

“Advancing Through the Basics” Strategic Utilization of BLS Ambulances in EMS: Where Are We One Year Later?

Gathering of Eagles 2023

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Can we predict which calls are clinically safe to assign a BLS ambulance?

What EMS care data can we measure to analyze safety of BLS ambulance assignment?

Do BLS ambulances impede timely care for patients that need ALS/paramedic care?



BLS Ambulances

- Initial Pilot Program started 2018
 - Hospital to Home/Nursing Home
 - Hospital to Hospital - BLS care only (rare)
 - HEMS/Fixed Wing landing zone/airport to ED/ICU
 - Organ harvest teams



EMSA Request to Expand BLS Pilot

- Intent for net increase in ambulances staffed
- 911 call response
- Created a tiered 911 system in OKC/Tulsa
 - Required change in local ordinances
 - Increases EMT patient care experience
 - Increases frequency of EMT use of scope of practice
 - Stimulate EMT interest in Paramedic training?



Medical Oversight Response

- Patient safety must always predominate
- MPDS code by code analysis
 - What descriptors = BLS scope of practice?
 - What data = non-RLS transport to ED?
 - Volume of calls per MPDS code?



A Note of Caution

- Medical Oversight in Tiered Systems
- “To a tired paramedic, everything looks BLS.”
- Most allow BLS→ALS→BLS or ALS→BLS
- OKC/TUL **only** supports BLS→ALS



Call Assignment Analysis

- MPDS determinant codes (n=2217)
- EHR review for:
 - RLS returns
 - ALS scope of practice intervention aka “ALS Assist”
 - “Unstable” vital signs
 - Defined by treatment protocol definitions
 - www.okctulomd.com



911 BLS Assignment Call Types

- Clinically makes sense
- RLS return to hospital <1%
- ALS assist activation <10%
- Unstable vital signs <1%
- CY2020 Included Calls = 22672 (10% total)



911 BLS Program

Dec 2021-Mar 2022

- Metro Oklahoma City & Tulsa Combined
- Eligible Calls (MCB MPDS Codes) = 8021
 - BLS Ambulance Responses = 925 (11.53%)
- Overall Transports = 5488
 - Cancel/Refusal of Service 31.58%
- RLS Transports = 72 (**0.90%**)
- ALS Assists = 40 (**4.32%**)
- Unstable VS = 13 (**0.16%**)



911 BLS Program

Dec 2021-Mar 2023

- Metro Oklahoma City & Tulsa Combined
- Eligible Calls (MCB MPDS Codes) = 32822
 - BLS Ambulance Responses = 6032 (18.4%)
- Overall Transports = 22878
 - Cancel/Refusal of Service 30.3%
- RLS Transports = 301 (**0.92%**)
- ALS Assists = 214 (**0.65%**)
- Unstable VS = 891 (**2.71%**)



911 BLS Program

Feb - Mar 2023

- Eastern Division/Metro Tulsa
- Eligible Calls (MCB MPDS Codes) = 2212
 - BLS Ambulance Responses = 885 (40%)
- Overall Transports = 1585
 - Cancel/Refusal of Service 28.3%
- RLS Transports = 13 (**0.6%**)
- ALS Assists = 38 (**1.7%**)
- Unstable VS = 56 (**2.5%**)



911 BLS Program

Feb - Mar 2023

- Western Division/Metro OKC
- Eligible Calls (MCB MPDS Codes) = 1758
 - BLS Ambulance Responses = 58 (3.3%)
- Overall Transports = 1273
 - Cancel/Refusal of Service 27.6%
- RLS Transports = 16 (**0.9%**)
- ALS Assists = 11 (**0.6%**)
- Unstable VS = 50 (**2.8%**)







MPDS 26A08 “Sick Person-Other Pain”

- 6888 Responses
- 5889 Transports
 - (Cancel/Refusal of Transport = 14.5%)
- 57 RLS Transports (**0.83%**)
- 43 ALS Assists (**0.62%**)
- 194 Unstable VS (**2.83%**)

