



SANFORD AMBULANCE

VITAL SIGNS

Fall 2022

Compassion, Excellence and Community

2022 Mission: Lifeline Gold Plus Award

When someone in our community suffers a heart attack, EMTs and paramedics are often the first to provide care. The type of care that these patients receive immediately after their signs and symptoms start can mean the difference between life and death. The role of EMS in the system-of-care for cardiac patients is crucial and often sets the course for the patient's outcome.

Mission: Lifeline EMS is a program launched by the American Heart Association in 2014 designed to showcase and recognize Emergency Medical Service organizations across the nation for excellent STEMI (ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction) care. A STEMI is a specific type of heart attack caused by a complete blockage of blood flow to the heart. In order to have the best outcome after a STEMI, timely treatment is imperative. The AHA's Mission: Lifeline award helps celebrate the achievements of prehospital providers and their collaboration with each other and destination hospitals specific to STEMI patient care.



This year, Sanford Ambulance was awarded the highest Mission: Lifeline award – Gold Plus. This award recognizes Sanford Ambulance for implementing quality improvement measures for the treatment of patients who experience severe heart attacks. Every year, more than 250,000 people experience a STEMI. To prevent death, it's critical to restore blood flow as quickly as possible, either by surgically opening the blocked vessel or by giving clot-busting medication.

“Sanford Ambulance is dedicated to providing optimal care for heart attack patients and making our service among the best in the country, and the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline program is helping us accomplish that by implementing processes for improving systems of care with the goal of improving the quality of care for all acute coronary syndrome patients,” said Kathy Lonski, Sanford Ambulance's Quality Improvement Advisor. “We are pleased to be recognized for our dedication and achievements in emergency medical care for all cardiac patients.” The Mission: Lifeline initiative provides tools, training and other resources to support heart attack care following protocols from the most recent evidence-based treatment guidelines. Sanford Ambulance has received the highest award every year since the inception of Mission: Lifeline and is one of only 25 across the nation to have done so.

Ninth Brain

For over 19 years, Sanford Ambulance has been using a system called Ninth Brain to coordinate EMS workforce resources. Ninth Brain helps track and manage a number of things, including credentials, education, training and quality improvement projects. "Sanford Ambulance has been using many of the features that Ninth Brain offers to enhance our performance and help maintain our CAAS accreditation," said Kathy Lonski, Quality Improvement Specialist. "We love the relationship that we have with Ninth Brain - they truly care about their customers and listen to any ideas and feedback that we share with them. From employee demographics to taking online classes to tracking certifications, Ninth Brain is a game-changing tool in the EMS field. Ninth Brain has been an instrumental tool in our ability to organize, standardize and communicate effectively throughout our operations. "

In July, Sanford Ambulance was chosen as a site to help celebrate Ninth Brain's 20th anniversary. The Ninth Brain team sponsored a BBQ dinner for our crews at the July company meeting.



Welcome to the Team!

Amber McGrath	NEAT EMT
Jared Douglas	EMT
Kayli Ginocchio	EMT
Alberto Moncera	Dispatcher
Caitlin Pettigrew	NEAT EMT
Jacob Wasem	Paramedic
Kaitlyn Mahowsky-Adams	Dispatcher
Abigail Fikter	Dispatcher

Are you an EMT, paramedic or dispatcher who is interested in working in a fun, fast-paced atmosphere? Sanford Ambulance is hiring!

Check out sanfordhealth.jobs to see what positions we have available! We'd love to have you join our team!



Night to Unite Burger Cook-Off

The Fargo Police Department hosted the 17th annual Night to Unite Chiefs and Sheriffs Burger Cook-Off on Tuesday, August 2nd. Sanford Ambulance was invited to take part in judging the event, along with representatives from the Salvation Army, North Dakota Vision Zero and Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths. Contestants were tasked with making one burger that was judged on appearance and taste. The 2022 Night to Unite Chiefs and Sheriffs Burger Cook-Off champion was Clay County Sheriff Mark Empting.



Night to Unite is a nationwide celebration that encourages neighborhoods to get together and meet one another and promote community safety. In Fargo and Moorhead, neighborhoods are encouraged to gather and host block parties to affirm their commitment to a safe, healthy community. In West Fargo, the community is invited to Elmwood Park for a free community celebration that includes public safety demonstrations, informational booths, games, food, and lots of fun! Night to Unite is held on the first Tuesday in August each year. For more information, please check with your local police department to see if they host Night to Unite activities.



Moorhead Underpass Ribbon Cutting

Sanford Ambulance was grateful to be invited to participate in the ribbon cutting event for the Moorhead underpass project on July 18. The 4-year, \$51 million railroad underpass project is an essential link that smoothly connects emergency services to the south side of Moorhead and the Moorhead High School area. The ribbon cutting event was the first official look at the completed project and featured a celebration with partners who worked on the project, emergency service providers, live music and food.



