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Emergency Medical Services in Eastern Broome County: Analysis and Opportunities

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Emergency Medical Services in Eastern Broome County: Analysis and Opportunities
Binghamton University Department of Public Administration • Broome County Office of Emergency Services
Sean J. Britton, NRP, CPH
Fall 2016

Background

Emergency medical services (EMS) is a system to provide out-of-hospital medical care and transportation for individuals suffering from acute illness and injury.

There is no requirement within New York State law for local government to ensure the provision of emergency medical services.

Deposit Emergency Squad, Windsor Emergency Services, Inc., and Colesville Volunteer Ambulance Service are currently the primary ambulance service providers in Eastern Broome County.

Broome Volunteer Emergency Squad and Superior Ambulance Service, Inc. frequently provide mutual aid from the City of Binghamton when the primary ambulance service is unable to respond.

Problem Definition

Ineffective levels of ambulance call coverage in eastern Broome County by the primary ambulance services cause significantly increased response times, which can result in harm to patients who need time-critical emergency medical care.

Eastern Broome County EMS agencies face long-term sustainability issues because they are underfinanced and highly reliant upon volunteers.

Policy Alternatives

The goal of examining various policy alternatives was to identify a recommendation to offer the municipalities of Eastern Broome County to improve the delivery of emergency medical services, by improving call coverage, in a manner which is affordable, sustainable, and gives the local governments oversight of service delivery.

Consolidated Nonprofit Ambulance Service Contracted With Eastern Broome County Municipalities

Consolidated Nonprofit Ambulance Service

A consolidated ambulance service created by a merger between Windsor, Deposit, and Colesville is forecasted to produce $505,941 annually from billing for services rendered.

Financial Analysis

Municipalities

- Windsor
- Deposit
- Colesville

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<th>INSURANCE</th>
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<td>MEDICARE/MEDICAID HMO</td>
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<td>WORKERS COMP INSURANCE</td>
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<td>PRIVATE PAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL REVENUE</td>
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</table>

A consolidated ambulance service created by a merger between Windsor, Deposit, and Colesville is forecasted to cost $550,000 in annual operating expenses, creating an operating deficit of approximately $44,059.

Expected Citizen Attitudes

The published literature shows public support for emergency services is high and citizens are willing to pay, in the form of taxes, for the service to be available (Donahue & Miller, 2006; Herian, 2014). Donahue & Miller (2006) found, “The wealthy, the highly educated, and the young are willing to pay more to improve public safety than are their counterparts.”

Belief in the importance of emergency services and trust in emergency services personnel are positive predictors of willingness to pay for service, while service quality does not influence willingness to pay (Donahue & Miller, 2006). Support for providing emergency services also remains high independent of the level of trust in the government providing the service (Herian, 2014).

Recommendation

A consolidation between Windsor, Deposit, and Colesville ambulance services as a single nonprofit ambulance service with an around-the-clock paid advanced life support crew will improve call coverage and response times, which may result in lives being saved.

Eastern Broome County municipalities should contract with the consolidated ambulance service and each provide $10,000 in funding to subsidize the operating deficit.