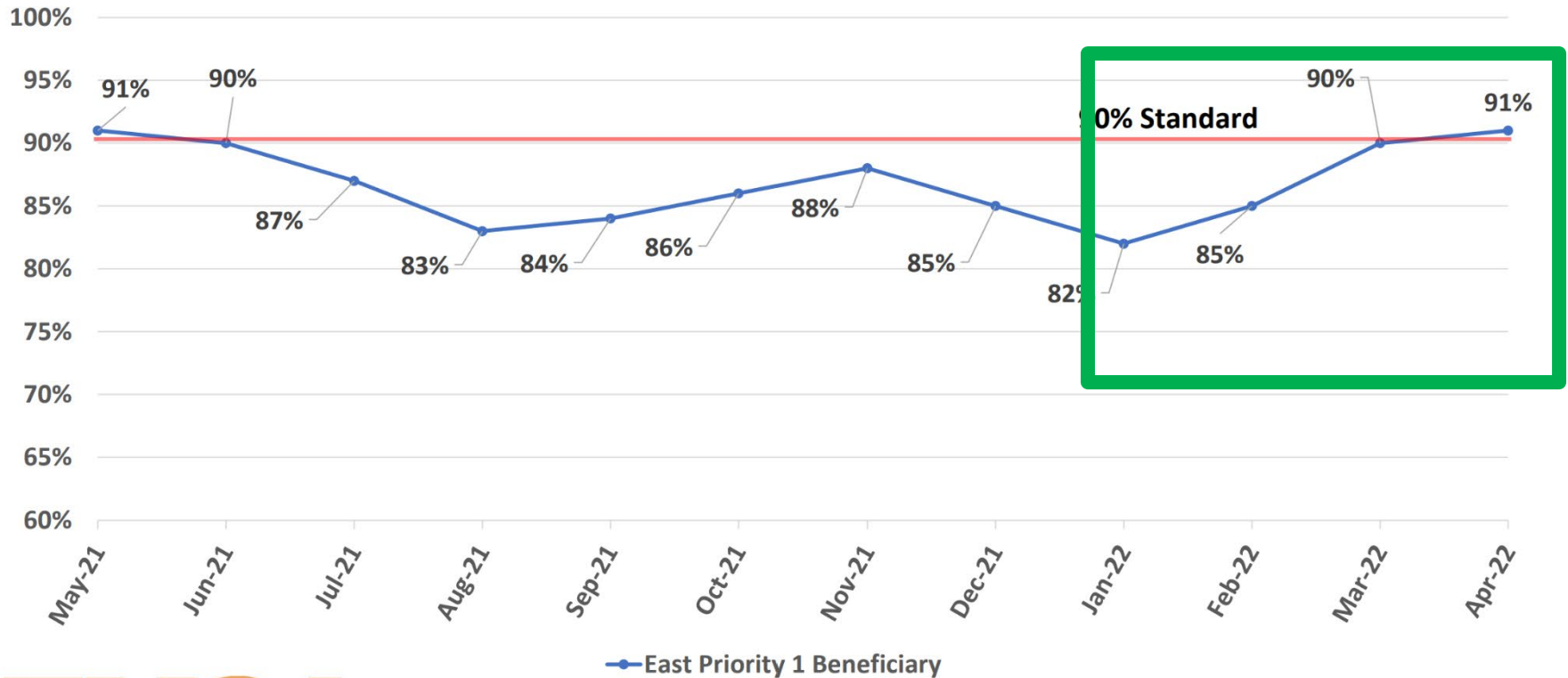


MPDS 32B02 Medical No Pt Info

- 3898 Responses
- 425 Transports
 - (Cancel/Refusal of Transport = 89.1%)
- 32 RLS Transports (**0.82%**)
- 16 ALS Assists (**0.41%**)
- 16 Unstable VS (**0.41%**)



