Regions Hospital EMS
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Mail Stop 13801B
St. Paul, MN 55101

Regions Hospital®
Emergency Medical Services
HealthPartners®

September 26, 2022

Dear St. Paul City Council, Residents, and Visitors,

I am writing today as the Medical Director for the St. Paul Fire Department. It is with great excitement that I share with you the news that, with your approval, SPFD will soon be deploying a state-of-the-art ultrasound device to improve the medical care delivered by our firefighters. Ultrasound brings a new level of diagnostic capability directly to the bedside. With this technology, firefighters will be able to directly visualize the heart and lungs to help them better determine the most appropriate treatment for patients suffering from severe traumatic injuries and cardiac arrest. We have been using ultrasound in the ER at Regions Hospital for years but with the approval of the city council, and under the leadership of Chief Inks and Asst. Chief Simpson, we are on the cusp of deploying this technology to the streets of St. Paul.

As a resident of the city, I am cognizant of the financial constraints we operate under as a taxpayer funded fire department. In 2021 SPFD responded to 204 CPR's. While there is a cost associated with these devices, I believe I can make a compelling argument, that it is small in comparison to the clinical benefits it will bring to our sickest patients. Our deployment plan is to equip the SPFD EMS Coordinator (Car 50) with the ultrasound device because they are dispatched to each CPR in the city. This is a more cost-effective approach than if we put them on every ambulance while at the same time ensuring equitable distribution of the technology to patients across the city. As Medical Director, I have no doubt that this technology will improve the already commendable medical care our fire department provides every day.

Sincerely,

Aaron Burnett MD, FACEP
Medical Director, St. Paul Fire Dept
EMS Medical Director, Regions Hospital
Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine
University of Minnesota

Our mission is to improve health and well-being in partnership with our members, patients and community.