

Ambulance Strike Team Saves the Day.

"Local EMS Ambulance service providers have been instrumental in moving COVID-19 patients from hospital to hospital over the course of the last 9 months in the State of California. By using the existing interfacility transport systems and the mutual aid system when necessary, California has been successful at moving thousands of patients."

Kelly Coleman, Manager, Plans and Training Unit, Disaster Medical Services Division
EMS Authority

Public Health Problem (Issue)

On March 4, 2020, 40 Days after the first reported case of COVID-19, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency. As of that date, there were three COVID-19 deaths and fifty-five confirmed cases. As of day 273, there have been 17,311 deaths and 892,810 confirmed cases attributed to the pandemic in California. When Imperial County EMS Agency had an urgent need to ease hospital surge and evacuate 600 patients to hospitals up to 100 miles away for COVID-19 treatment, these transports were performed by the ground ambulance providers listed in the transportation component of their EMS Plan as part of ambulance strike teams.

Taking Action (Intervention)

EMSA is tasked with oversight of the planning, implementation, and evaluation of local emergency medical services agency's systems. This includes the review of local transportation plans for ground and air ambulance providers, and oversight of 308 ambulance zones/areas. Per Health and Safety Code, Sections 1797.103 and 1797.107, each local emergency medical services agency submits an EMS Plan that must include a transportation component addressing emergency transportation capabilities with statistics and their emergency ground and air ambulance provider companies.

Impact

Having systems in place before a disaster strikes is crucial to the ability to respond quickly and effectively, and ground ambulance providers, as part of ambulance strike teams, are a critical component of the state's ability to respond to disasters. Ambulance strike teams are comprised of EMS personnel that provide out-of-hospital emergency medical care, evacuation, and transportation services. By utilizing these teams, the EMS system that is being assisted, has more ambulances to take the COVID-19 patients from overcrowded hospitals to hospitals that have the capacity to treat them in a timely manner. COVID-19 patients receiving timely treatment may assist in lowering the death rate from this pandemic.

Footnotes

N/A

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Healthy People Objective
Rapid Prehospital Emergency Care (EMS)

PHHS Block Grant Funding
100% - Total source of funding

