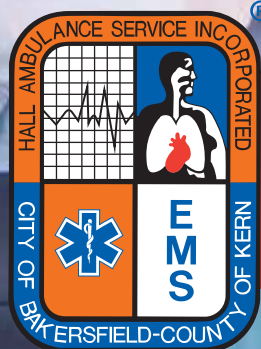


HallMark

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May/June 2020



Working On the Frontlines of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Caring for our patients, employees, and the community.





Hall Ambulance's Approach to the Pandemic

Early on, as word of a new virus began to spread, Hall Ambulance began implementing extensive measures to protect its employees, patients, and the communities we serve.

An internal task force was formed to determine how best to confront this unprecedented crisis of our lifetimes. The following is a summary of the efforts Hall Ambulance put into action:

- Ambulance decontamination protocol developed and implemented
- Strict Enforcement of PPE
- Emergency medical dispatchers implemented the use of the Emerging Infectious Disease Surveillance (EIDS) tool
- Mandatory wellness screening of employees and visitors to Hall Ambulance facilities
- Non-medical staff working remotely or on staggered schedules to maximize social distancing
- Daily well-being checks on paramedics, EMTs, and RNs who had contact with a COVID-19 patient
- Arranged for a licensed therapist to meet with employees, as needed
- Elevated cleaning and sanitization efforts of Hall Ambulance facilities.

These actions have proven effective, given as of press time, no Hall Ambulance employees have tested positive for the virus. This edition of the HallMark is dedicated to our employees and highlighting Hall Ambulance's response to the pandemic. *

Facilities-Maintenance Assistant Manager Mark Morse oversees the decontamination process of an ambulance following the transport of a COVID-19 patient.

Keeping Crews and Patients Safe

Detailing the Decontamination Process Following Transport of a COVID-19 Patient

by Mark Morse, assistant manager, Facilities-Maintenance Division

People routinely remark about the cleanliness of every Hall Ambulance traveling down the road. This comes from a standard put in place from the very beginning, by our founder, that every emergency vehicle should have a showroom clean appearance for the benefit of our patients and the paramedics and EMTs staffing them. Detailers handle ambulance cleaning and sanitization efforts in the Metro Division while the paramedics and EMTs themselves assigned to the East and West Kern Divisions. As the coronavirus elevated to pandemic status, Terry Adams, manager of the Facilities-Maintenance Division, developed a protocol for decontaminating ambulances used to transport a suspected/confirmed COVID-19 patient. This stringent process takes 3 hours and

40 minutes of staffing hours to complete and is performed by two decon technicians donning PPE, and a manager, who works from a safe zone to observe and document the decontamination process. For the deep cleaning, the technicians use hospital-grade germicidal bleach wipes and spray approved by the CDC. As the number of confirmed patients in Kern County has grown, so has the number of ambulances needing to be decontaminated. The first two ambulances were decontaminated the week of March 7; however, the weekly allotment has since grown to 31 as of the week of April 25. Thanks to the exceptional efforts of the decon technicians, our EMS crews can rest assured, knowing they are transporting their patients in a Hall Ambulance that is in spectacularly sanitized condition. *

Caring About Our Employees and Their Families During the Pandemic

by Jenny Ramirez, director, Human Resources Department

Throughout Hall Ambulance's history, we have taken a special interest in adopting and implementing programs that protect our employees. Our Company was founded by our visionary leader to support our community through care and compassion. Those beliefs don't only extend to the patients we support, it includes each and every member on our staff. When the COVID-19 pandemic began to spread to Kern County, our senior management team immediately acted by establishing a committee to help establish the protocol and the steps we would need to take and develop in order to support not only our patients but also how to protect our staff. As we have moved through the pandemic, our CCT Manager, Chris Leone, and our General Manager, Myron Smith, have immersed themselves in knowing and staying up-to-date on the CDC guidelines that help orient our actions, following county recommendations, and keeping our company informed of changes as they happen in real time. In this manner, we have been able to adapt our methodology of using PPE, screening people before they visit our offices, and, most of all, providing training that will help in keeping everyone safe. Through it all, there has been a collaborative effort from every department to prioritize the health and safety of our employees. And, as we move through these ef-

forts, the HR Department has worked closely with our management team and, most importantly, our employees. One of the first steps our COVID team took was building a tracking system identifying employees that had either transported a confirmed COVID-19 patient or a suspected one. From there,

However, we knew this was only part of the support they needed. Just like everyone else out there, our employees have families and people they care about and are concerned about, so we took it a step further and reached out to a licensed counselor that specializes in treating first

responders to arrange extra time to work with any employee that felt they needed additional support for their mental health. We set a process in which the employees could reach out directly to the Therapist in order to respect their privacy and not have to go through normal authorization processes that could hinder their ability to get help. Our field supervisors have also taken an active approach by being a constant reminder to employees about the resource available to them.

