EMS Agency of the Year/Delaware County EMS

Delaware County EMS is committed to the 200,000 residents they serve each day. Delaware EMS has implemented numerous evidenced-based practices that ensure citizens receive the highest quality out-of-hospital care.

Delaware County EMS has completed rigorous accreditation processes; its first was in 2012 by the Commission on the Accreditation of Ambulance Services. During its most recent review, the agency was awarded full accreditation through 2022. Only 192 other agencies across the U.S. have met these standards. Since 2014, Delaware County EMS has been recognized by the American Heart Association Mission: Lifeline Program for implementing objective measures to improve cardiac care.

Delaware County EMS’ utilization of the EMS Survey Team to gather data on patients’ experiences with their crews has helped them focus on delivering quality medical care and high-quality patient experiences. They achieved a 95% patient satisfaction and continue to strive to meet the needs of their growing community. In 2019, they added Medic 11 which offers around-the-clock service, resulting in a decrease of response times, and a decrease in mutual-aid requests.

The medical directorship of both Dr. Ashish Panchal and Dr. Brooke Moungey has proven to be beneficial for on-duty providers. Both have extensive experience in EMS and EMS education, driving evidence-based practice into the protocols used by the providers in which there is clear guidance and autonomy in managing patients independently. The use of a call service for on-duty providers allows the doctors to give expert advice when providers are facing challenging cases, while giving the doctors the opportunity to stay involved with patient care.

Delaware County EMS is fortunate enough to be part of the first responder therapy dog program for Delaware County. Coco, a 2-year-old Catahoula Leopard dog, visits many fire, EMS, and police departments in the county. She is also on the County Peer Support Team with her handler Karla Jacobs.

Delaware County EMS possesses a passion that is a reflection of their commitment to excellence and their dedication to improving the level of care for citizens in their community.
Captain Matthew Parrish leads the Columbus Division of Fire’s outreach programs where he assists individuals with substance use disorder, cardiac disease, and health resource inequities. His peers say he epitomizes the definition of a public servant, working hard to bring services to citizens, offering a nontraditional response to help the most vulnerable patients.

Captain Parrish leads the Rapid Response Emergency Addiction Crisis Team (RREACT), a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency team that connects high-risk opioid users with medical and social services professionals that offers follow-up within 48-72 hours after an overdose event. RREACT received 1,052 referrals from January through October 2019, with most patients having received three or more services. A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) grant was recently awarded to expand the program countywide.

He also leads the Specialized Program Assessing Resource Connectivity (SPARC) Team. These are EMS responders who provide assessment, treatment, and transport for patients with acute or chronic medical needs. Many of the patients are elderly, isolated, homeless, and often misuse drugs. Over 600 individuals recently received over 1,000 referrals for service from EMS crews and other agencies.

His leadership has led to the department’s partnership with the Columbus Division of Police (CPD) which equip officers who are responding to overdose and cardiac arrest calls with Narcan® and AEDs. Currently, 66 patrol cruisers have AEDs with the goal of expanding to 230 cruisers. Another goal is to outfit every CPD officer with AED use and compression only CPR training that has the potential to save 300 lives annually. Captain Parrish is an excellent representation of true dedication to raise the level of out-of-hospital care for the community.
Dr. Larrimore is described by her peers as an incredible asset to the Ohio State University’s Emergency Department, where she serves as assistant professor. As medical director for the Whitehall Division of Fire, the Newark Division of Fire and EMS, MedFlight and assistant medical director for Clinton Township Fire, she is known to go above and beyond her duties as an active participant in the education and training of out-of-hospital emergency medical care providers.

She is an active participant in the Air Medical Transport Committee of the National Association of EMS Physicians and has been appointed to committees of the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians and the state of Ohio EMS. Dr. Larrimore serves on the Mobile Stroke Treatment Unit Clinical Operation Committee and the Columbus Division of Fire Protocol Committee, all of which have positively impacted the out-of-hospital care of EMS patients. Dr. Larrimore has had several articles published in peer and non-peer reviewed journals, and developed a detailed curriculum for OSU medical residents that further develops the education, training, and practice of EMS providers in Central Ohio.

As a medical director, she participated in the development of an EMS simulation and “Hands Off” program designed to improve patient care that ensures her EMS teams have the knowledge and skills to handle any situation with high quality care and professionalism.

Dr. Larrimore’s leadership has significantly contributed to the excellence in EMS. She demonstrates a clear commitment to quality improvement, customer service, and the advancement of EMS in Ohio.
Dr. Panchal is described by his peers at The Ohio State University as the epitome of excellence. He is an associate professor and EMS fellowship director at the Department of Emergency Medicine in the College of Medicine and a clinical associate professor in the Division of Epidemiology at the College of Public Health. He also serves as the Research and Fellowship Director for the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians.

