

**CHECK OUT
WHAT'S IN-
SIDE:**

- * Holiday Happenings
- * AAA All Stars
- * From the COO: Priority Dispatch
- * Patient Satisfaction Results
- * Starting the New Year with a Record!

2013 Commissioner Morrone Award Winners



Congratulations to Megan Hollern, John Hanshew, Jeff Banks and Michael Gonzalez for being honored at the 18th Annual Commissioner John Morrone Awards lunch on January 25th. These four employees were nominated for their exceptional patient care at the 2012 Madeira Beach Triathlon.

On May 18th, Dawn Pelletier finished the run portion of the triathlon and passed the finish line. When her racing heart still didn't slow down after several minutes of rest, Dawn found EMT Jeff Banks and Paramedic Megan Hollern on the beach in a medical Kubota. She asked if she could sit with them for a short time until she caught her breath. After several minutes with no relief, Jeff and Megan began to get concerned. They monitored her vitals and then convinced Dawn to let them take her up to the road so a proper assessment of her heart rhythm could be done in the ambulance.

Upon her arrival to the ambulance, the paramedics placed her on the Lifepak heart monitor and found that she was in severe V-tach (Ventricular Tachycardia) with a low pulse and a dangerously low blood pressure. Michael Gonzalez and John Hanshew, the crew on stand-by that day at the ambulance, immediately cardioverted Mrs. Pelletier into normal sinus rhythm. She instantaneously felt relief. She was transported to Largo Medical Center for a cardiac evaluation and had a defibrillator surgically implanted a few days after her arrival.

Congratulations Megan, John, Jeff and Michael! Keep up the great care and customer service!





Holiday Happenings

Our First Annual “Fill the Ambulance” food drive was a tremendous success. The donations were delivered on November 20th and Metropolitan Ministries was excited by the enormous contribution. All employees were encouraged to fill one shopping bag with food and/or toiletries for those in need. The goal was to fill an entire ambulance and we exceeded our own expectations. In December, a Toys-for-Tots employee donation drive was also a great success! Thank you to all of our employees who helped to make the Holiday Season extra special for those in need.

In October, we decorated one of our ambulances pink in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. In addition, Sunstar employees bought and sold pink Sunstar t-shirts, to help show their support. We sold enough pink shirts to make a \$1,000 donation to the Suncoast Affiliate of Susan Komen for the Cure! A portion of this donation will go to breast cancer patients right here in Pinellas County!



A special thank you to our 17 Sunstar volunteers who helped to complete a new Habitat For Humanity project in St. Petersburg in November. Along with painting, trim and storm shutter installation, our volunteers added final touches to the outside of the home and cleaned the inside.



STARS OF LIFE AWARD NOMINEES HEADED TO WASHINGTON DC



Congratulations to Larry Marshall and Megan Hollern for being selected as 2013 Stars of Life Award recipients! The American Ambulance Association requests Star of Life nominations annually, looking specifically for individuals who epitomize the spirit and commitment of top ambulance service professionals. On March 18th, Megan and Larry will travel to Washington to receive leadership training, Capital Hill updates and motivating instruction from EMS panels and keynote speakers. We are proud of both employees and appreciate their efforts to support the high standards of Sunstar Paramedics!

From the C.O.O.



Mark Postma,
 Chief Operating Officer

In January this year, the Pinellas County Board of Commissioners approved Phase 3 of Priority Dispatch starting in June 2013. Priority Dispatch is a nationally recognized protocol to prioritize the dispatch of appropriate type and number of units to calls for medical assistance through a standardized questioning for an effective triage. The benefits of effective triage are proper resource utilization by call type and severity, preserving available resources, improved response times to serious emergencies, and "right sizing" our response to low acuity calls. Not sending a fire department first responder on lower acuity calls that statistically may require transport allows that first responder to respond to life threatening emergencies and makes them available for fire responses.

Phase 3 will reduce fire department first responder responses to minor falls and sick person calls. This would result in a reduction of approximately 14,000 calls per year (10%). Monetary savings will not be seen immediately

but provides room for growth so new personnel, equipment, and stations would not be necessary to purchase (the system growth rate is about 3% per year or a 28% increase in calls over 10 years). Delay in response time will be minimal. The average fire department downgraded response time is 7 min, 16 sec, while an ambulance's is 10 min (so 2 minutes and 44 seconds longer). Quality of Care will remain the same as the patient still gets an ALS unit. The same medical training is provided by the county-wide Continuing Education Program to Ambulance and Fire Department personnel. If the ambulance will be more than 15 minutes, FD will be sent immediately.