All in all, what makes our Company great is the people that work here, without them we couldn't deliver on our commitment to care for the Kern County community, which is why now more than ever we have all taken an active role in protecting, training, and supporting our employees. The role of HR has always been to care about the wellbeing of our employees and now more than ever we are committed to that effort. As they fight on the frontline, we will continue to develop and uphold programs that reinforce their health and safety in partnership with our management team and leaders. *



Paramedic Supervisor Celia Ames submitted this photo for inclusion in Hall Ambulance's COVID-19 social media campaign. With it, she expressed her appreciation to the Company for providing the proper equipment to minimize the risk of taking something home to her family.

we began tracking these same employees for 14 days, documenting any symptoms that could be COVID related; and, lastly, calling each and every one of the employees on a daily basis to check in on them. This includes weekends, holidays, night or day. The feedback from our crews has been positive and filled with appreciation that we prioritize their physical health. For those that have reported symptoms, the HR Department has sent employees for screening and testing right away. The partnership we've established with our occupational clinic has made it possible to get our staff the care they need in a relatively quick fashion.



Donning personal protective equipment has proven effective in keeping EMS personnel protected when transporting a suspected/confirmed COVID-19 patients (Training image).

Managing Our Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

by Chris Leone, manager, Hall CCT, and Myron Smith, general manager

While responding to a 911 call is never routine, EMTs, paramedics, and Registered Nurses have been trained to expect the unexpected. Most EMS training focuses on patient assessments, heart attacks, strokes, trauma, and other ailments that are commonly encountered during a “routine” 911 call. The COVID-19 pandemic has added an entirely new layer of “the unexpected”. There was little warning for what was about to come. There was little information on what to do about it when it did arrive. And, there con-

tinues to be limited guidance on how to best treat these patients in the field

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience but where he stands in times of challenge and controversy.”

—Martin Luther King Jr.

setting. Crews are being asked to adapt to a rapidly changing environment. As COVID-19 cases began presenting in California, our ambulance crews were reminded of the importance of

the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). N95 masks, gowns, gloves, and face shields became the new normal on many calls. As crews arrive at the scene of a 911 call, they will put on their PPE prior to contacting the patient. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, ambulance crews that transported a suspected COVID-19 patient would be met outside of the ER by the hospital staff to determine if the patient was going to be tested. If the patient was going to be tested, these crews were placed on a

“contact list.” These employees would then be contacted daily until the patient test results came back. This worked for a short period of time, as the number of patients tested remained minimal. Within a few weeks, the number of patients being tested grew exponentially, and the patients were not being tested right away. It quickly became impossible to track every patient with our current system. With guidance from the CDC and Kern County Public Health, a new procedure was developed. Currently, Hall Ambulance receives information from Kern County EMS regarding positive patients within the County. Patient addresses are flagged in the dispatch system. If a crew responds to that address, they are notified that PPE is mandatory for the call. Every person who calls 911 is also screened for respiratory issues. If certain criteria are met during the 911 call, dispatchers notify crews that PPE is recommended. We have added this layer of notification to better assist our crews with their personal safety while responding to 911 calls. Since the beginning of the pandemic, use of PPE equipment has skyrocketed. Hall Ambulance encourages PPE use by its employees and is committed to providing the proper PPE required to keep the crews safe. Unlike the controlled environment of a hospital, ambulances do not have negative pressure rooms, and there are no “isolation carts” conveniently placed outside of the patient room to identify a COVID-19 patient.

Our crews are responding into patient’s homes, medical clinics, and any other type of public place you can imagine. It is difficult for the crew member to



Company-wide health screening was implemented on March 20, requiring employees to ensure they are fit for duty and not experiencing elevated fever or virus-related symptoms.

isolate themselves and the patients from potentially sick family members and bystanders. The crew’s use of PPE is paramount to their safety and must be available for them to use when needed. The procedures and processes in place continue to evolve and change. It is not uncommon for a procedure to be implemented in the morning and revised the same afternoon. Information about COVID-19 continues to evolve, and we must adapt to keep pace with the most up-to-date information. Hall Ambulance has also taken steps to implement several preventative measures to assist in keeping our employees, patients, and visitors safe. On March 20, 2020, Hall Ambulance implemented a Health Screening department that is responsible for ensuring that

all employees and visitors are not presenting with illness or fever. At the start of each shift, every employee is screened, and their temperature checked.