Sanford Ambulance Celebrates PRIDE Week

In August, employees of Sanford Ambulance and Sanford Health celebrated with the Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo communities at F-M PRIDE week. Volunteers staffed a booth at Pride in the Park and showed their pride and support at the downtown parade.



HEALTH HIGHLIGHT

Stop the Bleed

A Pittsburgh synagogue... a Florida high school... a Texas church... a Las Vegas concert... a Connecticut elementary school... these are the locations of some of our country's deadliest mass shootings. At a moment's notice, anyone can find themselves in a situation where WE are the help until help arrives.

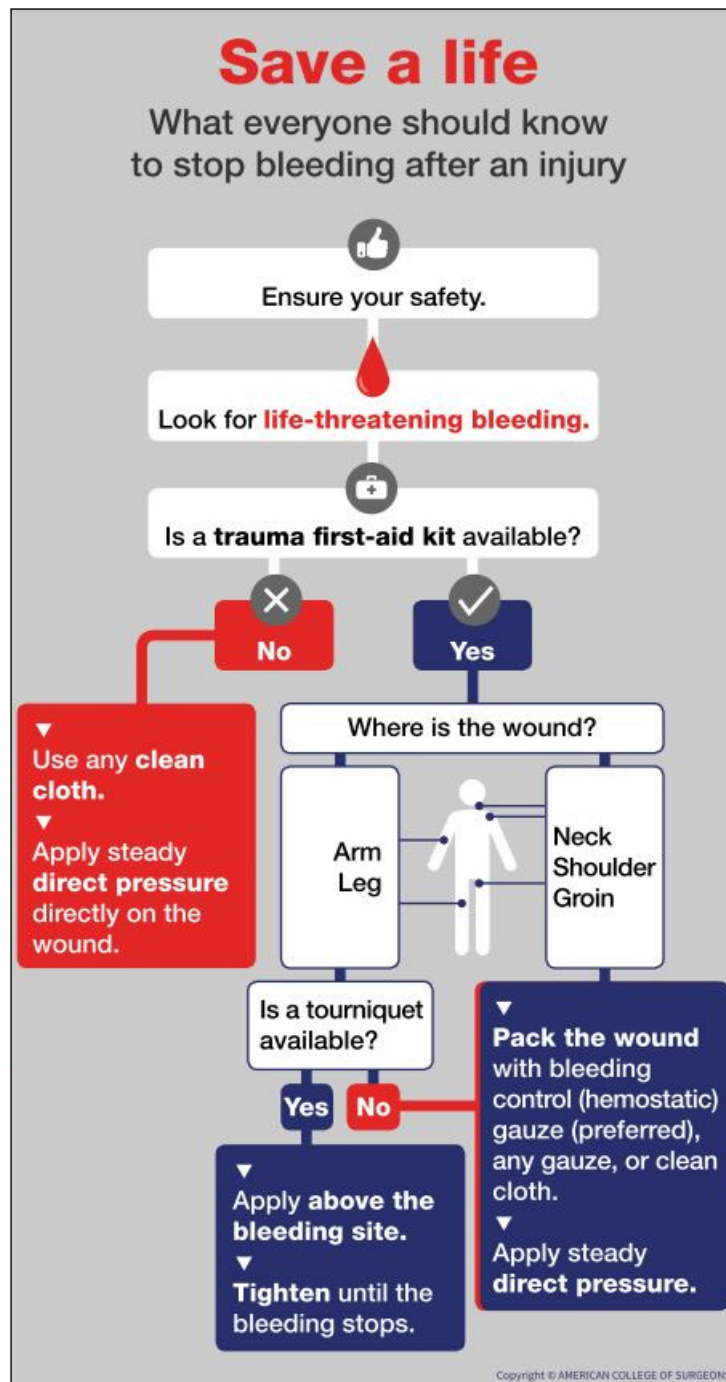
In 2015, the White House launched Stop the Bleed, a national awareness campaign and call to action to teach civilians how to use basic bleeding control techniques in the first few minutes during an emergency.

No matter how rapid the arrival of professional emergency responders, bystanders will always be first on the scene. A person who is bleeding can die from blood loss within five minutes, so quickly stopping the bleeding is critical. Those nearest to someone with life-threatening injuries are best positioned to provide immediate care if they are equipped with the appropriate training and resources.

"Being prepared is the most important thing," says Kristi Engelstad, Outreach Coordinator for Sanford Ambulance. "Severe bleeding can cause shock or death within just a few minutes – before medical help arrives. Bleeding emergencies can happen anywhere – even at home. Traffic accidents and even accidents around the home can cause major bleeding that needs to be stopped quickly."

Over 1.5 million people have learned basic bleeding control techniques from the "Stop the Bleed" program. There are three quick actions that you can take to stop bleeding:

1. Apply pressure with your hands
2. Apply a dressing and press on the bleeding
3. Apply a tourniquet



Want to learn more about the Stop the Bleed campaign? Check out www.bleedingcontrol.org, or call Sanford Health EMS Education at 701-364-1750 for more information on Stop the Bleed classes.

