

Security Health Plan: Invests in Granton Area First Responders to ease burden on responders

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GRANTON - "The hardest part of CPR is doing the chest compressions - it can really drain you, no matter how good of shape you're in," Granton Area First Responders President Pat Wolf said.

Security Health Plan Claims Examiner 2 Janell Walter said in order to combat that and help the Granton Area First Responders improve the patients' outcome, the department purchased a Lund University Cardiopulmonary Assist System (LUCAS) device. Walter has been a first responder with the Granton department for 19 years. She said the device costs about \$15,000.

Security Health Plan of Wisconsin, Inc., will invest \$1,000 in the Granton Area First Responders as part of its Employee-Driven Corporate Giving grant program to help the organization purchase the LUCAS device. 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.

Walter nominated the organization and said, "The Granton Area First Responders are a 100% volunteer organization, every member works full time at another employer as well. With that being said, during the day there are very few members

available to respond to calls. If a community member is in cardiac arrest it is difficult to do all the needed treatment with only a few crew members. Having a LUCAS device will improve our patients' outcome."

Wolf said the LUCAS device can improve the quality of chest compressions and is able to sustain life-saving circulation during prolonged resuscitation attempts. He said it removes the fatigue and individual variations from CPR.

"With the LUCAS device we no longer need to switch CPR partners every two minutes and it frees up a first responder to perform another important task," he added. "We cover 180 square miles including the townships of York, Grant, Washburn, Sherwood and Lynn as well as the Village of Granton."

Walter said since the Granton Area First Responders don't transport patients they have to wait for either Neillsville, Pittsville or Loyal ambulance service to be dispatched to the scene, which she says can sometimes be a lengthy amount of time when CPR needs to be done and fatigue can set in.

"This \$1,000 goes a long way to help us purchase this equipment," she said. "This grant will help ease the burden of raising funds for the device."

Wolf added the organization is 100 percent volunteer and they are always looking for more members.

"We struggle to get members. It is a large commitment and requires continuous education, but we're all local people who want to have a healthy community," he explained. "We do reimburse our members for the cost of their education after one year of service with us."

“The Granton First Responders enrich the lives of the residents in the area we serve by coming to their aid when they need us,” Walter added. “We have an excellent crew and are thankful for the donation from Security Health Plan.”

To get involved with the Granton Area First Responders contact Wolf at 1-715-937-4430.