

Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System



Strategic Plan

Adopted April 6, 2021

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Introduction

The current level of emergency medical services provided to the people who live in and visit Delaware County is considered by many to be the best in Ohio. However, there is a rare opportunity to take these services to an even higher level and better position them to implement cutting-edge technology and best practices at a reduced cost to each service provider. This will be accomplished through regional collaboration, resource pooling and shared services.

Background

In 1966, the National Institute of Medicine (IOM) published a document that gave rise to the first national effort to build an EMS system, "Accidental Death and Disability: The Neglected Disease of Modern Society."

In 1972, Delaware County, the city of Delaware and Liberty Township formed a partnership to provide a countywide EMS service. Many options were looked at in 1972 including a hospital-based EMS program. Prior to 1972, service was provided by the city of Delaware and Liberty Township for their respective jurisdictions and by funeral directors throughout the remainder of Delaware County. Delaware County assumed the responsibility from the funeral directors through the Sheriff's Department and enacted a \$0.05 sales tax to fund the program. The city of Delaware and Liberty Township continued to provide services to their respective jurisdictions and were reimbursed from the \$0.05 sales tax. In April of 1978 the Delaware County Emergency Medical Service Department was formed. The Sheriff's Office demands for service exceeded the ability to manage both the medical and law enforcement demand.

Today, these departments have grown to meet the demands of service. It is noted that since the implementation of this program in 1972, additional paramedic transport units have been added by townships fire departments in the southern end of Delaware County. Additionally, the city's of Columbus, Dublin and Westerville have annexed into Delaware County and provide services within their respective jurisdictions. Together the service providers employ over 300 paramedics, operate 23 paramedic transport units and respond to over 10,000 calls annually.

The Mission Statement

The purpose of the Mission Statement is to answer the question "Why do we exist as an organization?" The mission of the Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System is:

To ensure that high quality, prompt and coordinated emergency medical services are provided to the residents throughout Delaware County.

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The Vision Statement

In addition to knowing who we are and understanding our beliefs, all successful organizations need to define where they expect to be in the future. After having established the organization's Mission, the next step was to establish a new vision of what the Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System should be in the future. Vision statements are built upon the framework of the Mission Statement. Vision Statements provide targets of excellence that the organization will strive toward and provide a basis for their goals and objectives. Our vision will be met by continuing to understand our community needs and expectations and establishing goals and objectives to meet these needs and expectations. Our vision is:

The Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System will develop a high-performance emergency medical system throughout Delaware County involving all EMS providers utilizing technology, training, purchasing/central supply and focusing on an economy of scale.

S.W.O.T. Analysis

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis is designed to have the Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System candidly identify their positive and less-than-desirable attributes. The Board Members of the Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System participated in this analysis and recognized its strengths and weaknesses, as well as the possible opportunities and potential threats.

Strengths

It is important for any organization to identify their strengths in order to assure that they are capable of providing the services requested by customers and to ensure that strengths are consistent with the issues facing the organization. Often, identification of organizational strengths leads to the channeling of efforts toward primary community needs that match those strengths. Programs that do not match organizational strengths or the primary function of the organization should be seriously reviewed to evaluate the rate of return on precious staff time. Through a consensus process, the Pre-Hospital Care Board identified the following strengths:

1. Structure-one team
2. Functioning committees
 - a. Unified Protocol-use to navigate committees and assist with prioritizing
 - b. Regional Collaboration
 - c. County-Wide EMS Standards
 - d. Technology and Innovation
3. Medical Direction-Board of MD's and Training Coordinators

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4. Variety of EMS Providers/Instructors/Background/Experience-use to work together
5. Common Dispatch
6. In event of an emergency, all work together
7. Common medical protocol is on the horizon
8. Great Personnel
9. Strong work ethic
10. Great customer equipment
11. Close working relationship with Public/Private Agencies
12. Up-to-date Equipment
13. Common Vision/Mission

Weakness

Performance or lack of performance within an organization depends greatly on the identification of weaknesses and how they are confronted. While it is not unusual for these issues to be at the heart of the organization's overall problems, it is unusual for organizations to be able to identify and deal with these issues effectively on their own.

