



# SANFORD AMBULANCE

# VITAL SIGNS

Fall 2021

Compassion, Excellence and Community

## Sanford Ambulance



The challenges of the last year have greatly driven home what our team has always known - we are stronger together. With that in mind, we are proud to announce that the names of our ambulance services in Fargo-Moorhead, Hillsboro, Thief River Falls are transitioning to one name, Sanford Ambulance.

F-M Ambulance has been part of Sanford Health since the merger with Meritcare more than 10 years ago. The time is right for our service to proudly reflect the strength, values, certifications and integrated quality care that Sanford Health provides at so many levels.

The name change to Sanford Ambulance does not mean that we will only transport to Sanford Hospital - we will always follow

the regulations and ethics of our profession and transport our patients wherever they may receive the fastest, most appropriate care. This is a message we will continue to send to our partner agencies, health care facilities, patients and communities.

In the next few months, you can look forward to seeing new uniforms, signage, trucks and a brand new webpage.

Our name will always be a part of our history and our legacy. The future of Sanford Ambulance will build on all that our past employees have done and all we can do, together, in the future.

## Friend of Nursing Award

Kathy Lonski, Improvement Advisor for Sanford Ambulance, was recently named as a Sanford Friend of Nursing Award recipient.

Kathy has been a paramedic for over 24 years. Kathy has had many roles during her career including operations, education, and administrative. Kathy excels at creating strong personal connections that allow for communication and crucial conversations to take place between the different hospital specialty areas that Sanford Ambulance interacts with which allows Sanford patients to receive the best care possible. In her current role, Kathy acts as a liaison between hospital specialty areas in order to make sure that the continuum of patient care flows smoothly throughout the patient's entire experience – from the time that the ambulance crew arrives on-scene to the time they are discharged from Sanford. Congratulations, Kathy!





# Sanford Ambulance Names New Medical Directors

Sanford Ambulance is pleased to announce that Dr. Jason VanValkenburg and Dr. Jeff Tiongson have been named co-medical directors for Sanford Ambulance in Fargo, Hillsboro and Thief River Falls. Dr. VanValkenburg will primarily be working with the operations portion of Sanford Ambulance, while Dr. Tiongson will primarily be working with Sanford Health EMS Education.

Both Dr. VanValkenburg and Dr. Tiongson are board certified in emergency medicine who work primarily in the Sanford Emergency Department. Dr. VanValkenburg was born and raised in Fargo; he has worked at Sanford since 2014 and is married with 3 kids. Dr. Tiongson has worked at Sanford since 2009 and is married with 5 kids.



Dr. VanValkenburg



Dr. Tiongson

## Welcome to the Team!

- Ronnie Nordstrom

Paramedic
- Jessica Harms

Paramedic
- Victoria Hernandez

EMT
- Morgan Lewis

EMT
- Brooklyn Erickson

EMT
- Brian Titus

Dispatcher
- Caleb Ellingson

Dispatcher

Are you an EMT or paramedic who is interested in working for Sanford Ambulance? Check out [sanfordhealth.jobs](#) to see what positions we have available! We'd love to have you join our team!



## 2022 Recertification Courses Start Soon

Did you know that after passing the National Registry exam to become an EMT or a paramedic, each provider must complete additional educational hours every two years in order to maintain their certification? The continuing education that our providers receive helps assess their knowledge and skills in the EMS field, encourage professional development, ensure competence and promote lifelong learning.

Every two years, EMTs need 40 hours of continuing education and paramedics need 60 hours of continuing education. There are many ways for EMS providers to get their continuing education credits, including monthly company training sessions, conferences and conventions, recertification courses offered by EMS agencies, call review/personal QI and online training.

Recertification courses are starting soon - if you are interested in attending any of the courses, please register online ([www.shemse.org](#)) or call 701-364-1750 for more information.

