

EMS Abstract:

On June 4, 1987 Dr. Steven Hughes, Dr. Stephen Morgan, and Dr. Elaine Peterson met with Beverly Finley, Director, Health Services Agency. The purpose of that meeting was to explore the possibility of having the Center for Public Policy Studies at California State University, Stanislaus conduct a study of the Emergency Medical Services System in Stanislaus County.

A great deal of work has already been accomplished in this area. In 1995 the EMS Design 2000 project was developed in response to a State directive that all EMS agencies update their plans to conform to revised guidelines.

Coordinated by the Mountain-Valley EMS Agency, EMS 2000 has made significant progress in addressing the transformation of emergency services from a fee-for-service model to a managed care system. However, much work remains to be done in this area. In addition, the serious floods of the past winter have raised questions about the potential for enhanced coordination between EMS and Disaster Response programs.

On August 5 Director Finley hosted a meeting at the Stanislaus Medical Center that allowed the CSU Stanislaus research team to hear directly from various EMS providers including fire and medical representatives, Fred Hawkins of AMR, Steve Andriese and members of his staff from Mountain Valley EMS, and Paul Caruso from the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors.

As a result of those meetings, a review of EMS 2000, and additional correspondence, we have compiled a series of questions for consideration. Most address one of two themes: coordination and allocation of resources.

Coordination

There seems to be strong interest in coordinating the dispatch process. At this point the system appears to be fragmented between as many as seven points of contact. There is also concern for coordinating the efforts of the

various public entities including the County, cities, and special districts.

In addition, there seems to be a need for better coordination between the public and private sector elements. Finally, as noted above, the recent major flooding in the area has sparked an interest in coordinating the efforts of the EMS and Disaster Response systems.

Allocation of Resources

The second important theme is allocation of resources. Can coordination of effort help to reduce costs? Can dispatch be modified to more closely match the requirements of an incident to the equipment and labor response? What is the impact of managed care on the system? What is the impact of uninsured or underinsured patients?

Research team:

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