For any organization to either begin or to continue to move progressively forward, it must not only be able to identify its strengths, but also those areas where it functions poorly or not at all. These areas of needed enhancements are not the same as threats to be identified later in this document, but rather those day-to-day issues and concerns that may slow or inhibit progress. The following items were identified by the Pre-Hospital Care Board as our weaknesses:

1. Low productivity of committees- second to COVID
2. Misunderstanding of purpose-creating dysfunction
3. Variety of EMS providers/Instructors/Background/Experience-can cause conflict of what is priority
4. In ability to put past in the past
5. Willingness to allow change
6. Communication
7. Keeping everyone updated on other agency activities
8. Future Funding Concerns
9. Will residents always say yes to levies?
10. Feeling of losing local control
11. What we don't know – Service gaps

Opportunities

The opportunities for an organization depend on the identification of strengths and weaknesses and how they can be enhanced. The focus of opportunities is not solely on existing service, but on expanding and developing new possibilities both inside and

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beyond the traditional service area. Many opportunities exist for the Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System. The Pre-Hospital Care Board identified the following opportunities:

1. Interoperability- creates a team with same template of care/work regardless of where and who responds/works on project.
2. Cost Savings
3. Community Outreach- roll out of unified protocol and team approach
4. Specialty programs-Critical Care, Mobile Integrated Health (Community Paramedics).
5. Pool resources to train, create a standard of program in Delaware County together.
6. Collaboration between all (Training/technology /Purchasing)
7. To grow our EMS system in to a “great” system
8. Single operating system, using existing agencies – Fire-EMS-HazMat-Tech Rescue
9. Resource Sharing/Unified Supply chain
10. Risk Reduction/Injury/illness Prevention
11. Erase Past
12. Funding Modeling
13. Deployment modeling
14. DATA Collection

Threats

To draw strength and gain full benefit of any opportunity, the threats to the organization, with their new risks and challenges, must also be identified in the strategic planning process. By recognizing possible threats, an organization can greatly reduce the potential for loss. Fundamental to the success of any strategic plan is the understanding that threats are not completely and/or directly controlled by the organization. Some of the current and potential threats identified by the Pre-Hospital Care Board were as follows:

1. Lack of succession planning-more involvement as time goes on and new players come into depts.
2. Compliance with regulatory Agencies’ –Ohio Board of Pharmacy, Ohio Dept. of EMS, NEMSIS, USDOT.
3. Communication- is not consistent internally and externally.
 - a. Internally-how is info delivered to providers as a whole?
 - b. Externally- public perception
4. Provider mental health- change. Still need to create Chaplin pool and a way to promote peer support amongst all providers.
5. COVID
6. The economy - The pandemic-how long will the economic impact be
7. Traditional and organizational silos, need to put aside historical grievances and unhelpful attitudes
8. Politics

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9. Loss of control
10. Wanting to be in control
11. We are a threat to ourselves
12. Lack of trust

Areas of consideration

1. I'm not sure yet, but I think we need to make sure to not try to accomplish too much at one time, because then we will accomplish none of them,
2. Need small wins to build momentum
3. Medical control Board (Existing Medical Directors)
4. Oversight Board Operation
5. Dispatching/DelComm
6. Fitch Report Recommendations
7. Training
8. Protocol
9. Medical Direction
10. Interoperability
11. Staffing
12. Quality Assurance
13. Policy
14. EMS Agenda 2050

Others to be Involved

1. Elected officials at the appropriate time
2. Customers at the right time.
3. Source Point – community paramedicine
4. Peripheral agencies
5. Non-ems transport agencies

Goals and Objectives

In order for the Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System's to achieve the mission and its vision, realistic goals and objectives must be established. Goals and objectives are imperative to enhance strengths, to address identified weaknesses, to provide clear direction and to address the concerns of the citizens. These goals and objectives should coincide and work to accomplish the serving agencies overall goals and objectives.