2021 - 2022 NCCR Class Schedule				SANFORD HEALTH	
Listed by Topic in Alphabetical Order				EMS Education	
Topic	Date	Time	Topic	Date	Time
ACS & Chest Pain	8/27/2021	1800	Neurological (Seizures) (0.5 hours)	See Toxicological	
	12/13/2021	1800	OB Emergencies	See At-Risk Populations	
	1/10/2022	1800	Oxygenation	CPRI/ACLS/PALS/PEARS	
Ambulance Safety	8/27/2021	1000		10/25/2021	1800
	12/6/2021	2000	Pain Management	12/10/2021	1300
	1/10/2022	1900		2/5/2022	1000
At-Risk Populations (0.5 hours)	8/27/2021	1300	Pediatric Transport (0.5 hours)	10/25/2021	1900
OB Emergencies (0.5 hours)	10/25/2021	2000	&	12/10/2021	1400
Capnography	1/24/2022	1900	VAD (0.5 hours)	2/5/2022	1100
	ACLS/PHTLS				
CNS Injuries	8/27/2021	1100	Pediatric Cardiac Arrest	9/10/2021	1000
	10/11/2021	2000		11/8/2021	1800
	1/24/2022	1800		2/5/2022	1300
Congestive Heart Failure	ACLS		Post-Resuscitative Care	See Immunological	
Crew Resource Management	8/27/2021	1400		9/10/2021	1100
	8/30/2021	1800	Psychiatric Emergencies	11/8/2021	1900
	1/8/2022	0800		2/5/2022	1400
Culture of Safety (0.5 hours)	9/13/2021	1800	Role of Research	9/10/2021	1400
&	11/19/2021	1300		11/22/2021	1900
Evidence Based Guidelines (0.5 hours)	1/8/2022	1000		2/7/2022	1900
EMS Hygiene, Safety & Vaccinations	See Infectious Diseases		Stroke	9/10/2021	1300
	8/30/2021	1900		11/22/2021	1800
Endocrine Emergencies (Diabetes)	10/29/2021	1400		2/7/2022	1800
	1/8/2022	0900	Special Healthcare Needs (Cognitive)	10/29/2021	1100
Evidence-Based Guidelines	See Culture of Safety			12/6/2021	1900
	9/27/2021	1800		2/21/2022	2000
Field Triage	11/19/2021	1300	Special Healthcare Needs (Devices)	10/28/2021	1000
	1/8/2022	1300		11/19/2021	1400
Fluid Resuscitation (0.5 hours)	9/13/2021	1900		2/21/2022	1800
&	11/19/2021	1100	Toxicological (Opioids) (0.5 hours)	10/28/2021	1300
Hemorrhage Control (0.5 hours)	1/8/2022	1100	&	12/13/2021	1900
Immunological Emergencies (0.5 hours)	10/11/2021	1800	Neurological (Seizures) (0.5 hours)	2/21/2022	2000
&	12/10/2021	1000			
Post-Resuscitative Care (0.5 hours)	2/5/2022	0800	Trauma Triage	9/27/2021	1900
Infectious Diseases (0.5 hours)	10/11/2021	1900		11/19/2021	1400
&	12/10/2021	1100		1/8/2022	1400
Hygiene/Vaccinations (0.5 hours)	2/5/2022	0900	VAD	See Pediatric Transport	
Medication Administration	PALS/PEARS		Ventilation	CPRI/ACLS/PALS/PEARS	



# HEALTH HIGHLIGHT

## CARES: Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival

More than 350,000 people suffer sudden cardiac arrest each year, with 80% of those cases occurring outside of a hospital. As a result, survival rates are very low - less than 10% of sudden cardiac arrest victims survive. The key to survival of sudden cardiac arrest is immediate bystander CPR and quick defibrillation with an automated external defibrillator (AED). How often does someone in our community receive immediate bystander CPR - and how does Sanford Ambulance track that information?

Since 2014, Sanford Ambulance has participated in the Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival, or CARES. CARES helps communities measure and identify how to improve cardiac arrest survival rates. The CARES registry was developed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Heart Association (AHA), and the Department of Emergency Medicine at Emory University. The registry collects data from participating EMS systems and hospitals to track cardiac arrest cases and identify opportunities for improvement in the treatment of cardiac arrest. The registry links information collected about cardiac arrest, including 911 dispatch information, first responder response times and interventions, and EMS agency interventions, to outcome data from hospitals. This information helps communities determine what specific changes can be made to save more lives.

CARES objectives include:

- To collect the frequency and locations of sudden cardiac arrests in the community.
- To track the performance of each component of the EMS system (calling 911, dispatch instructions, bystander care, first responders, and advanced life support care by the ambulance crew).
- To determine the outcome of the cardiac arrest, including answering questions such as did the patient regain a pulse, did the patient survive, and were they able to function when they were discharged.
- To evaluate how well the community achieves each link in the American Heart Association's chain of survival.
- To identify and prioritize opportunities to strengthen the chain of survival by monitoring high-risk locations, settings, populations and prioritizing interventions to improve care.
- To determine if the burden of cardiac arrest and survivable outcomes differ by race/ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic levels.