East Beneficiary Response Time Compliance

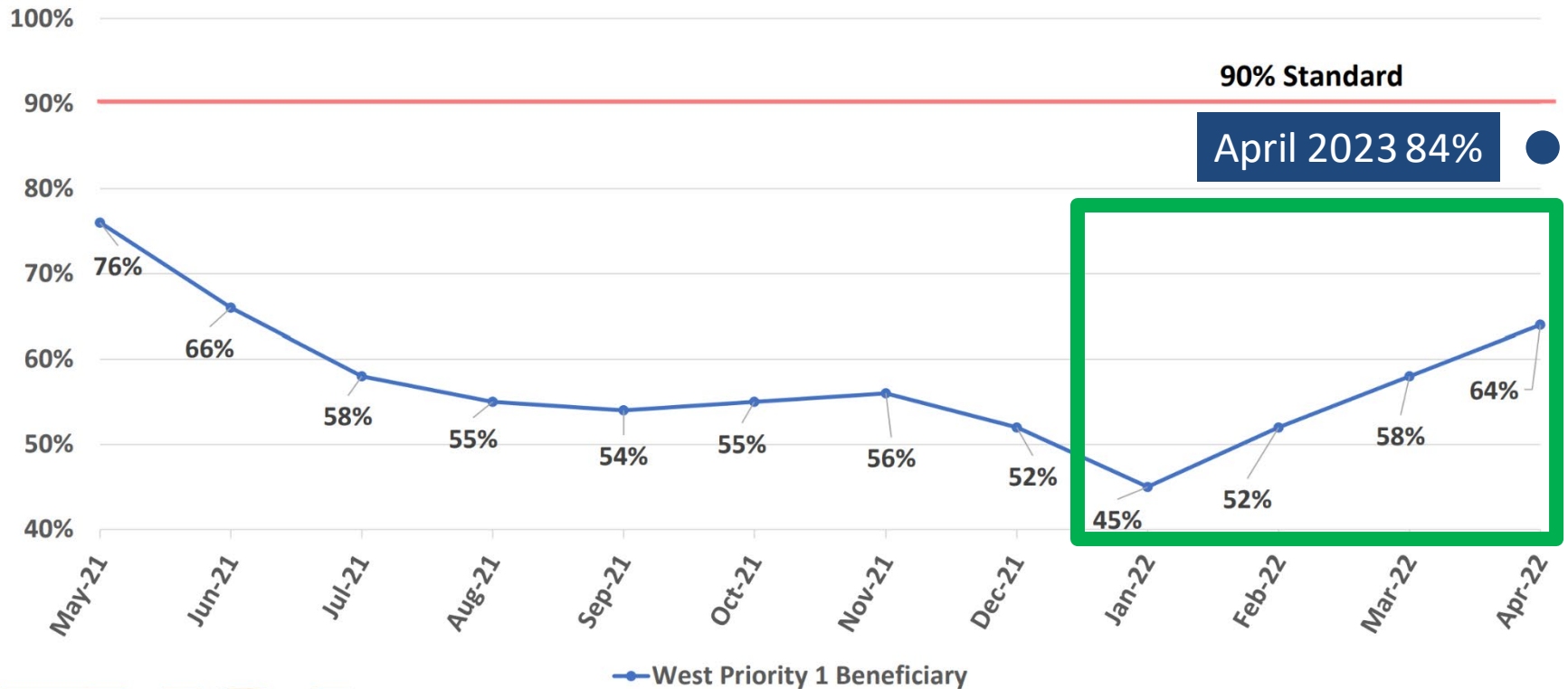


"To serve our communities' pre-hospital needs through value-driven, compassionate, and clinically superior care."

Tulsa, OK – Highest Priority ALS Ambulance Response



West Beneficiary Response Time Compliance



"To serve our communities' pre-hospital needs through value-driven, compassionate, and clinically superior care."



OKC, OK – Highest Priority ALS Ambulance Response

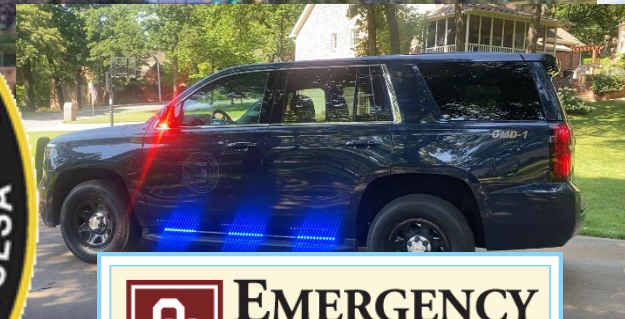


Strategically Adding 911 BLS Ambulances

- Increases the “availability” of ALS ambulances
- Increases the “capacity” of EMS for ALS
- Reduces the time for good paramedics to reach patients needing ALS



TULSA



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