



# SANFORD AMBULANCE VITAL SIGNS

Spring 2024

Compassion, Excellence and Community

## Save a Life Saturday

Did you know that every 90 seconds, someone dies of cardiac arrest? Nationally, approximately 40% of pre-hospital cardiac arrest victims receive bystander CPR, while in our community that number falls to about 34%. The longer a cardiac arrest victim goes without CPR, the lower their chance of survival. Most people who experience cardiac arrest at home, work, or in a public location die because they don't receive immediate bystander CPR. By knowing CPR, you could save the life of someone in cardiac arrest.

On Saturday, February 10, Sanford Ambulance teamed up with the NDSCS EMS Club and other organizations from around our community to host Save a Life Saturday at West Acres. Participants were able to learn hands-only CPR, how to stop a bleed, and how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED). Almost 300 community members participated in the event and are now prepared to help save a life.

To learn more about hands-only CPR, please visit [handsonlycpr.org](http://handsonlycpr.org). For more information on CPR courses please visit [www.shemse.org](http://www.shemse.org).



# Community Connections

The Sanford Ambulance administration team decided to give back to the community by volunteering!

On January 9, the admin team spent their morning scooping soy at the Fargodome for Feed my Starving Children (FMSC). FMSC uses donations to fund meal ingredients; volunteers then hand-pack meals, and the meals are donated to FMSC food partners around the world, where kids are fed and lives are saved.



On January 26, the admin team volunteered to answer phones for the 2024 Cares for Kids Radiothon! While the event was being broadcast on several local radio stations, the admin team stood by to answer phones and thank people for their donations. The event raised over \$185,000 to help local kids who need care at Sanford Children's Hospital in Fargo.

## Tours and Talks

Spring is finally here, and Sanford Ambulance is looking forward to several community activities and events in the upcoming months!

**Buckle Up with Bucky** is a child passenger safety presentation for kids in Kindergarten and first grade. The 30-minute presentation creates a fun and easy way for EMS professionals to teach children about seat belt safety and how to safely ride in a vehicle. Students receive a short presentation that covers the rules of riding in a car, watch an interactive video and end with a quick tour of an ambulance.



**BLAST Babysitting Class** is a course developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics for teens and pre-teens to learn about the responsibilities of caring for children. Using scenario-based learning, the class addresses staying safe and dealing with emergency situations. To register for a BLAST course, please visit the Sanford Health EMS Education website at [shemse.org](http://shemse.org).

Sanford Ambulance provides **tours and talks** for community members of any age. We will send a paramedic or EMT to your facility to do a 15-minute talk and tour of an ambulance or you can join us at our facility for a tour! Longer talks, including Boy Scout and Girl Scout readiness badge talks, are available for a fee.

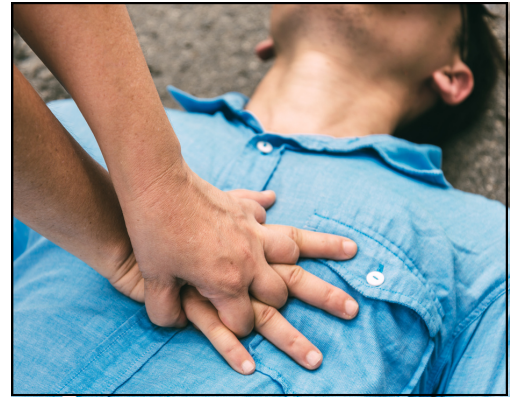


# HEALTH HIGHLIGHT

## Hands Only CPR

If someone experienced sudden cardiac arrest and collapsed in front of you, would you know what to do? Sudden cardiac arrest occurs when the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. When someone experiences sudden cardiac arrest, they need immediate CPR to help keep blood flowing throughout the body. Immediate CPR can double or triple a patient's chances of survival.

For the more than 350,000 American's who suffer cardiac arrest outside of a hospital each year, the prognosis is not good. Only around 40% of these patients receive bystander CPR, and without bystander CPR, less than 10% of these patient survive.

