

DISTRICT 16 – MONROE & LIVINGSTONE COUNTIES

EAST ROCHESTER VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS, Monroe County, merged in July with commercial provider Rural/Metro Corp. Local media report a combination of circumstances – dwindling volunteers, low call volume, response rate as low as 56% and a 2010 audit by the NYS Comptroller's Office that faulted the co-terminus town/village for treating the independent organization as a municipal department and improperly covering its revenue shortfalls. Under the new arrangement, ERVAC's 12 employees will work for Rural/Metro receiving additional training, bringing service to the EMT-P level, and pay raises while still wearing their volunteer REVAC uniforms. The two East Rochester ambulances will carry both organizations' names and Rural/Metro will rent the formerly independent corps' space in a municipal building on West Ivy Street. Since the switch, the response rate has been at 100%. Rural/Metro Corp. filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in August giving the company protection from creditors while it reorganizes.

GATES VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE SERVICE and SPENCERPORT VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE, Monroe County, announced merger plans to be completed in the first half of 2014. Gates' 115 volunteers and 65 career staff operate 5 ALS ambulances and 2 1st responder vehicles serving 30,000 residents in the Town of Gates handling about 6,000 calls annually from 2 stations. Spencerport's 13 volunteers and 26 employees operate 2 ALS ambulances and 2 1st responder vehicles serving 19,000 residents in the Village of Spencerport, Town of Ogden and southern part of the Town of Parma handling about 1,600 calls a year from 1 station. Spencerport will transfer all assets, liabilities and their service response area to Gates. A press release is online at http://spencerportambulance.org/images/Press_Release_-_Gates_VAS_and_Spencerport_Volunteer_Ambulance_01-07-2014_v6.doc

GREECE VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS, Monroe County, donated another of its used ambulances in 2013 to Haiti where it will continue in a second life covering a 25 mile stretch of Highway 1 out of Port Au Prince. Pre hospital care in the country is very limited and in most instances if there is some sort of emergency, including MCIs, patients are put in the back of a pickup or on the back seat of a motorcycle by bystanders and sent to the nearest hospital. Previous ambulances donations from Greece VAC to the Caribbean area include: February 1999 to Antigua, June 2008 to Haiti and January 2010 to Haiti. Greece VAC's newest ambulance is a Chevy G-3500/Braun Express Type III.

MONROE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES STUDY

Monroe County released a 112 page report in 2013 on the state of EMS in the county which included a number of recommendations for change. The report was done by Fitch & Associates, LLC a well know EMS consultant service based in Missouri. Funding for the \$140,000 project was provided through a series of 5 grants.

The study covered areas outside of the City of Rochester which are served by career and volunteer agencies and independent VACs and fire based agencies. The city of Rochester is covered by a performance based contract with commercial provider Rural/Metro.

Fitch was asked to assess the capabilities of all agencies/components needed to deliver care and to evaluate their contributions as part of a system. System participants and stakeholders were interviewed, data was gathered and analyzed and deployment plans were developed.

Findings were as follows:

- Governance of EMS in Monroe County is very weak
- EMS in Monroe County does not operate as a system
- The closest ambulance is often prohibited from responding
- Emergency medical care is not consistent
- Slow response times occur throughout the system
- Reliable data is lacking
- Medical Directors do not track basic clinical performance
- Appropriate interface with hospital emergency departments is lacking
- Monroe County is more urban than people think
- Fewer ambulances can achieve performance metrics

Recommended options for change were:

- Option Zero: Retain the existing emergency medical system

- Option One: Staged steps toward higher performance
- Option Two: Implement the “M-xR” Model using existing agencies
- Option Three: Implement the “M-xR” Model using a contract agency

Results of the report were widely disseminated by local media. The response of the County’s Director of Public Safety was quoted as “We’re not doing a good job at how we’re capturing data, so that’s one of the first things I’m going to take away from this is we need to do a better job at that. Nothing is going to happen based on this study other than a good discussion about this study and how we can get good data going forward so we can make good decisions. So that’s really what we found out.” Local EMS agencies also took strong exception to the accuracy of data on which the findings were based.

Any number of other counties in the state, including the 5 that make up New York City, can point to one or more findings listed above and say that the same situation exists in their county. The full report is online at http://www.mcvfa.com/f/Monroe_County_EMS_Report.pdf