

# Home Health Partnership Overview

## Program Goals:

- Reduce 9-1-1 responses or transports to acute care facilities, and a decreased burden on the patient/family.
- Early notification of the home health agency, by the Communications Center, when 9-1-1 call is placed for an enrolled patient.
- Dispatch of a Community Paramedic (CP) to the call, alone or with an ambulance response.
- Advance notification to responding crews that the patient has been enrolled in a partner home health agency.

## Background:

Home health patients are at increased risk for activating 9-1-1 due to clinically complex medical conditions. Home health agencies are desirous of providing care coordination for their patients to potentially prevent an unnecessary ED visits. Additionally, there are times when the home health agency receives an after-hours episodic request from a patient on service that requires an assessment and/or treatment of a minor medical complaint.

### 9-1-1 Intervention:

The partnership with home health allows the agency to register their patients on service with MedStar to facilitate identification of these patients in the event they call 9-1-1. When this happens, the MedStar communications center notifies the home health agency of the response, and dispatches a CP who has received special training by the home health agency to co-respond with the ambulance for patients enrolled in the partnership.

Once on scene, the CP conducts an initial assessment of the patient and contacts the home health agency nurse on call to provide care coordination. Under protocols approved by MedStar's Medical Director and the Medical Director of the home health agency, the CP can provide interventions such as breathing treatments, in-home diuresis, diabetic treatments, Foley catheter maintenance or replacement, and wound vac troubleshooting.

The episodic intervention and alleviation of immediate medical issues can then avoid a trip to the ED and facilitate a follow-up home visit by the home health agency.

### Back-up for Episodic Requests:

The partner home health agency can call MedStar's communications center and request a community paramedic visit a patient on the home health agency's service to provide an episodic assessment and call the home health agency for care coordination. This generally occurs after hours, such as evenings, nights or weekends.

The immediate response of MedStar's CP helps prevent the patient from needing to call 9-1-1 for a trip to the ED, and helps the home health agency demonstrate care and compassion for the patient on their service, enhancing the patient's experience with the agency. It may also help improve the operational and economic efficiency of the home health agency.



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**Procedure:**

- The home health agency provides listings of patients on their service in the MedStar service area.
- The patient's address is logged into MedStar's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system for ready identification in the event the patient / family accesses 9-1-1.
  - Including information in the CAD system so that communications personnel are aware of which home health agency is coordinating care for the patient.
- In the event of a 9-1-1 call to the residence, a regular system response occurs, with the addition of an on-duty CP who has received special training by the home health agency.
  - The communications center will also contact the patient's home health agency to advise of the 9-1-1 response.
  - The CP on-scene will work with the patient to assure timely patient care coordination with the home health agency.
- During enrollment, the home health agency may contact MedStar for an in-home visit by a CP should the agency become concerned about the patient's status.



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