In order to establish the goals and objectives, the Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System's leaders met a number of times to complete this critical phase of the planning process. As goals and objectives are management tools, they should be reviewed and updated on an on-

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going basis to identify what has been accomplished and to note changes within the organization and the community. The attainment of a performance target should be recognized and celebrated to provide a sense of organizational accomplishment. With the completion of the strategic plan, the goals and objectives should now become the focus of the efforts of the Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System's Advisory Board.

By following these goals and objectives carefully, the Pre-Hospital Care System will be directed into their desired future. These established goals and objectives should also greatly reduce the number of obstacles and distractions for the system and its personnel. The Pre-Hospital Care Board set priorities for the accomplishment of specific objectives. Those objectives that carried higher priorities have been identified for completion first and those objectives with a lower priority can be accomplished later. Overall, these goals and objectives provide very specific timelines within the next two years and more general timelines beyond that period. The leadership of Pre-Hospital Care Board will meet periodically to review progress toward these goals and objectives and adjust timelines and specific targets as needs and the environment change.

2021 Goals

1. Recognition of the Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System's Strategic Plan by the serving governmental subdivisions. (Lead: All Agencies)
2. Develop a central supply system for use by all Fire and EMS agencies. (Lead: Regional Collaboration Committee)
3. Identify a process and priority(s) to utilize available funding to advance EMS throughout Delaware County. (Lead: Chief Donahue)
4. Promote the work and accomplishments of the Delaware County Pre-Hospital Care System. (Lead: Chief Cochran)
5. Develop and implement a single countywide medical protocol all Fire and EMS agencies. (Lead: EMS Standard Committee)
6. Explore means to implement a unified training program for use by all Fire and EMS agencies. (Lead: Regional Collaboration Committee)
7. Conduct clinical research to assist in advancing the existing high-performance emergency medical system. (Lead: EMS Standard Committee)

2021-2023 Committee Goals

1. EMS Standard
 - a. Define level of service expectation in Delaware County through establishing performance metrics (i.e. response time), personnel training and certification standards, and effective response forces. Performance metrics will be used to identify continuous improvement opportunities and not to judge local EMS providers.
 - b. Formalize the consortium of Medical Directors (from each local service provider) to establish common medical direction with evidence-based protocol derived from CQI/CQA data. This consortium should include access to specialty physicians such as pediatric, trauma surgeons, etc.

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- c. Consistent gathering and evaluation of CQI data obtained by each local service provider with complete interoperability and report to the medical director consortium.
2. Regional Collaboration
- a. Identify regional risks and means to reduce these risk. Examples may include community paramedicine, use of Teledoc, Specialty Medical Direction (pediatric, etc.), Mental Health and Social Work staffing, Critical Care Paramedics and Transports, and Alternative Transportation Destinations (Urgent Cares). These programs may not be financially feasible at the local service level, but maybe at the regional level.
 - b. Collaboration to help build internal/external stakeholder support.
 - c. Consortium purchasing options to reduce costs to each local service provider. Soft Billing Master Contract, and Vehicle, Equipment and Supplies purchasing programs.
 - d. PulsePoint collaboration to drive the awareness and use regionally.
 - e. Regional training opportunities to reduce local service provider costs and determine method for at-station training opportunities to not impact service coverage (video streaming).
3. Technology and Innovation
- a. Work with Delaware County Emergency Communications (911) on implementation of new CAD system to include AVL capability and automation of run cards and move-ups for dispatchers.
 - b. Evaluate Video Conferencing or additional Technology Systems to improve At-Station Communication.
 - c. Consider Point of Care Testing and Ultrasounds.
 - i. Durable medical equipment that is used in diagnostic procedures that drive therapies, etc.
 - ii. Ultrasound equipment to evaluate hemorrhage, and other medical issues. POC blood labs, etc.
 - iii. These devices would offer the ability to conduct testing at the patient's home and provide a deeper insight to the disease process. This is especially true for Community Paramedicine.