So how does CARES actually work in the Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo community? Every morning, Sanford Ambulance gets a report of all cardiac arrests that took place the previous day. A team member reviews each cardiac arrest and gathers additional information from the Red River Regional Dispatch Center and the police and fire departments that responded to the call. Data collected includes demographic information about the call (where and when it took place), who performed CPR, what each responder did, which medications the patient received, and what the final disposition of the patient was when they were delivered to the emergency department. The data is entered into the national CARES registry each day. At the end of the year, the CARES registry analyzes all of the data and sends Sanford Ambulance a report that details how our community responds to cardiac arrests in addition to ideas on how to improve the survival rate in our community.





# 2021 Fargo AirSho

A typical day on the ambulance looks a little different when working at special events, including the Fargo AirSho. Although the weather was hot, there were very few medical emergencies at the show this year.

*Fargo AirShow fun facts:*

- Attendance was approximately 15,000
- Although the show began at 11:00, ambulance crews were at on scene by 7:45 AM to set up and prepare.
- Sanford Ambulance staff helped in the following ways:
  - 1 ALS crew dedicated as the "crash truck" who were staged with the Hector Airport Fire Department
  - Mass Casualty Incident team members who staffed the Incident Command vehicle
  - Drivers for the AmBus and Supply Truck
  - Tours of the AmBus and ambulances
  - 2 bicycle paramedics
  - 1 U-Cat paramedic crew
  - The very popular "misting tent"



# 2021 Downtown Fargo Street Fair

Educators from SHEMA teamed up with the Sanford Trauma team to teach community members that attended the 2021 Fargo Street Fair how to perform hands-only CPR and how to stop major bleeding.

The use of CPR dates all the way back to 1740, yet even today, most Americans don't know how to perform it. Nationally, only 32% of cardiac arrest victims get CPR from a bystander. Hands-only CPR is easy - there are only two steps to save a life:

1. Call 9-1-1
2. Push hard and fast in the center of the chest

The purpose of the "Stop the Bleed" program is to help prepare community members to save lives if people nearby are bleeding. Since 2017, over 1.5 million people have learned basic bleeding control techniques. To stop a major bleed:

1. Apply pressure with your hands
2. Apply a dressing and press on the bleeding
3. Apply a tourniquet

For more information on hands-only CPR or the "Stop the Bleed" program, please call 701-364-1750.





# Sanford Ambulance New Employees

Have you ever wondered what happens after you get hired at Sanford Ambulance?

Even after an EMT or paramedic has completed their training, there are many things that they still need to learn prior to working on their own in the back of an ambulance. Every ambulance service has a different orientation process - from a "figure it out on your own" method to an in-depth orientation process.

In Fargo, all newly-hired ambulance employees start their onboarding process with an orientation to Sanford. After the Sanford orientation, ambulance employees continue their orientation process at the Sanford Ambulance building. The ambulance orientation process is broken into four phases:

*Phase 1:* Classroom training that covers topics such as:

- Time keeping - how to punch in and out, view your schedule, enter PTO, bid for a shift, and enter your availability
- Safe driving - Emergency Vehicle Driver's Training (EVDT), company policies and expectations, driving with due regard, reporting accidents or vehicle contacts
- Customer service and corporate compliance
- Stryker PowerLoad cot - general use, safe handling, loading & unloading, troubleshooting
- Uniforms and pagers
- Protocols and HIPAA
- Safety - OSHA, workman's compensation, injury reporting
- Communication and dispatching
- Community familiarization - tours of places that they will frequent, such as hospitals, ambulance stations, Fargodome, Scheel's Arena, nursing homes

*Phase 2:* Non-patient care ambulance training, which covers topics like:

- Daily ambulance and equipment checks
- Driving emergent vs. non-emergent
- Road Safety/AceTech system - warning tones, using a spotter for backing
- Radio use and etiquette
- Navigation skills and resources
- Stocking and cleaning

*Phase 3:* Classroom training

- Company training, licensing and recertification information
- Ambulance equipment familiarization
- Tricky documentation - refusals and other special forms
- Safety - lifting & moving patients, using ambulance equipment safely
- MCI training - resources available
- Skills, scenarios, and tests

*Phase 4:* Field Training Officer portion

- General ambulance operations
- Stations and daily duties
- Patient Care Reports (PCR)
- Special transport situations, such as the NICU team
- Interacting and communication with other first responders
- Patient care - leading a call from start to finish, using appropriate protocols and equipment, using critical thinking skills, assuring accurate and timely patient care reports, and how to follow-up with clinical department if needed.





## A Very Special Patient

On July 1, ambulance crews were called to a house fire. When crews arrived, there were no patients in the house, but there were three cats that were unaccounted for.

Firefighters were able to find one cat, but it wasn't breathing very well due to smoke inhalation. Sanford Ambulance crew members assisted the cat's breathing with some supplemental oxygen and medication, and shortly after, the cat started breathing on his own. The owners took the cat to the veterinarian, who cleared the pet to return home. Thanks to the action of the ambulance crew, two of the three cats that were involved in the fire survived.



