



Mobile Integrated Health Program

Executive summary

The Anchorage Fire Department Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) program is an innovative health care delivery model designed to improve patient outcomes by leveraging the mobility of EMS and the enhanced skillsets of EMS clinicians teamed with other health care specialists. The goal is to provide cost-effective, patient-centered care to help individuals access the appropriate level of care while reducing unnecessary emergency department visits. AFD responds to thousands of medical calls per year that would be better served outside of ambulance transport to an emergency department. AFD is in a unique situation to be able to offer alternative, cost effective, and innovative care within the community. MIH is a collaborative approach involving community partners, aimed at assisting individuals who face obstacles in accessing appropriate care and resources tailored to their specific needs. Our proposal for an MIH program aimed at better meeting the needs of the community will include a Mobile Crisis Team, a Community Outreach Referral & Education (CORE) team, and an Advanced Provider Response as outlined below.

Mobile Crisis Team

Provides a non-law enforcement response to behavioral health crises. A team of a Mental Health Clinician and an EMT/Paramedic respond to calls through 911 or 311. AFD ran a pilot program which made one team on duty 24 hours a day three days a week. The pilot demonstrated community need for this team 24 hours a day. With full staffing the team can be 24/7 and with a municipal ordinance update this team is expected to be a Medicaid billable service (1115 Waiver). To expand to a 24-hour model, this would require an additional 4 mental health clinicians.

Community Outreach Referral & Education (CORE)

The re-imagined CORE team will provide multiple services to include assertive community outreach and follow up for high utilizers of the emergency response system to increase access to primary and preventative health care, assist with medication management, all while reducing hospital readmission. When fully implemented the service could include identifying opiate OD medication-assisted therapy and follow up, “elders-in-home” for mitigation of fall risk, vulnerable adult identification and reporting; in addition to other programs to enhance community health and unburden hospitals.

This referral-based team will consist of a Community Paramedic (CP) and a Clinician with a focus on social work. CORE will work with AFD responders and the hospitals to help identify those in need. The CP is a paramedic with advanced training that will bring medical and operational knowledge to each patient/client with the goal to increase access to the healthcare system to those who are currently challenged to do so in a more appropriate manner. The Clinician brings knowledge of community resources, networking, and clinical intervention.

Advanced Provider Response

To address the increase in lower acuity patients using the 911 response system, an Advanced Provider (NP or PA) will respond in the community to offer patient treatment and release, linkage with community resources as needed, and provide telehealth triage or treatment. This will be a referral-based model working with our dispatch center and AFD responding crews identifying those who would be best served by an Advanced Provider meeting patients in their location to treat. This provider will help divert individuals away from unnecessary transports to the emergency departments. This is expected to be a billable service.

Summary

With support from the city administration and the assembly, the Anchorage Fire Department is poised to provide the most vulnerable and at-risk individuals in our community with the right resources that will help improve individual and community health and wellness.