Dr. Panchal demonstrates the essential hallmarks of service to the EMS community through his continuous involvement in education and training of EMS providers at the local, state, and national levels. His work includes protocol development, EMS oversight, and training that prepares the providers to handle all emergency scenarios.

As an accomplished researcher, he has improved out-of-hospital resuscitation, which increases the survival of patients who have suffered cardiac arrest. He is committed to understanding the best ways to improve performance of bystander CPR, and the techniques needed to improve overall patient outcomes. Dr. Panchal has published 62 articles focusing on airway management, EMS workforces, and the science of resuscitation since 2013. As a recognized expert, he has served on national level expert panels and lead guideline writing groups, including the Adult Cardiac Arrest Writing Group.

Dr. Panchal's contributions to EMS education have made a valuable and lasting impact on the EMS community by improving overall patient care in Ohio.
Dr. Werman has dedicated over 40 years to emergency medical care. He came to The Ohio State University for his emergency medicine residency in 1981, where he has built incredible collaborations with leaders in the field of EMS, and contributed numerous publications to the areas of resuscitation, patient transport, trauma, and EMS practices. His articles have been published in the Journal of Emergency Medical Services, Trauma Reports and EMS World, among others. Dr. Werman served as a member of the Ohio Trauma Committee of the State Board of Emergency Medical, Fire, and Transportation Services for 21 years.

Dr. Werman’s deep knowledge and engaging personality make him a highly effective teacher of EMS providers and medical students. He is described by students as being a wise and insightful teacher, and by coworkers as being extremely compassionate in caring for his patients. Dr. Werman’s charisma and passion have had a positive impact on EMS through his lifetime of leadership.

His passion for EMS, especially in the area of air medical transport, has allowed him to move the practice of EMS forward, through his teaching and training in the field. As medical director for both Medflight and SKYMED Helicopter Consortium, his sound instruction allowed his crews to transport critically ill patients in every imaginable scenario, giving them vital skills to provide the highest quality of care.

Dr. Werman has left a legacy for other EMS professionals to build upon which reflects his dedication to out-of-hospital care, trauma, and his community.
On November 5, 2019, Anna Rescue Squad responded to the Plastipak Company in Jackson Center, Ohio where they found 35-year-old Ricky Joseph in cardiac arrest. Mr. Joseph was working on a 480-volt conveyor belt. He accidentally grabbed a piece of machinery, and was subsequently electrocuted. The plant emergency response team (ERT), along with the plant nurse, immediately administered CPR and utilized their AED, where Mr. Joseph regained a pulse after a second defibrillation was administered.

Anna Rescue Squad arrived on scene, performed a rapid assessment of the patient, continued advanced life support, and administered fluids. Early notification was given to the Lima Memorial Health System, a level III trauma center. Upon the squad’s arrival, the patient was further stabilized in the emergency room by the trauma team. Mr. Joseph spent four days in ICU, was discharged, and received outpatient care. Mr. Joseph made a full recovery.

The individuals involved in Mr. Joseph’s care were all commended for their actions that day. Immediate high-quality CPR, the four strategically placed AED units at Plastipak, grab-and-go first aid kits, emergency response training and integrated advanced life support and post arrest care were key factors in the chain of survival that helped save Mr. Joseph.
On May 6, 2019, Akron Fire and EMS Department was dispatched to a car crash involving a pedestrian. They arrived on the scene and found pedestrian David Moore who had been struck by two vehicles. The patient suffered severe trauma with an amputation to his right lower leg and an open fracture to his left tibia. Mr. Moore’s blood pressure continued to fall and he experienced respiratory failure.

Medics worked quickly to apply a tourniquet to his leg, provide respirator support, package the patient, administer fluids, and prepare him for transport to Cleveland Akron General, a level I trauma center. They managed to accomplish this within 7 minutes of arriving on scene. Mr. Moore’s injuries required surgery to both legs and he was subsequently discharged to an impatient rehabilitation facility.

The prompt assessment, treatment, intervention, teamwork, and overall level of care provided by Akron Fire Department and EMS saved Mr. Moore’s life that day.
On April 22, 2019, the City of Hamilton Fire Department and EMS was dispatched to a motor-vehicle crash involving a motorcycle. Witnesses reported that the motorcycle operator, Anthony Hensley, was suffering from a compound fracture. MedFlight was put on standby due to the nature of his injury.

Upon arrival, the EMS crew found the patient had taken his own belt and improvised a tourniquet to stop the bleeding from his leg. Crew members applied a commercial tourniquet and placed his leg in a vacuum splint to prevent total amputation.

