



# THE HEMS DISPATCH

Greetings!

With the holidays just around the corner, our EMS crews are prepping for a busy December. Alongside all the merriment, there's a lot of emergencies – due to an uptick in driving under the influence, snowy conditions, mental health emergencies and more.

While they're so busy, it's easy for our paramedics and EMTs to overlook their own mental health to serve others. They're a selfless bunch by nature, but we always want to make sure their mental health is a priority.

Paramedics and EMTs have the highest rate of PTSD of all emergency service workers (14.6%). For these paramedics and EMTs, seeking help can be a struggle, especially from non-first responders who might not understand the stressors unique to the job. That's why our relationship with Hennepin Healthcare's Dr. Mitch Radin, who provides critical incident support, and Stillpoint Engage, which provides peer support services, is so critical. Our paramedics, EMTs, EMDs and leadership staff can all access these resources as an ongoing mental health coping and resilience-building resource.

We've also incorporated a wellness room into our Glen Lake hub in Minnetonka. This room features a massage chair and calming tools like a sound machine and oil diffuser. This is a place for our staff to re-center and practice resiliency while on the job.

Mental health goes beyond just our staff as well. While we see hundreds of mental health calls per year, we also know that any medical emergency can be an emotional challenge for patients and family. Earlier this year, we began a "healing art" pilot program where we worked with a local artist specializing in sensory immersion transition experiences to install lighted art displays in the ceiling of our rigs. The display can act as a calming point of focus for patients experiencing distress.

This is a tough time of year for many, first responders included. We urge you to take care of your mental health first as you serve your communities.

Thank you for your continued partnership,

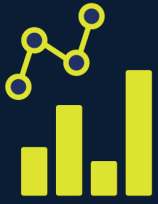
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*Photo of "healing art" in Hennepin EMS ambulances.  
Artist: Vara Kamin*



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# BY THE NUMBERS

At HEMS, we're much more than just ambulance drivers. Not only are we treating patients, but we're also serving in public safety and community health functions. That reality is very much on display during the holiday season, when we're not only busy with calls, but also in giving back to our community.

One example is our Thanksgiving meal deliveries as part of our Community Paramedic program, which is designed to proactively reduce reliance on emergency services by sending paramedics to be liasons between the patient and their health care team for approximately **70** patients across our primary service area. Most often, these patients have chronic health conditions and don't qualify for home healthcare services. HEMS has **four** community paramedics on staff and on Thanksgiving, they deliver **60** meals to our patients.



Photo credit: KSTP

We also work with the Hennepin Healthcare Foundation on a cold weather kit drive where our paramedics collect donations of essential winter weather items like socks, gloves, stocking hat and hand warmers. These kits are handed out to the **dozens** unsheltered patients that we encounter every day. Many of these Minnesotans are forced to walk all day to find food, shelter, services, and medical care. This makes these patients highly susceptible to injuries like frostbite and trench foot which can result in an ambulance ride, an ER visit, a hospital admission, debilitating surgery, and/or a long rehabilitation. This year so far we've collected **2,000** kits and we're hopeful that it will translate to fewer of these preventable calls among our unsheltered patients.



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# IN THE COMMUNITY



Photo credit: Minnesota State High School League

We're continuing our EMS support at U.S. Bank Stadium. Vikings home games are in full swing, and while they have been away in November, the future football pros of tomorrow took over the field! The Minnesota State High School League Football Championship spanned two weekends and HEMS was on site to offer EMS to fans, players and staff.



We had the pleasure of touring groups of University of Minnesota Master of Public Health students like this one through Hennepin Healthcare campus. It was inspiring to connect with future public health leaders and share insights about our work.





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# STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Congratulations to two of our HEMS team who were awarded SKOL Service Game Balls this fall. Paramedic Gina Smith was honored for her superb work at the Zach Bryan Concert this past August. Gina managed multiple event aid needs with composure and compassion. And EMT/EMD Brent Koskela was recognized for his dispatching work at the Vikings game against the Houston Texans. Brent managed a heavy load of calls that could have quickly become a confusing snarl if not for his strong communication and organization. They both are exceptional team members!



Please join us in welcoming this group of paramedics to the Hennepin EMS team! We celebrated this academy class with a badging ceremony earlier this month. These 10 paramedics are now added to our full-time roster. We're happy to have them join our outstanding team!



# HEMS IN THE NEWS

**FOX 9** recently did a story on our suboxone program, which is one of the first in the country and already showing a lot of success! With this program, our patients can choose to start recovery by getting suboxone before they even get to the hospital and before any withdrawal symptoms set in. At one year after receiving our treatment, 12% of those given suboxone were still on the treatment.



In May, we responded to an unfortunate call in Eden Prairie with a positive outcome. We worked with Eden Prairie Fire Department to treat and transport an infant from a duplex home fire. We're proud to see our colleagues receive "Award of Honor" medals last month from the City of Eden Prairie. The recognition for their heroism is well deserved!

Sometimes unique emergency situations require unique medication solutions. At HEMS, we have an expert for that. Dr. Holly Drone is our EMS Pharmacist and an invaluable part of our team. Read her article in national journal **EMS 1** where she discusses the benefits of having access to clinical pharmacy in prehospital care.



# HEMS SUCCESS STORIES

We always love hearing when our HEMS team members provide exceptional care. Such is the case when we recently heard praise for HEMS paramedic Kirsten Moore. She responded to a fatal car versus pedestrian accident with the Hopkins Police Department, who relayed this account and compliment of her work. Thank you, Kirsten, for all you do here at HEMS!



*After assessing the scene and terminating resuscitative efforts on the pedestrian, Kirsten recognized the driver of the vehicle was distraught after the accident and stepped up to assist. The officer said that Kirsten was calm and comforting to the patient and helped her process the situation. Kirsten sat in the squad car with the patient and let her cry on her shoulder. He went on to say Kirsten was unbelievably fantastic and the whole department was grateful for her help. He also said that when Kirsten shows up on a call, she gives a consistently high level of care and goes above and beyond, not just for the patient's medical needs but their mental well-being also.*

