

Dial 911!

A car accident . . .

A heart attack . . .

A child has fallen . . .

For the people of Whatcom County, a simple call to 911 will enlist the services of a specialized team of professionals from EMS (Emergency Medical Services). Emergency medical personnel will respond to the call, assess the situation, and proceed with appropriate, life-saving care and stabilization measures. The patient will then be quickly transported to a health care facility that can provide maximum recovery.

It all happens so quickly, and with such professionalism. But the behind the scenes support of this team is also extraordinary. Coordinating EMS providers -- offering continuing education to emergency medical services personnel -- facilitating communication between hospitals and EMS -- educating the public on how to access this care.

It's a big job. And that's what the Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Care Council is all about. It's local people donating their time in a cooperative effort to coordinate and improve emergency medical services in Whatcom County communities.



Whatcom County Emergency Medical Services & Trauma Care Council



Commitment Cooperation Communication

Commitment to Education

The Council sponsors a wide variety of education and prevention programs that served both the community and the professional emergency caregiver.

Since 1981 the EMS and Trauma Care Council has sponsored the Annual Conference on Pre-Hospital Medicine. This conference is the second largest EMS conference in Washington State.

The Council regulates Whatcom County Emergency Medical Service training, including Emergency Technician Training.

The Council also manages the Whatcom County CISD (Critical Incident Stress Debriefing) Program that provides debriefings following critical incidents for emergency response agencies.

Through the Education Committee, the Council sponsors various on-going trainings for emergency medical responders, to include:

- Defibrillation training,
- Standardized annual training for EMTs and First Responders,
- Approval of county EMS instructors, And quality assurance standards.

The Council participates in community trainings, such as CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation).



Cooperation among Agencies

The Council supports services such as 911 and other programs that increase public participation and access to Emergency Medical Services. In addition, the council has completed the first phase of a countywide plan for emergency medical services.

The Council's role as liaison provides Whatcom County with the opportunity to make recommendations regarding local needs to the Washington State Department of Health. The Council works closely with the North Region EMS and Trauma Care Council, an agency composed of councils from Snohomish, Island, San Juan, Skagit, and Whatcom counties. Together, these counties have developed a comprehensive Trauma Care System for the North Region, which is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the needs of the public are met.

Communicating the Spirit of Volunteerism

Volunteers are still the backbone of both EMS and the EMS and Trauma Council; approximately 65% of all emergency medical service providers are volunteers. The Council is composed of volunteers representing pre-hospital, hospital,

education, fire fighting, law enforcement, industry and the public at large.

Supporting EMS since 1972

The Emergency Medical Service and Trauma Care Council is a non-profit advisory board that offers direction and support to the Emergency Medical Services System of Whatcom County. The Council is part of a nationwide network of advisory boards promoted by the Federal Emergency Medical Services Act of 1973. These councils assist local EMS providers with long-range planning, education and prevention programs. In addition, the EMS Council facilitates communication among EMS providers, state and local government, and the Washington State Department of Health.

EMS and Trauma Care Council: Coordinating and Supporting a Countywide EMS System

An EMS system is defined as one “. . . which provides for the organized arrangement of trained personnel, facilities and equipment for the effective and coordinated delivery of health care under emergency conditions (occurring either as a result of the patient's condition or of natural disaster).”

– American Trauma Society



Whatcom County EMS and Trauma Care Council Mission Statement

The mission of the Whatcom County Emergency Medical Services Council is to help reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with trauma and acute illness, by working to enhance the quality of patient care that is cost effective to the community served.

Whatcom County EMS and Trauma Care Council meetings are open to the public. For more information about meetings, programs and services, call the Council office at (360) 715-6418 or email wcemsc@nas.com.

The Council accepts contributions to support its services. The Council pursues grants to finance programs, services and special projects. The Council also receives funds through contributions.

Credits:

*Photo of Olympic Pipeline Explosion
Brad Bennett, Whatcom County*

*Photo of EMS Auto Accident
Ken Gustafson, Bellingham Fire Dept.*

*Photo of Firefighter Trainees
Ken Gustafson, Bellingham Fire Dept.*

*Photo of EMS Students
Gene Fusch, BTC*