



May 30, 2017

Dear Mr. James Newlun,

Our association would like to inform you that our members are becoming more and more concerned regarding recruitment of Paramedics and EMT's in Wisconsin. Our membership encompasses private for profit, non-profit, hospital based and municipal agencies. Accordingly, we transport over 400,000 patients per year and that number continues to grow. We believe there are a number of factors creating this problem and would like to focus on a few in particular. First, the technical colleges are not producing enough resources to fill the demand and even if they did that would not solve the problem that many of our services are experiencing by losing experienced medics. Second, we cannot effectively recruit out of state with the current reciprocity process which does not assure that we as providers can assure licensure on these medics in a timely manner.

Our association members need to be able to meet the demand of the citizens of the State of Wisconsin and the Paramedic / EMT shortage is bigger than what most may think. We have services in our association that had waiting lists and they could pick and choose the best candidate to fill vacancies and now find themselves with no waiting list or even applicants coming in looking for work. These are professional services with starting pay ranges well above average.

What we are currently seeing in our industry are providers soliciting other service provider employees trying to get them to switch for greener pastures. This can work for a short period of time, but will not sustain the current market or demand. In fact, some could argue this practice will only hurt residents in Wisconsin, especially smaller markets. The only providers that will win in this scenario are the one's giving high end sign on bonus's etc. and then this type of practice will become the norm and an expectation. Additionally, hospitals, clinics, and some factories are even now hiring paramedics and EMT's which further depletes the pool that all providers trying to recruit from.

In closing, we are not trying to point fingers at the State office, we simply are pointing out an obvious fact that we are facing a shortage of Paramedics and EMT's. One possible solution would be allowing services to recruit from other states and letting them work immediately under the direct license of the provider's medical director and that service provider would be responsible to provide the state with all proper documentation in a timely manner. This would allow providers another tool to seek out good candidates outside of the state to help lessen the shortage we are experiencing here in Wisconsin. Perhaps, the EMS board could look at this and provide other solutions or at least a discussion on this matter as this is affecting a lot of services throughout the state.

Respectfully,

Patrick Ryan
President