

PENINSULA AMBULANCE CORPS 2020 Report to the Towns

As this year began, we expected Peninsula Ambulance Corps' primary challenge was to continue the work begun in 2019, under the leadership of our Manager, Alan Henschke, to reorganize our business model to improve efficiency and to match our staffing model with call volume patterns. By late March, however, this work was secondary to dealing with the multiple challenges of Covid-19.

The first was a substantial reduction in billable call volume and revenue as hospitals reduced elective procedures and admissions. There was also a reduction in call volume as patients delayed and avoided visits to the hospital. Operating costs increased with the purchase and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). In addition, staff required training in new procedures for treating potential Covid patients. Simply put, we experienced an increase in expenses and a decrease in income.

Fortunately, PAC took advantage of stimulus programs to help balance our budget. We successfully applied for and received a Payroll Protection Plan loan, which we successfully moved later to a grant. In addition we received a Health and Human Services grant to compensate for reduced Medicare volume. These helped us greatly in maintaining our normal staffing/payroll levels and to continue providing our services to the communities we serve.

Unfortunately, the Community Paramedicine Program was suspended for 2020, because the risk to patients and staff was too high. In addition, a grant that was used to fund the Program expired and was not renewed due to Covid. We continue to work with our partners, Healthy Peninsula, At Home and Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital, and hope to continue the Community Paramedicine Program in the future.

We are proud of our five full-time and 24 staff—the Paramedics and EMTs who make the program work. We continue to provide staff with continuing education for federal and state mandated classes. Our employees like their jobs and provide real benefit to the communities we serve.

Our fleet of three ambulances allows us to maintain our staffing model of two on duty ambulances with a spare to use when the others need service. This also allows us to staff the third ambulance for local events, such as the Blue Hill Fair, and in times of increased call volume. We utilize management to staff the third ambulance during high-volume times, which allows us to respond to more calls.

Our largest customers remain Medicare (federal government) and Medicaid/MaineCare (state government). Together, they represent 63.86% of our payors. However, for every \$1 of that billing, we are paid only \$0.65 at best. Medicaid reimbursements are often less than 50%. This accounts for most of our operating deficit. The remaining shortfall is the result of running a service in a large territory with a small population.

Call volume—the basis upon which we are reimbursed—was 1309 this year, a decrease of 139 calls from 2019. This is attributed to Covid as our volume dropped 170 calls in the first half of the year, compared to the same period in 2019.

Totals by town are given in the chart below. Inter-hospital patient transports, which were 35% of call volume, are also included in call totals.

There were only 3 calls (all non-emergency) which we could have completed if we had had available staff. This is down from 25 calls in 2019.

2020 Calls by Town

Blue Hill	715	Penobscot	84
Brooklin	57	Sedgwick	75
Brooksville	36	Surry	135
Castine	71	Other Towns	136

We decrease our deficit in three ways: with the support of our town governments, by individual donations to our annual appeal, and by using volunteer board members to accomplish administrative and fund-raising tasks.

This year we are asking for \$18.50 for the operating budget and \$4.43 for the ambulance reserve fund per capita. This per capita total of \$22.93 is the same as last year's request.

Staff and ambulances are the visible aspects of PAC, but community loyalty and the funds provided by the towns are its lifeblood. Our annual appeal to the public provides an essential and remarkably consistent source of support, but we must rely to the greatest extent on the common sense of town governments and citizens to understand the necessity for an ambulance service, and that, if we don't hang together and make it work, no one else will.

Thank you for your support.