Peer Assistance Crisis Team

"How do you do it?"

It's a question that first responders are often asked. How do you go from trying to save a child in a horrific crash to helping someone who hurt their back? How do you deal with the emotions that come with watching someone die? How do you know what to say to someone who just lost the person that they loved most? How do you deal with the incredible amount of stress and emotions that come with working in EMS?

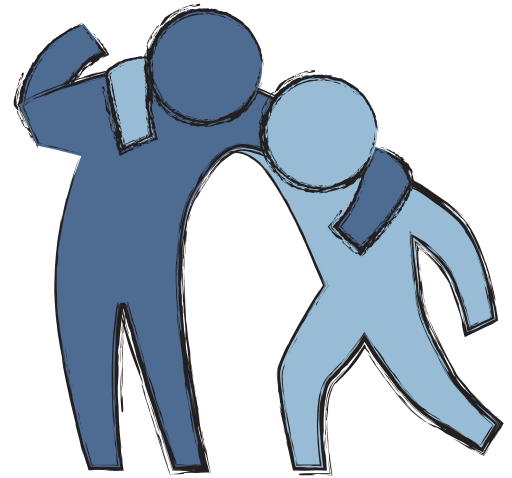
In 2020, Sanford Ambulance hosted a four-day Peer Assistance Crisis Team (PACT) training. The training taught first responders in the Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo community the tools they need to handle stress and help their co-workers and peers work through tough times. The goal of the PACT team is to promote healthy coping skills to employees through confidential peer-to-peer interactions. Dr. Dan Casey led the four-day PACT training; Dr. Casey has taught over 3000 PACT courses and has extensive training in how emergency workers deal with stress.

Operations Director Rick Cameron is one of Sanford Ambulance's PACT team members. Cameron says that most of Sanford Ambulance's EMS providers won't go on a lot of stressful calls in a row, but if a few of those stressful calls are within a short period of time, and throughout a career, the stress and emotions build up. The PACT program allows Sanford Ambulance paramedics and EMTs to talk about these experiences with their peers - people who can relate to what they're experiencing. PACT team members are trained in helping their peers through tough times in positive ways.

Kathy Lonski, Quality Improvement Coordinator and PACT team member says, "We have had team members leave because of the stress of this job. It's usually not one call... it's a cumulative effect of many calls. I think we've gotten better at helping our employees deal with stressful calls, but we can always do better. There are always going to be calls that you don't forget. Hopefully our PACT team can help co-workers learn how to cope with and get through these calls in a healthy way."

Some of the advice that PACT team members give their peers about dealing with stress is not only useful for paramedics; it can be used by anyone in a stressful situation:

- Exercise regularly - people who exercise regularly have lower rates of depression and anxiety.
- Get plenty of sleep. Sleep is key to your body's ability to handle stress.
- Eat a rich, varied diet. If you're trying to lose weight, don't just count calories. Talk to a doctor or a dietician about how to achieve a healthy weight without missing out on key nutrients.
- Know your biggest stressors - knowing what causes you stress will help you manage those situations when they arise.
- Draw strong boundaries - carving out personal time is essential to mental well-being.
- Talk to a professional - If your car started flashing a strange light, you wouldn't ignore it - you'd take it to an expert. If you feel stressed, anxious or depressed, talk to a professional - they really can help.



Sanford Ambulance Peer Assistance Crisis Team (PACT)



EMS Education

Summers in the Sanford Health EMS Education department are usually a little less stressful than the spring and fall. However, this summer has been one of our busiest ever!

- Education staff attended over 30 community events this summer including the Safety Safari at the Red River Zoo, Safety Town, the Fargo Street Fair and many parades.
- SHEMSE Director Ron Lawler attended his final National Association of EMS Educators Symposium as an elected member of its Board of Directors.
- Ron, along with incoming Paramedic Program Coordinator Kelly Wanzek, attended our national accreditor's accreditation workshop in Louisville, Kentucky.
- The Summer EMT class was our largest yet with 25 students.
- Twenty students from the 2021 - 2022 Paramedic class graduated this summer! Awards were presented to the following students.
 - Student of the Year: Isabel Wedell
 - Distinguished Honors: Katlin Borgen, Tyler Barnhardt, Nkemdirim Orjinta, Sampson Donkor



- The SHEMSE team spent some time in the Sanford Emergency Department garage doing five minute skill sessions with Sanford Ambulance crews. Wound packing is a skill that paramedics use for patients with severe penetrating or open wounds in an attempt to control bleeding. To pack a wound, the paramedic applies direct pressure to the wound while placing gauze material directly on the lacerated blood vessel. Wound packing is indicated for penetrating wounds where bleeding cannot be controlled using direct pressure alone. It is an ideal technique for injuries to junctional areas of the body, such as the groin or axilla, where tourniquets are ineffective and direct pressure can be difficult to maintain.



Sanford Ambulance

2215 18th Street South

Fargo, ND 58103