



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Ana L. van Balen
Director

June 20th, 2012

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
Montgomery County Executive
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Leggett:

On behalf of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB), I am writing to express the MCCAB's support for the recently enacted Emergency Medical Services Transport Insurance Reimbursement Act (Act). A similar letter is being sent to the County Council President.

The Act will enable the County to collect an estimated \$18 million a year from insurers to reimburse the County for the costs of ambulance transports. The Act includes the following provisions to safeguard County residents and enhance EMS services:

- ensures that County residents will not pay out-of-pocket expenses for EMS transport;
- establishes a patient advocate in the Office of Consumer Protection;
- requires the Fire Chief to report semiannually to the County Council and County Executive regarding implementation of the Act;
- requires the County to conduct a public outreach and education campaign;
- requires the County to use revenues collected from insurers to supplement existing expenditures for EMS services, rather than supplanting existing spending.

The two recommendations which follow are for your consideration as you implement the provisions of the new law.

Recommendation 1: Include EMS patient health outcome measures in the Fire Chief's required semiannual report to the County Council

The provision of the Act that requires the Fire Chief to report semiannually to the County Council and County Executive is consistent with the MCCAB's support for a responsive, transparent, and accountable government. Regular reporting will also help to ensure that resource deployment decisions made by the Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service (MCFRS) are data-driven and based on the medical evidence of what is best for patients.

The MCCAB strongly believes that the public reporting of EMS patient outcome measures, such as EMS patient survival from sudden cardiac arrest, would contribute to improved performance by the MCFRS. The MCFRS has continued to make significant advancements in measuring EMS patient outcomes particularly in the area of treating patients experiencing heart attacks

(STEMI) and sudden cardiac arrest. The survival of STEMI patients to hospital discharge and other EMS patient outcome measures should be included in the Fire Chief's semiannual report.

Recommendation 2: Measure and publicly disclose the impact of the public education and outreach campaign

An important component of the Act is a public education and outreach campaign to ensure that patients experiencing medical emergencies are not dissuaded from calling 9-1-1 or accepting transport to the hospital due to financial concerns. Poorly designed public education campaigns can have undesired effects; therefore the MCCAB encourages the involvement of public health experts from the County's Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Consumer Protection in designing an effective public education and outreach campaign. The County should also measure the impact of this public education effort on residents' knowledge of the EMS reimbursement program and their willingness to call 9-1-1 and accept transport if experiencing a medical emergency.

The MCCAB will closely monitor the implementation of the Act, particularly its impact on residents who use EMS services and the performance of the EMS system. The MCCAB looks forward to working with you to improve EMS services in the County. The MCCAB appreciates the opportunity to share its views with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Gamunu Wijetunge
Chair
Mid-County Citizen's Advisory Board

CC: Roger Berliner, President, County Council