Hall Ambulance also instituted a comprehensive mask policy that details when employees are required to wear masks and what type. The aggressive step of ensuring our crews wear a mask on all patient encounters, in public areas, and in our ambulances, is all dedicated to stopping the spread of illness and keeping our employees and patients safe. Keeping up-to-date has not been an easy task. Multiple members of the Hall Ambulance team collaborate daily to review responses to potential COVID-19 calls. The management team at Hall Ambulance also meets multiple times

per week to discuss the Company’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Kern County, California, the United States, and worldwide statistics are continuously reviewed. The team also discusses the number of transports of positive COVID-19 patients as well as the number of employees that have been involved with these transports. As of the writing of this article, there have been 134 transports of known COVID-19 positive patients, affecting over 165 field employees. We are proud to report that there have been no cases of COVID-19 within the Company. We believe this is a testament to the efforts of dispatchers and field crews identifying potentially infected patients, and the field crew’s commitment to safety in their use of proper PPE. *



Communications Supervisor Lashika Britton EMDs a call using the Emerging Infectious Disease Surveillance (EIDS) tool. A caller's positive responses to the questions allow Britton to alert the ambulance crew of the need to donn personal protective equipment before patient contact.

EIDS Tool Enables Dispatchers to Keep Ambulance Crews Safe Amidst Pandemic

by Darrin Stacey, interim manager, OCD

When 9-1-1 is dialed, dispatchers become the first line of contact for someone in need of medical aid, providing pre-arrival instructions to the calling party, as well as interacting with the responding ambulance crew. As the coronavirus pandemic started to take hold, our communications specialists took on the added responsibility of determining whether the patient or a family member in the household might be a "COVID-19 patient of interest." Such valuable information is vitally important as it allows the dispatcher to alert the responding paramedics or EMTs of the need to donn personal protective equipment (PPE) ahead of time. A valuable tool was put into effect, under a directive by the Kern County EMS Department, known as Emerging Infectious Disease Surveillance (EIDS). Working in tandem with Kern County's Emergency Communications Center

(ECC), this program allows our dispatchers to deviate from the standard Priority Medical Dispatch protocols and ask COVID-19 specific questions. If the caller's answers to the EIDS questions are positive, the dispatcher alerts the crew of the need to donn the appropriate level of PPE before patient contact. The original EIDS directive started with two questions asking whether the caller or someone they have had contact with traveled internationally in the 14 days prior to symptom onset? Additional updates added questions inquiring if the caller is experiencing fever, chills, cough, or shortness of breath, and whether they are able to safely meet the first responders outside? Using the EIDS tool has enabled our dispatchers to keep our front-line EMS crews protected and safe so that they can continue to respond to those in need of medical aid.*

Recognized as an Accredited Center of Excellence by the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch, Hall Ambulance's communications center is responsible for dispatching ambulances for every medical aid request across Kern County.

We salute our talented team of emergency medical dispatchers standing by for when life's unexpected moments occur.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Tabitha Baker
Supervisor | Kelsey Watson |
| Nedra Thompson | Garrett Kelley |
| Sylvia Ricks | Lupe Agcaoili |
| Ed Cordova | Lashika Britton
Supervisor |
| Jennifer Grizzell | Tim Wren |
| Christian Figueroa
Supervisor | Jordyn Kirkingburg |
| Kirk Chambers
Trainer | Kristina Harrison
Trainer |
| Julianne Solano | Justin Moulton
Trainer |
| Faith Welton | Ashly Martin
Trainee |
| Lakia Beard | Jessica Gonzales
Trainee |
| Anthony Hernandez
Supervisor | Turae Butler
Trainee |
| Ashley Lara
Trainer | |

A Personnel Note

by Krystal Mascarinas, human resources specialist

Happy Birthday

05/02 Celia Ames
05/03 Jill Harlander
05/03 Rebecca Mateiro
05/04 Katelyn Mendenhall
05/04 April Warkentin
05/06 Nedra Thompson
05/06 Chris Cook
05/06 Charline Hart
05/06 Allen Swerdgefer
05/06 Jeffrey Gleason
05/07 Anthony Dominguez
05/08 Eric Calderon
05/08 Emily Wolfe
05/09 Rafael Orozco
05/09 Cristyl Eller

05/09 Joseph Castro
05/09 Steven Holeman
05/10 Jason Pimienta
05/12 Adam Lopez
05/14 Tracy Burnside
05/15 Theo Feliz
05/15 Immanuel Holliday
05/15 Jeremy Capps
05/15 Kristen Clark
05/16 Greg Bicera
05/16 Naomie West
05/17 Michael Coglianese
05/19 Daniela Castillo Dominguez
05/20 John Wiley