En route to the hospital, an IV was established, Ketamine® was administered and his airway secured. Pre-notification was made to Fort Hamilton Hospital.

This is a perfect example of how pre-arrival instructions from dispatch, teamwork, and cooperation between providers can ensure delivery of the vital care needed to make a life-saving difference.

Because of the early notification of aeromedical transport, excellent care provided by the EMS crew, and the patient care provided by the MedFlight crew during rapid transport to the emergency department Mr. Hensley is able to lead a normal life today.
On Christmas Eve 2019, Union Fire Department responded to a call involving 69-year-old Berry Chalmers, who developed cardiac arrest after choking while eating at a holiday dinner with over 30 members of his family.

Union Police Officer Eric Langenkamp arrived on the scene where he quickly and effectively took over CPR from the family. The EMS crew arrived, and immediately provided Advance Cardiac Life Support to Mr. Chalmers where his vital signs improved and he began to breathe on his own. He was transported to Grandview Medical Center Emergency Department.

Under very stressful circumstances, the immediate action of family members, the swift life-saving actions of Officer Langenkamp, the outstanding care provided by the Union Fire Department and the post-resuscitation care provided by Grandview Medical Center Emergency Department saved Mr. Chalmers. He recovered and was discharged from the hospital.
On November 3, 2019, 51-year-old Jed Cavadas and his 9-year-old son, Troy, were in the front yard where Mr. Cavadas was using kerosene to burn a tree stump. As he poured the kerosene, the container exploded, spraying kerosene on himself and Troy, causing their clothing to catch fire.

Troy remembered the fire safety lessons he was taught a week prior at Troy’s school by Columbia Township Volunteer Firefighter Brett Wilson. Troy remained calm, dropped to the ground, and rolled while removing his clothes which extinguished the fire. Troy instructed his father to do the same, however, Mr. Cavadas could not remove his pants. Troy retrieved a water hose and put out the fire on his dad.

Neighbors came to the scene, including a former paramedic and a doctor to comfort both father and son until EMS arrived.

Upon arrival, the Columbia Township Fire crew found Troy suffering from second and third-degree burns on his lower legs, and Mr. Cavadas with third-degree burns on his legs, hand, and stomach. Troy was transported to Metro Health Medical Center by ambulance, and his father Jed was transported by Metro Life Flight where they both underwent skin graft surgeries and physical therapy as a part of their recovery.

Because of the quick response of the Columbia Township Fire Department and the smart actions of 9-year-old Troy, who implemented the fire lessons he learned from firefighter Wilson, they were both saved. Troy is a hero. His dad says he owes his life to his son’s levelheaded actions. They both owe their lives to another hero, one who passed away before knowing the profound impact he had on their lives.

Tragically, firefighter Brett Wilson passed away unexpectedly while rendering aid at the scene of a car crash one week after providing the fire safety lessons for Troy and his classmates. Jed and Troy Cavadas have made a full recovery and are eternally grateful for Firefighter Wilson.
EMS STAR/East Wayne Fire District

On December 22, 2019, East Wayne Fire District was dispatched with mutual aid from Kidron Fire Department to the scene involving two children and an adult who fell into an icy pond. Firefighter and Paramedic Ryan Sprunger was nearby and arrived first on scene followed shortly by East Wayne Fire Chief Kyle Nussbaum arrived soon after. An attempt to throw a rope to the victims was unsuccessful, and it became clear that hypothermia and fatigue were rapidly setting in. Lieutenant Sprunger made the heroic decision to don the small life vest that was available, enter the water, and rescue the victims.

Additional rescue crews with ice rescue gear arrived and quickly took over the search and rescue. The first child, Landon Hodge, age 6, and Todd Farris, age 56 and the children’s grandfather, were safely brought to shore. Mr. Farris informed rescuers that Landon’s younger brother, Jenson, age 4, was still underwater. Lieutenant Sprunger, ignoring hypothermia, removed Jenson from the icy water and resuscitation efforts were immediately begun. Jenson was airlifted to Akron Children’s Hospital where, sadly, he succumbed to his injuries two days later. Landon and his grandfather were transported to Aultman Orrville Emergency Department where they were treated and released.

After the tragic loss of Jenson, Lieutenant Sprunger wanted a way to honor Jenson’s memory by help to save others from drowning. He created a lifesaving device, a 75-foot rope, that allows a rescuer to pull a victim from the water without having to enter the water. The first “Jenson Rope” was installed at the pond where they had fallen into the icy waters. The Jenson Rope has now been installed at almost 100 ponds and lakes in memory of Jenson.

