



MEMORANDUM

To: Whatcom County Council Members
From: Mike Hilley, EMS Manager
Subject: Community Paramedic Interlocal
Date: November 30, 2020

Requested Action:

We are asking the Council to approve an amendment to an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Bellingham Fire Department (BFD) for the purposes of expanding the successful BFD Community Paramedic Program by covering the expenses for the Community Paramedic Program facilitated through two Community Paramedics.

Background and Purpose:

Community Health programs are evolving with associated outreach programs that include the Ground Response and Coordinated Engagement (GRACE) team. The Bellingham Fire Department has operationalized a Community Paramedic/Health program over the last six years citing a significant reduction of the overuse of 911 by those enrolled in the program. The Bellingham model has expanded into the county with additional Community Paramedic's and Sheriff's Deputies supported by case workers from the GRACE Team which includes four case management specialists, a community health worker (CHW), a part-time Nurse Practitioner (ARNP), Program Manager and Administrative Assistants.

The goal of the program is to direct patients to the right care at the right time in an effort to reduce frequent use of the 911 system for both EMS and Law Enforcement. In March, 2020 BFD requested and gained approval from the EMS Oversight Board to fund both Community Paramedics beginning in 2021. The BFD Community Paramedic commitment is programmed through the life of the current levy as outline in the interlocal agreement.

Funding Amount and Source:

The EMS Levy Fund as budgeted through 2021-2022 biennial budget.