## Summer Celebration

Sanford Ambulance employees were able to enjoy a beautiful evening outside with dinner and a Redhawks baseball game in August. Thank you to all of the employees, family and friends who helped make the evening fun!



## Sanford Ambulance Collaboration

Did you know that Fargo is not the only Sanford Ambulance location? Sanford Health also owns ambulance services in Bagley (MN), Canby (MN), Canton-Inwood (SD), Hillsboro (ND), Luverne (MN), Thief River Falls (MN), Wheaton (MN) and Worthington (MN); Sanford is affiliated with ambulance services in Mahnomon (MN), Northwood (ND), Orange City (IA) and Perham (MN).

In 2014, Sanford Ambulance service leaders started brainstorming how all of the Sanford-owned and affiliated ambulance services could work together to collaborate and help each other. In 2019, leaders from each of the services began holding a biannual summit, where they talked about topics such as billing, community outreach, employee education and training, communications, dispatching ambulances, ambulance equipment, EMS provider safety, staffing, fleet maintenance and fleet sharing, purchasing, quality improvement and quality assurance and compliance. The biannual summits have allowed the Sanford-owned and affiliated services to network, brainstorm, and develop a strategic plan that outlines how they can work more effectively and efficiently together. The next Sanford Ambulance summit will take place in September, prior to the MN Medical Director's Conference in Alexandria, MN.



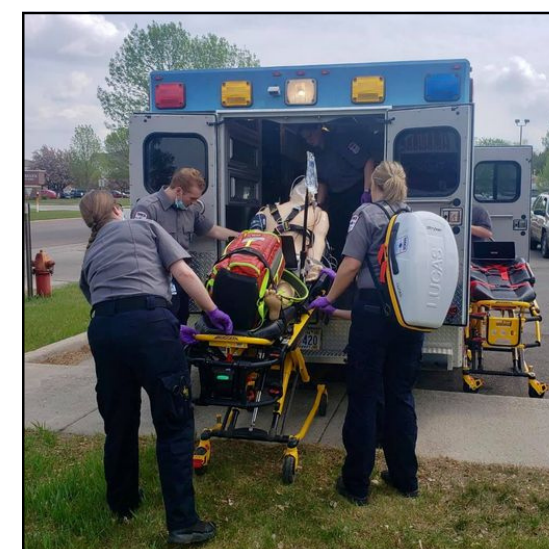


## EMS Education

The Sanford Health EMS Education (SHEMSE) team has been busy! Check out all of the exciting things happening!

### PHTLS

The SHEMSE team has conducted Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) courses this summer in Fargo as well as at Sanford Ambulance Bagley (MN) and the Tri-County Health Care EMS team in Wadena (MN). Through classroom and scenario-based learning, the PHTLS course covers treatment of a multi-system trauma patient and unique traumatic situations. The course promotes critical thinking as the foundation for providing quality care.



### EMS Apprenticeship Program

In partnership with Train ND, the first EMS Apprenticeship group will start their training in September! After successful completion of an interview and tests, apprenticeship applicants were hired by Sanford Ambulance and will soon start their EMT training and employee orientation. After graduating the program, the apprentices will immediately transition to providing EMS care in the ambulance.



### Summer EMT Class

The 2021 accelerated summer EMT program was successful! ! Seventeen students attended the course on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for 18 weeks. The didactic portion of class was held in the mornings with the hands-on lab portion in the afternoons. The course concluded at the end of July, with some students continuing on to paramedic school, which began in late August.



### Paramedic School Begins

Twenty-seven students recently began their paramedic training. Students will graduate in August of 2022 with their associates degree in paramedicine through the North Dakota State School of Science (NDSCS).



### Company Training Continues

As our call volume in Fargo metro area continues to climb, we have added more ambulances to meet that demand, along with more employees. This increase makes getting education to staff members more difficult. Our SHEMSE team has been helping make that easier by bringing the training to our crews! Education team members have been holding mini-sessions with crews after they drop their patients off at the emergency department. Crew members like that they don't have to go anywhere for training (and the ice cream treats that they get don't hurt either)!

### NAEMSE

Educators Ron Lawler, Kelly Wanzek and Kayla Shaw attended the 2021 National EMS Educators Symposium in Orlando, FL in August. The Symposium offers networking, education workshops and presentations from EMS educators across the US. Ron, Kelly and Kayla attended educational sessions and hope to implement some of the ideas that they learned into their classes and share their knowledge with the rest of the education team.





**Sanford Ambulance**

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