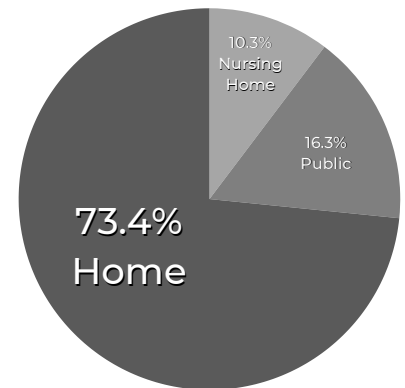


During cardiac arrest, the heart cannot pump blood to the rest of the body, including the brain and lungs. Death can happen in minutes without treatment. CPR uses chest compressions to mimic how the heart pumps. When someone performs CPR, they are pushing on the chest, keeping blood flowing throughout the body.

### Did You Know...

- ➔ Most out-of-hospital cardiac arrests happen at home.
- ➔ You don't need formal training to perform CPR. Just follow two steps to save a life: call 911 and push hard and fast until help arrives.
- ➔ Less than half of cardiac arrest victims receive the immediate help they need - only 40.2% receive bystander CPR.
- ➔ Men are 1.23 times more likely to receive bystander CPR in public, and their chance of survival is 23% higher compared to women.
- ➔ Even children can perform successful CPR! A recent study tested sixth graders and their capacity to use hands-only CPR to save lives. The majority of children could perform CPR in the correct location and at the appropriate compression rate.

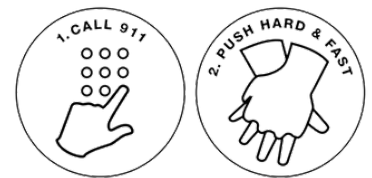
### Where Does Cardiac Arrest Happen?



In February, Sanford Ambulance paramedic Kristi Engelstad chatted with WDAY, KFGO, and North Dakota Today to teach community members how to save a life with hands-only CPR. "You never know when sudden cardiac arrest will happen. Hands-only CPR is probably the easiest way to save a life; all you have to do is push hard and push fast."

If you have questions on hands-only CPR, go to [www.handsonlycpr.org](http://www.handsonlycpr.org). If you are interested in attending a CPR course or getting certified in CPR, go to [www.shemse.org](http://www.shemse.org).

## 2 STEPS TO SAVE A LIFE



# A Look Back: Sanford Ambulance in 2023

## Director's Message

As we close the door on 2023, I want to thank all of the Sanford Ambulance team members – the paramedics, EMTs, dispatchers, supervisors, leaders and support staff for making this organization work. Without their dedication and focus, we would not be the high-performance ambulance service that we are. It takes constant attention, training, and re-training in a repeated cycle to ensure that we are ready to handle any and all emergencies.

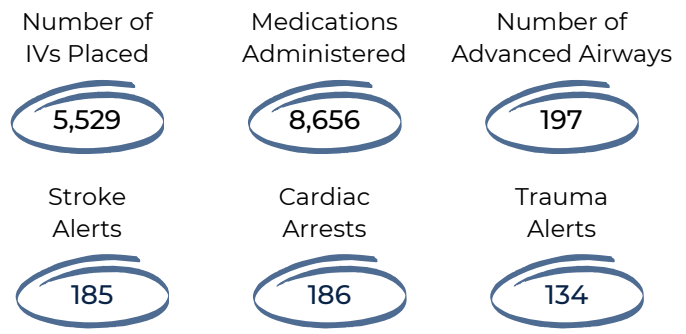
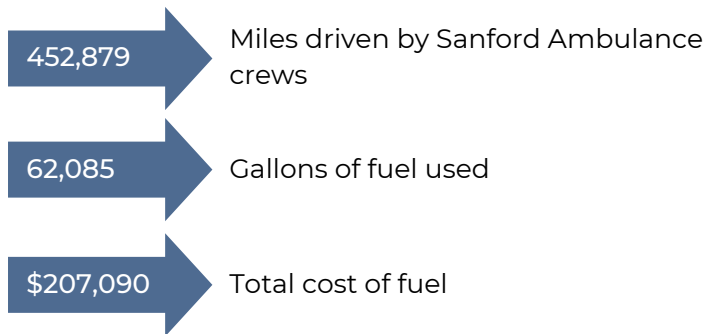
In addition, the EMS system needs strong public safety partners to ensure we are protecting the public. I would also like to thank all of the area first responding agencies, neighboring ambulance services, and area hospitals that work with us every day to keep our citizens and visitors safe.

