

Security Health Plan: Invests in Central Fire EMS District to ease burden on responders

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COLBY - "Lifting our patients into the ambulance can be difficult," said Lin Mueller, Patient Care Support Receptionist at Marshfield Clinic Health System.

Mueller is also an emergency medical technician (EMT) with over 25 years of service with the Central Fire Emergency Medical Service (EMS). The organization provides service to 210 square miles serving seven municipalities including the cities of Abbotsford and Colby, village of Dorchester and the outlying townships of Hull, Holton, Mayville and Colby. She said the median age of the EMS staff is going up, so lifting adult patients on the gurney into the ambulance can be difficult.

Security Health Plan of Wisconsin, Inc., will invest \$1,000 in Central Fire EMS District as part of its Employee-Driven Corporate Giving grant program to help the organization purchase lifts for their ambulances. Each month Security Health Plan awards a \$1,000 grant to a different charity or organization that is nominated by a Marshfield Clinic Health System employee. Employees are encouraged to nominate organizations making a positive difference in the community.

"We run over 700 calls a year - that's a lot of lifting," Mueller said. "By installing these lifts, or power cots, into our ambulances we can decrease the risk for injury to our EMTs. In turn that will result in fewer workman's compensation claims and lower our workman's compensation premiums. That's a win-win for our organization and those we provide services to."

Mueller explained the EMS is self-funded, generating revenue through ambulance calls. She said when equipment upgrades are desired finding funds can be difficult.

“This \$1,000 can go a long way to help us purchase this equipment,” she said. “We use our donations wisely and this grant will help ease the burden of raising funds for the lift, which is about \$32,000.”

Mueller said patients served by the EMS will also benefit from the lifts. She said patients sometimes worry about the EMTs’ ability to lift them into the ambulance and having the lift will expedite some calls.

“We sometimes have to wait for additional assistance from the fire department to lift heavier patients into the ambulance,” she explained. “This can cause delays, which is never good in an emergency situation. Fewer delays on scene can help us get patients the care they need faster.”

The Central Fire EMS District has four ambulances throughout the district. At this time they have installed power lift cots in two of them and are working to upgrade the other two vehicles with the power lift cots.

“The Central Fire EMS District enriches the lives of the residents in the area we serve by coming to their aid when they need us,” Mueller said. “We have an excellent crew and have a unified department that shows a lot of teamwork. We’re thankful for the donation from Security Health Plan.”

Learn more about The Central Fire EMS District visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/centralfiredistrictwi. Mueller said the organization is always looking for volunteers to join them and welcome donations of any kind to go toward the purchase of the two remaining power cot lifts. She said they also welcome supply donations and if you or an organization you’re involved with is interested in making a donation you can call and leave a voicemail at 1-715-223-2414.