05/22 Rocco Scopellite
05/23 Ryan Makaiwi
05/23 Gerardo Santana
05/25 Edward Kyles
05/27 Johnny Ayala-Garcia
05/28 Joshua Stretz
05/30 Marian Anson
05/31 Mark Corum
05/31 Adam Aase
06/01 Raul Depaz
06/05 Ed Bronowicki
06/05 Lori Webby
06/06 Brandy King
06/07 Chelsey Hepp
06/08 Cortland Ashbrook

06/08 Debbie Rogers
06/09 Lillie Rodriguez
06/09 Jacqueline Summers
06/10 Robert Wilson
06/10 Dewi Adams
06/11 Jacob Estes
06/11 James Mascola
06/11 Mark Gildez
06/11 Seth Mason
06/12 Leddy Medrano
06/13 Katie Van Allen
06/13 Joshua Williams
06/13 Jennifer Phillips

Welcome New Employees

03/10 Joseph Castro, EMT
03/10 Devin Major, EMT
03/10 Jacqueline Summers, EMT
03/10 Michelle Guidotti, EMT
03/10 Brandon Dorsey, EMT
03/10 Sarah Hague, EMT

03/10 Nichole Hodges, CCT RN
03/16 Charlene Frame, Business Office Director
03/31 Jennifer Gomez Hernandez, EMT
03/31 Joshua Kurtz, EMT
03/31 Marina Wheeler, EMT

03/31 Jessica Gonzales,
Communications Specialist
03/31 Tyler Sellers, Paramedic

Display Your Company Pride for a Chance to Win!



We are rounding the employee parking lots to see who is proudly displaying their Hall Ambulance license plate frame. If one of these belongs to you, bring your registration to Administration and claim your prize!

HallMark

Founder of Hall Ambulance Service

Harvey L. Hall
(1971-2018)

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The HallMark is published for the staff, friends, and family of Hall Ambulance Service, Inc.

Comments, questions, or suggestions should be directed to Mark Corum, director of media services at: corumm@hallamb.com.

Established in 1971, Hall Ambulance Service is the 9-1-1 paramedic provider for 88% of Kern County, California's population. The Company serves the communities of Bakersfield, Arvin, Lamont, Frazier Park, Tehachapi, Rosamond, Mojave, California City, Boron, Taft, Shafter, and Wasco.



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@HallAmbulanceService

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Community Appreciation for Frontline Responders

In times of crisis, Americans come together to show their support. Such is true during the coronavirus pandemic as restaurants, merchants, organizations, and the community has gone out of their way to express their appreciation to EMS, public safety, and healthcare workers on the frontline.

Gratitude to first responders has been extended from national brands like Costco, Starbucks, Krispy Kreme, Circle K, SaveMart, FoodMaxx, and McDonald's, while locally operated restaurants including Denny's, Texas Roadhouse, Pappy's Coffee Shop, and The Well (with First Amendment Tattoo) served meals to our EMS crews.



A unique concept came from Food for the Frontline Kern County benefitting local restaurants while honoring first responders. Through donations from area Kiwanis International clubs, over one-hundred Happy Jack's Pie 'N Burger meals were delivered for our crews to enjoy. Local organizations are getting involved, too! In Taft, Chevron San Joaquin Valley Business Unit provided 12 \$100 fuel cards for the paramedics and EMTs assigned to Post 21, while businesses in Shafter and Wasco supported Care for Our Hero's. The Stockdale Moose Lodge organized a drive-thru spaghetti lunch, and Pacifica Senior Living dropped off sack lunches for our crews to enjoy. Even youngsters are getting involved, including Girl Scout Reyna Abdool, who dropped off several packages of America's favorite cookies to enjoy!

Such generosity goes a long way in warming the hearts of those on the frontline and is much appreciated! *

Social Media Campaign Showcases Our Employees

With quarantine practices in place, many have turned to social media to keep informed and entertained.

In an effort to highlight the dedication of our employees during this time, Hall Ambulance implemented a social media campaign entitled, "Working On the Frontlines of the COVID-19 Pandemic." The campaign features Hall Paramedics, EMTs, EMDs, RNs, and support staff talking about their response to the pandemic, while embracing new norms such as donning PPE.

Posts have been made across Hall Ambulance's social media platforms which include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn and have reached thousands of views across the nation. The campaign has also been a great way for family members of employees to keep connected with what they are doing in this age of social distancing. *

