La Crosse Area while not on transfers. Because of this high level of certification, La Crosse area residents are cared for by some of the nation’s highest trained critical care paramedics.



Operational Accomplishments

Strategic Deployment of Ambulances

Tri-State Ambulance continues to deploy ambulances strategically throughout the region by using *System Status Management* which “stages” or “posts” ambulances in and around the La Crosse area based on historical and predictive ambulance requests. This type of system is used by the most efficient and highest performing EMS systems in the nation to reduce response times. Because of Tri-State’s system status plan we have average response times of less than 4 minutes, 55 seconds in urban areas and 6 minutes, 3 seconds for La Crosse County responses. These response times are well below the national average of 8 minutes,



32 seconds in urban areas and 9 minutes, 37 seconds in suburban areas of the United States.

Vehicle Area Computer Networks

Tri-State Ambulances all are equipped with *On-Board Mobile Gateway* computers that use high-speed wireless data to communicate with our state-of-the-art dispatch center. These sophisticated on-board computers transmit GPS information to our dispatch center which automatically informs our dispatchers which ambulance to send to the scene of the 9-1-1 call based on geographic distance. In addition, our on-board computers give our paramedics access to medical protocols, medication interaction resources, traffic and weather information. During the August 2007 floods, Tri-State offered mutual aid assistance to the Caledonia Ambulance Service and Houston County Command Post by allowing these agencies to use our on-board computers to monitor rainfall totals and weather radar. Tri-State Ambulance's computer network was the only Internet access available during the flooding.



Special Operations Unit

In the latter part of 2008, Tri-State Ambulance put into service its new Special Operations Unit (SOU). The SOU is a modified four-wheel drive pick-up truck that acts as a fully equipped Advanced Life Support response unit and is operated by our field supervisors. The SOU carries equipment and gear for high angle rescues, remote patient access, GPS ambulance fleet tracking, and other scene support equipment and supplies. Since being placed in service, the SOU has been on numerous rescue calls and at least 5 first-in cardiac arrest responses.



Emergency Medical Dispatch

With the assistance of Tri-State Ambulance, the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Communications Center continues to provide emergency medical dispatch (EMD) services to anyone who calls 911 in La Crosse County. EMD is an internationally approved, locally authorized protocol for providing pre-arrival medical instructions to callers for emergency medical services. The protocol also teaches certified emergency medical dispatchers how to determine the proper mode the ambulance should respond based upon the patient's medical condition. These two parts of EMD help assure that the patient receives medical treatment as soon as the call is placed for an ambulance, and also keeps the community and other drivers safe by appropriately reducing the occurrence of ambulances responding with lights and sirens to non-emergency calls.

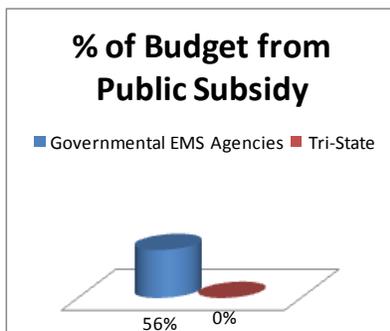
New South La Crosse and Onalaska Stations

Tri-State Ambulance has four ambulance stations throughout the Metro La Crosse area and one in Viroqua, WI. In the late half of 2007, Tri-State Ambulance moved into a newly dedicated ambulance station on South 26th Street in the Town of Shelby. In late 2008 and early 2009, Tri-State Ambulance moved into a second new station location off of Theatre Road and Lester Avenue near the Valley View Mall shopping center. These two strategic locations enable Tri-State crews to decrease response times by being closer to populated and busy parts of our service area.



Fiscal Accomplishments

No Taxpayer Subsidy



As a non-profit agency, Tri-State Ambulance provides dual paramedic, advanced life support service with average urban response time of 4 minutes, 55 seconds with **ZERO taxpayer subsidies**. Across America, 64 percent of governmental EMS agency budgets are funded by taxpayers (5). In La Crosse, ours is not and we're able to achieve economic efficiency by flexibly staffing ambulances using 8, 12, and 24 hours shifts to match call volumes. We also seamlessly provide ambulance service across our diverse service area without regard to geopolitical boundaries. An ambulance can respond to calls in La Crosse, La Crescent, Holmen, Nodine, Onalaska, West Salem, Genoa, Coon Valley, and Viroqua in the same day very quickly. This regional delivery system creates significant economic efficiency and helps maintain clinical proficiency by giving our paramedics a high call volume throughout the region.

Community Service Accomplishments

Community-based Flu Vaccines

As part of an innovative program with Gundersen Lutheran, specially trained Tri-State Ambulance paramedics administered 73 flu and pneumonia vaccines in 2008 in patient's homes or other community-based settings to people who ordinarily could not visit one of the clinic-based vaccine sites.



Donated Community Service Responses

In 2008, Tri-State Ambulance donated services to 500 requests from local agencies and patients. This included 311 assistance calls where patients were assisted but not injured, 131 public event standbys or safety seminars, 57 standbys at area structure fires, and 24 law enforcement requests for S.W.A.T. standbys.

In addition, during 2008, Tri-State Ambulance donated over 300 hours of ambulance and bike medic team standby service to events such as Oktoberfest, Riverfest, the 3rd Street Aid Station, Applefest, the American



Heart Association's Heart Walk, numerous YMCA marathons and triathlons, and frequent community gatherings. These events amounted to greater than \$120,000 worth of services donated to our local community.

United Way

Tri-State Ambulance ran its first ever United Way Campaign as a Pacesetter for 2007. This tradition continues and has grown and pledges are up for 2009. Tri-State Ambulance is proud to be able to contribute to the United Way. Total 2008 Contributions - \$2,121.00 | 2009 Estimate - \$2,952.00



Contact Information

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Tri-State Ambulance is a wholly owned subsidiary of Gundersen Lutheran

References

1. American Heart Association; Circulation. 2005; 112: Iv-1—IV-5
2. ACAD EMERG MED May 2006, Vol. 13, No. 5, Suppl.1
3. Wang HE, Yearly DM. "Out-of-hospital endotracheal intubation where are we?" Ann Emerg Med 2006; 47:532-41
4. Jour Emerg Med Svcs Feb 2007, 200 City Survey