Everyone involved in the care of this family are to be commended for their actions that day. From the initial 911 call, to the clear communication and the swift, high-quality care and rapid transport. This serves as an example of how teamwork and cooperation with local providers can deliver the vital care needed to make a life-saving difference.
On June 4, 2019, the Ross Township Fire Department was dispatched to a motor-vehicle crash with entrapment. Upon arrival the EMS team found a sedan that had been struck by a semi-truck. After triaging all victims EMS personnel performed a quick triage and located the most critically injured patient, 15-year-old Lyla Brinck, laying unresponsive in the backseat of the sedan. What made an already stressful situation even more intense was that the patient was the daughter of one of the paramedic’s good friends.

Immediately after a cervical collar was placed on the patient, she became apneic and pulseless. She was quickly extricated and CPR with advanced cardiac life support care was initiated. After approximately one minute the patient regained a pulse for ten minutes but was lost again until her blood pressure was stabilized.

Flight nurses from Miami Valley Care Flight met the EMS team at the landing zone where the patient’s airway was secured and she was flown to the University of Cincinnati, a level I trauma center.

Lyla suffered multiple fractures involving her skull, ribs, and clavicle. She also suffered internal bleeding and spent two months in the hospital where she faced a long recovery and rehabilitation. Once released, she and her family were able to visit the Ross Township Fire Station to personally thank the firefighters and EMS personnel who saved her life.

Tragically, EMS Star of Life recipient, Brandon Sparks, a firefighter and EMT with Ross Township Fire Department, passed away in December 2021 from a motorcycle accident. He was loved by his firefighter family and will be missed tremendously.
On October 10, 2019, MedFlight 4, Smith Ambulance Service, and Uhrichsville Fire Department were dispatched to the scene of a woman kicked twice in the head by a horse. Upon arrival they found 51-year-old Cara Kohler sitting in an upright position, she was confused, and had sustained a with a large open skull injury. There was severe swelling to her face, and she was having trouble breathing.

Oxygen was administered via a bag-valve-mask device and the patient’s neck was stabilized with a C-collar once MedFlight arrived. Despite ventilation with a bag-valve-mask, the patient’s condition began to deteriorate. Attempts were made to intubate the patient, but due to the swelling from her injuries, they were unsuccessful.

An emergency attempt to ventilate her after performing a needle cricothyrotomy also proved unsuccessful. The MedFlight crew performed then preformed a surgical cricothyrotomy to secure her airway in order to provide the oxygen she so desperately needed.

The exceptional and collaborative out-of-hospital care provided by MedFlight 4, Smith Ambulance Service, and Uhrichsville Fire Department to their critically injured trauma patient made the difference between life and death. The advanced airway maneuvers performed by EMS personnel saved Ms. Kohler’s life and she was able to make a full recovery.
On June 25, 2019, the Urbana Fire Division was dispatched to a residence on a report of a pediatric drowning. Upon arrival, they found 1-year-old, Elizabeth Sowers limp in her mother’s arms and not breathing. She had been submerged in a livestock watering trough for an estimated two to three minutes prior to being pulled from the water by her mother.

Medics quickly took over and administered CPR as additional personnel arrived on the scene. They immediately recognized the need for aeromedical transport and requested CareFlight to respond. Advanced life-saving efforts continued, including clearing her airway, bag-valve-mask ventilation, and intubation.

The child was transferred to CareFlight and flown to Dayton Children’s Hospital where she made a full recovery and was discharged with no lasting effects.

As a result of rapid intervention by skilled medical professionals, baby Elizabeth lived to see her next birthday and many more to come.
On January 20, 2019, Wooster City Fire Department was dispatched to a residence on a report of 14-year-old, Ethan Rutherford, in cardiac arrest after helping his father carry a snowblower to the basement.

The department responded with a squad and battalion equipped with a snowplow due to 6-9 inches of snowfall. The Wooster City Road Department also responded by clearing the roads to expedite EMS’ travel to the scene. Upon arrival, Wooster EMS took over CPR care from Ethan’s father. Ethan was defibrillated immediately and high-quality CPR, airway management, and medications were administered. After being defibrillated twice more on the scene, Ethan regained a pulse.

Ethan was transported to Wooster Community Hospital where care was continued, and it was determined that he needed transport to Akron Children’s Hospital for specialized care. Due to the inclement weather the children’s hospital could not send air or ground transport. Wooster City Fire Department decided to transport the patient with the help of the Wooster City Road Department and the Ohio Department of Transportation. Ethan was successfully transported to the children’s hospital to receive the specialized care that he needed.

Because of the fast, advanced, and efficient out-of-hospital care provided for Ethan by his father and the Wooster City Fire Department, and in spite of the weather challenges, Ethan was able to make a full recovery.