



TEXAS EMS AGENCIES PUT PATIENTS FIRST: TDI'S PROVEN ARBITRATION WILL TAKE PATIENTS OUT OF THE MIDDLE



EMS AGENCIES PLAY AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN TEXAS COMMUNITIES

Texas EMS agencies are an essential part of every Texas community and serve a unique role in the state's health care system. EMS providers are the only segment of the health care industry designed to respond to the location of a patient suffering from an acute onset of illness or a traumatic injury, provide patients with initial care on the scene and provide timely access to a specialized segment of the health care system, such as a trauma hospital.

In an increasing number of rural communities, the local EMS agency is the only health care provider in the community. Simply put, EMS is a critical public health safety net upon which many Texans rely.

COMMERCIAL HEALTH PLANS RARELY INCLUDE EMS AGENCIES IN NETWORKS

While EMS is possibly the most essential service in health care, commercial health plans choose to disregard the local community in which their insureds live by failing to adequately compensate the local EMS agency. In many cases, health plans do not even attempt to engage or include EMS in a network arrangement that would offer fair and adequate compensation to cover the cost of care provided.

EMS agencies only have two sources for funding their essential services: revenue generated by patient services or taxpayer support. When EMS agencies are not adequately compensated for their services, either local taxpayers must make up the difference or reduce services to balance budgets. This means fewer ambulances, slower response times or agency closures. As a result, fair reimbursement is critical to maintaining the EMS public health safety net, ensuring patients' access to care, and reducing the taxpayer burden.

TEXAS EMS AGENCIES: WE WANT TO HELP SOLVE THE OUT-OF-NETWORK BILLING ISSUE

Providing the best care to patients represents an EMS agency's top and only concern. And Texas EMS agencies want to extend this prioritization of the patient by working with lawmakers to remove patients from the middle of payment disputes.

The data from the arbitration process created by SB 1264 are clear: patients are benefitting. TEMSA strongly encourages the 87th Legislature to remove patients from the middle of EMS billing disputes and allow EMS agencies to access TDI's arbitration process. Specifically, SB 999 should direct the arbitrator to consider rates established by local governmental bodies.

Legislative Advertising Authorized by:

Craig Holzheuser | Texas EMS Alliance | P.O. Box 13531 | Austin, Texas 78711