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Community Resource Paramedic

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Resource Paramedicine improves patient care and reduces non-emergency calls to 911

SNOHOMISH COUNTY, WASH. – In August 2015, Snohomish County Fire District 7 and Lake Stevens Fire partnered to create a Community Resource Paramedic (CRP) program. Now a year and a half later, the results are showing a reduction in non-emergency calls to 911 and improved patient care.

“Often people call 911 because they don’t know where else to turn,” said Scott Dorsey, Deputy Chief for Snohomish County Fire District 7. “The purpose of the program is to connect frequent callers to the community resources they need.”

Emergency Medical Services personnel responding to calls identify and refer people to a Community Resource Paramedic shared by both districts. The CRP provides an in-home assessment, and then refers the individual to social service programs or community health resources. The CRP can contact health providers, social service agencies and community health resources to schedule appointments for patients, or work with family members to provide ongoing care. If necessary, the CRP will provide follow-up care and coordination of services.

Between August 1, 2015 and October 31, 2016, there were 98 referrals made to the Community Resource Paramedic. Twenty-nine of those patients had been enrolled in the program for a time period sufficient to analyze data, and the results are encouraging. There was an overall reduction of non-emergency calls to 911 by 52.3%. Almost 80% of these patients changed the way they used the EMS system after working with the CRP, as well.

Ambulance transports to area hospitals also decreased by 52.1% with this patient group. This reduces health care costs overall and keeps ambulances available for emergencies requiring an emergent response.

Paramedic Craig Fisher has served as the CRP for both fire districts since July 2016. He says the data is encouraging, but it’s the patient outcomes that matter.

Paramedic Fisher has connected people with hospice to access care in their final days. He’s helped other community members access services for substance abuse, and connected seniors to home repair and

nutrition services. He has also connected veterans with a specialist to access services provided by the Veterans Administration.

“The CRP program is about caring for people,” said Fisher. “We’re improving patient health, their experience with the healthcare system, and lowering healthcare costs overall.”

In addition to emergency personnel, the public can refer a friend or family member to the CRP program. Referrals can be made by emailing Paramedic Fisher at crp@snofire7.org.

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Snohomish County Fire District 7 provides fire and life safety services to 110,000 people over 98.5 square miles in central and east Snohomish County, including the communities of Monroe, Maltby, Clearview and Mill Creek. Fire District 7 taxpayers have built the most advanced emergency response system in Snohomish County with highly-trained personnel, facilities, apparatus, and rescue programs. Learn more about Fire District 7 by visiting www.snofire7.org, or find them on Facebook @firedistrict7 and Twitter @snocountyfire7.

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Lake Stevens Fire provides fire suppression and emergency medical service to 44,000 people over 42 square miles. Our highly-skilled firefighters and paramedics respond to more than 5,600 calls per year, 76 percent of which are for emergency medical service (EMS). Lake Stevens Fire is proud to be debt free, operate under a balanced budget and has a long history of passing independent audits by the state. More information about the fire district can be found at www.lsfire.org.