



# F-M AMBULANCE SERVICE

# VITAL SIGNS



Summer 2021

Compassion, Excellence and Community

## Dr. Heidi Lako-Adamson

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The F-M Ambulance family was heartbroken with the sudden loss of their medical director, mentor and friend, Dr. Heidi Lako-Adamson.

Heidi fell in love with EMS at an early age and began her EMS career as an EMT at F-M Ambulance in 1997. She then attended paramedic school at FMA and was hired as a paramedic the following year. In 2000, Heidi was accepted into medical school at UND; she completed her residency at Regions Hospital in Minneapolis. Heidi worked as an emergency room physician at MeritCare from 2007 - 2011. In 2009, Heidi returned to F-M Ambulance as medical director. In 2017, she received her Board Certification in Emergency Medicine.

Heidi was the medical director for many ambulance squads throughout Cass and Clay counties, as well as the Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo fire departments and the Red River Regional Dispatch

Center. She was extremely involved with her rescue squads and took an active role in the development of new protocols for the squads and organizations that she led. Heidi worked hard to make sure that her squads were always up-to-date on the most cutting-edge technology in emergency medicine. She was a great advocate for F-M Ambulance and rural EMS in North Dakota. Heidi loved teaching; she could often be found in the classroom or squad rooms teaching everyone from seasoned squad members to new paramedic students. Shortly before her death, Heidi had renewed her National Registry Paramedic certification for the 11th time, signifying over 20 years in EMS.

Heidi was an integral part of the F-M Ambulance family who cared deeply for our whole community. She was truly a dedicated advocate for rural EMS in North Dakota; her passion for the profession of EMS and her patients will never be forgotten. Heidi's bright personality is dearly missed by everyone at F-M Ambulance.



# Dr. Heidi Lako-Adamson



## A Look at 2020

It's hard to believe that only 20 years ago, F-M Ambulance had just four ambulance crews responding to emergencies during the day and only three at night. Today, we typically have 11 ambulances ready to respond to emergencies during the day and five at night.

F-M Ambulance has worked hard to keep up with the incredible growth of our community over the past 20 years. Not only have we had to hire an increased number of EMTs and Paramedics, we have also had to stay on top of new technology and medical protocols in order to provide the best care for our community.

The year 2020 tested the healthcare system, including EMS, like never before. We are proud of our team - from our paramedics and EMTs to our dispatchers and Ready Wheels drivers, everyone works hard to continue to provide top-notch care and excellent service to the community that we love.



## Helmet Rewards!

According to the CDC, only 48% of children ages 5 – 14 wear a bicycle helmet while riding. Older children were less likely to wear helmets than younger children. Every year, 26,000 children are treated in an emergency room for a bicycle-related traumatic brain injury.

This summer, F-M Ambulance is partnering with Culver's to promote helmet safety to children in our community. If an ambulance crew sees a child wearing a helmet, they will stop and give the child a coupon for a free scoop of ice cream from Culver's!

Thank you to Culver's for partnering with us to help keep kids safe!

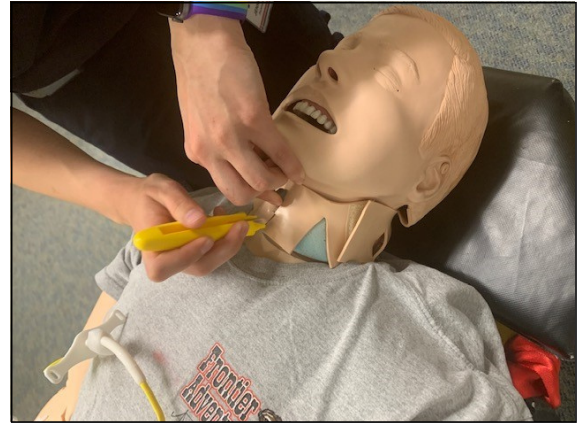


# Skills Fair

Did you know that nationally registered EMTs and paramedics need to recertify every two years? In order to recertify, EMTs need 40 hours of continuing education and paramedics need a total of 60 hours.

One of the ways that FMA employees obtain continuing education hours is by attending skills fairs. Skills fairs are designed to refresh crew members on skills that they may not use very often and to educate them about new procedures, medications, or devices. Topics for FMA's biannual skills fairs are chosen from feedback from hospital departments such as stroke, cardiac or trauma, notable calls that crews have responded on, and crew inquiries after a difficult or unusual call.

Recently, FMA crews participate in skills fairs that focused on caring for patients on a ventilator, cardiac monitor pacing, field cricothyroidotomies, and rapid sequence intubation (RSI) training. Crews also reviewed how to best help and work with our fire departments at fire scenes, including where to park and how to perform rehab, which includes checking the vital signs of each firefighter after they come out of an active fire to make sure that they are healthy and ready to go back in.



## Did You Know...

Sudden cardiac arrest can happen to anyone at any time. Unfortunately, most sudden cardiac arrest victims don't survive; those that do most likely receive immediate CPR and have an AED near them when they collapse.

On March 18, 2018, Kay Zirnhelt was shopping at Target when she collapsed, and with no warning, her heart stopped beating. Bystanders immediately started CPR and first responders, including paramedics from F-M Ambulance, arrived to help save her life. Exactly three years after she collapsed, Kay stopped by FMA with cupcakes for our crews in appreciation of helping save her life.



# EMS Week 2021

In 1974, President Gerald Ford authorized the very first EMS Week, which was meant to celebrate EMS practitioners and the important work they do in our nation's communities. May 16 - 22, 2021, was the 46th annual National EMS Week.