As you may recall, this is not the first for reduction of responses in Pinellas County. In December 2010, Phase 2 of Priority Dispatch was passed. In Phase 2, only fire department first responders respond to low acuity 911 calls that rarely have an ambulance transport (sting ray bites, falls without injury, children locked in vehicles). Phase 2 has reduced ambulance responses by 5.6% since implementation. Reducing responses to low acuity requests helps decrease the overall cost of the EMS system. As with our system, EMS systems nationwide continue to see increased growth and are implementing Priority Dispatch to capitalize on their limited resources. The good news is that these efforts help contain growth and decrease the number of resources dedicated to an EMS response if the patient does not need them.

Sunstar PARAMEDICS

12490 Ulmerton Road
Largo, FL 33774

Phone: (727) 582-2090

Fax: (727) 582-2249

On the web at www.sunstarems.com

Our Mission is "to provide compassionate quality care and service to our community."

Community Newsletter

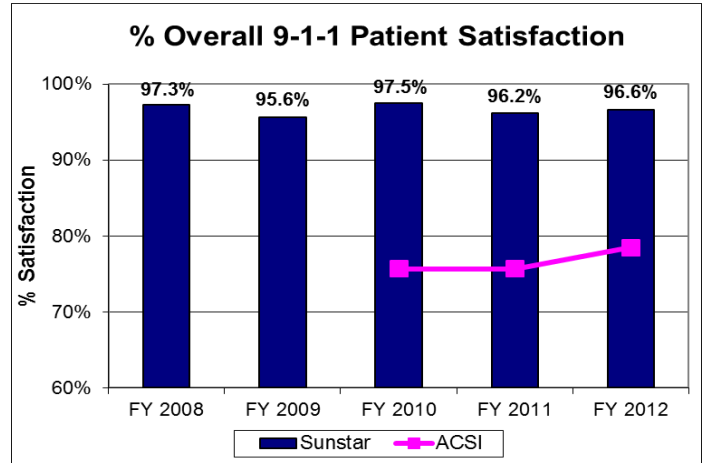
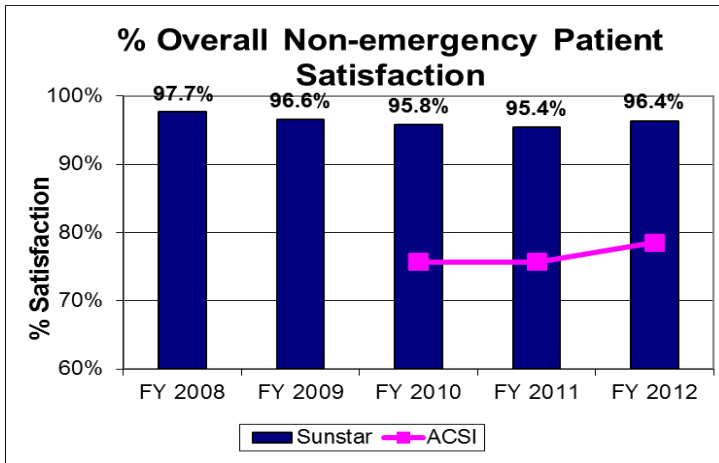
TO:



Know someone who would enjoy this quarterly newsletter? E-mail Ksterling@sunstarems.com

WANT TO VISIT SUNSTAR?
Stop by for a tour!
Mon.- Fri. 0800am - 4:00pm

GOOD NEWS!! For fiscal year 2012, our patient satisfaction scores increased to between 96 and 97 percent! This data is placed against the American Consumer Satisfaction Index (in pink below), an economic indicator that measures the satisfaction of consumers across the U.S. economy.



Starting the Year Off with a Bang!

Sunstar Paramedics welcomed the New Year in with a bang, breaking several transport records. January 10, 2013 was the single highest transport day with 506, besting the 492 transport record set on April 8, 2011. January 2013 also

set a new record month high with 12,978 transports. The week of January 7th was also the highest week with 3,038 transports. We believe the increase was due to a high number of flu-like illnesses.