"*This is EMS: Caring for our Communities*" was the 2021 EMS Week motto. In the past year, F-M Ambulance crews have taken on unimaginable new challenges while responding to emergencies during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our EMS crews were on the frontlines of the pandemic – they kept responding to emergencies and kept our community safe even when they didn't know a lot about the virus.

Along with a carry-out family burger meal kit courtesy of F-M Ambulance, team members also received a t-shirt from the team at Sanford AirMed and a generous meal from Stone Town Grille in West Fargo.

We are proud of our FMA family and thankful for the excellent care that they provide our community each and every day.



## Welcome to the FMA Team!

Ryan Gregersen	EMT
Alexis Lunski	EMT
Guyth Alsmas AlKhazraji	EMT
Nkem Orjinta	EMT
Spencer Oen	EMT
Anna Zamarripa	EMT
Dawson Eilts	EMT
Latasha Keller	Dispatch
Ronald Kopperdahl	Ready Wheels



*Are you an EMT or paramedic who is interested in working for F-M Ambulance, Hillsboro Ambulance or Thief River Falls Area Ambulance?*

*Check out [sanfordhealth.jobs](https://sanfordhealth.jobs) to see what positions we have available! We'd love to have you join our team!*

# Health Highlight



## **How hot is too hot?**

Hot summer weather can pose special health risks to everyone, especially older adults and children. Hyperthermia is a condition in which the body's temperature is higher than normal. The body's heating and cooling mechanisms become over-run, and the body cannot get rid of enough heat.

Hyperthermia can be caused by overexertion or from spending extended periods of time in hot conditions. Both of these things can cause an increase in a person's internal body temperature. An internal body temperature of 104° F or higher is life-threatening.

## **What are the signs and symptoms of hyperthermia?**

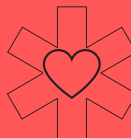
- Confusion
- Nausea or vomiting
- Rapid breathing
- Dehydration
- Muscle cramps/spasms
- Dry skin
- Headache
- Fainting

## **What should you do if someone might be too hot?**

If an individual is experiencing mild hyperthermia, they need to drink water and move to a cooler place, which will help the body cool down. If the patient has stopped sweating or is close to losing consciousness, it is critical to cool the patient down and seek immediate emergency medical care.

## **What can you do to prevent hyperthermia?**

- If you don't need to be outside in the extreme heat, stay indoors. Stay well hydrated - try to drink water every 15 - 20 minutes when you're active in the heat.
- Take cool breaks in the shade or air-conditioning.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing when outdoors.

HEAT EXHAUSTION	or	HEAT STROKE
Faint or dizzy		Throbbing headache May lose consciousness
Excessive sweating		No sweating
Cool, pale clammy skin		Body temperature > 103° Red, hot, dry skin
Nausea or vomiting		Nausea or vomiting
Rapid, weak pulse		Rapid, strong pulse
Muscle cramps		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Rest in a cool place</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Air conditioning is best, but a shady spot is OK too</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Drink cool fluids</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Stick to water or sports drinks if possible</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Cool the person down</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Put wet, cooled towels on the skin or soak in cool water</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Loosen clothing</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Lightweight clothes are best</li></ul></li></ul>		<b>CALL 911</b> Take immediate action to cool the person until help arrives 

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

- EMT Coordinator Jaymes Feil recently completed the largest EMT class in SHEMSE history! Several students in the course received tuition-free education through the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Grant for Rural EMT Training. We are hopeful that we will be accepted to take part in the second portion of the grant!
- The COVID-19 pandemic forced our Explorer advisors to be more creative in the delivery of the Explorer course. Explorer Advisor Seth Murray put together a video series of “virtual ride alongs” that explored different aspects of EMS. The final video was recently posted to our Facebook page. We are hopeful that our Explorers can meet in-person again beginning in September. If you know a local high school student who may be interested in our Explorers program, contact Dwayne Chevalier (Dwayne.chevalier@sanfordhealth.org).
- We are excited about the Sanford/TrainND EMT Apprenticeship program that will start in September. Participants in the program will be hired by FMA and take part in an intensive, fast-paced EMT course and FMA orientation program, which will prepare them to immediately start working and "earn while they learn". Information and application process are at <https://www.ndscs.edu/workforce-affairs/apprenticeshipnd>.
- SHEMSE staff members Ron Lawler, Kelly Wanzek, Tom Dobrzynski, Kyle Janssen and Kayla Shaw are working on national focus groups or committees on topics related to EMS recertification (with the National Registry of EMTs-NREMT), accreditation skills requirements (with the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the EMS Professions - CoAEMSP), and trauma triage guidelines (with the American College of Surgeons – Committee on Trauma).
- As covid restrictions are eased, classes are picking up! Along with our Sanford Enterprise partners, we are looking at fully opening our class sizes and offerings in the next few months. If you need CPR/First Aid or a babysitting class, visit our website, [www.shemse.org](http://www.shemse.org) or contact Trista Berg (Trista.berg@sanfordhealth.org). If you are an industrial site interested in EMR training, please contact Dwayne Chevalier (Dwayne.chevalier@sanfordhealth.org).



We hope that you have enjoyed this edition of *Vital Signs*, a quarterly newsletter distributed by F-M Ambulance. An electronic version of this newsletter can be found on our website, [www.fmambulance.com](http://www.fmambulance.com). If you have an story ideas, comments or questions about *Vital Signs*, please contact Kristi Engelstad at 701-364-1759 or [kristi.engelstad@fmambulance.com](mailto:kristi.engelstad@fmambulance.com).



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