It is surprising how many people and agencies are involved in public safety and health care. Sanford Ambulance is proud to work with our partner agencies and serve the citizens of Cass County, North Dakota and Clay County, Minnesota. As the largest ambulance service between Minneapolis and Seattle, we span counties in two states and operate in multiple cities. As we grow into the future, we intend to continue towards intelligent growth to best serve the community with a commitment to high-performance ambulance operations and fiscally sound practices. I hope you are all proud of the vast network we have in place in our communities. Our EMS system, which is comprised of highly trained and dedicated individuals, is as good as any place in the United States.



Tim Meyer  
Senior Director of Emergency Services

## 2023 Statistics



## Daily Stats

- Busiest Day of the Week:** Friday
- Slowest Day of the Week:** Wednesday
- Busiest Time of Day:** 4:00 PM
- Busiest Day of 2023:** 131 calls in 24 hours
  - Thursday, February 9
- Least Busy Day of 2023:** 44 calls in 24 hours
  - Sunday, January 29

## 2023 Top 10 Most Common Calls

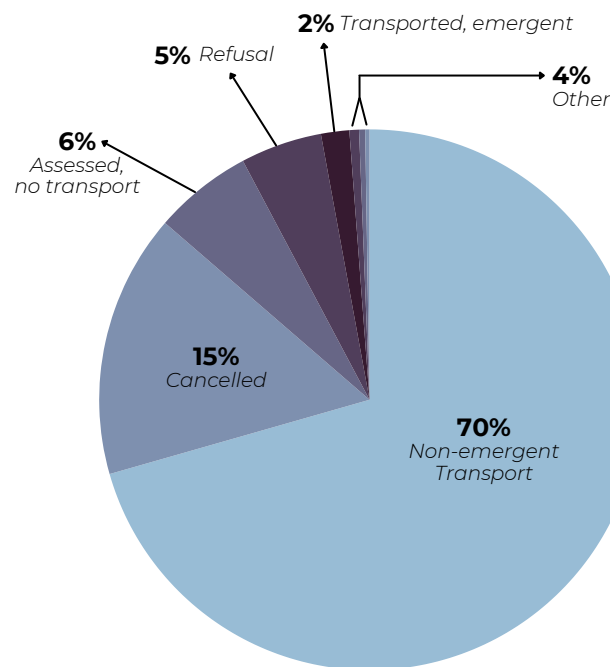
1. Behavioral Emergency
2. Abdominal Pain
3. Suicidal Ideation
4. Alcohol Use
5. Generalized Weakness
6. Extremity Pain
7. Chronic shortness of breath
8. Back Pain
9. Anxiety Reaction
10. Seizures

# A Look Back: Sanford Ambulance in 2023

In 2023, Sanford Ambulance responded to 31,944 requests for service. Out of those requests, 22,859 patients were transported to the hospital.

## 2023 Patient Dispositions

<b>22,147</b>	Transported, non-emergent	<i>The decision whether to transport with lights &amp; sirens is based on the patient's needs. The majority of the patients that we transport are not emergent transports.</i>
<b>4,752</b>	Cancelled	<i>Sometimes we are cancelled prior to arriving at a call if care is not needed.</i>
<b>1,904</b>	Assessed, no transport	<i>Some patients may be injured or sick, but they don't need ambulance transport.</i>
<b>1,468</b>	Refusal	<i>Unless a patient is unconscious or in an altered state of mind, everyone has the right to refuse ambulance transport.</i>
<b>663</b>	Transported, emergent	<i>Lights &amp; sirens are used to transport patients who are critically ill or injured in order to get them to definitive care quickly.</i>
<b>247</b>	Treated & released	<i>In some cases, we can treat a patient on-scene so they don't need to be seen in the emergency department.</i>
<b>247</b>	Other	<i>The other category consists of several areas, including the transport of transplant organs, deceased patients, and many other categories.</i>
<b>107</b>	Intercept	<i>Sanford Ambulance provides ALS services to some rural communities. Our ALS providers will meet them on the way to the hospital after the rural first responders have started caring for the patient.</i>



# Mobile Mental Health Pilot Project

For years, the number of calls to 911 for patients with a behavioral health or mental health crisis have continually climbed. Today, mental health emergencies are one of the top reasons that patients call for an ambulance. Emergency departments and ambulance services have struggled to find a way to provide the mental health services that these patients need while also avoiding an unnecessary trip to the emergency department. While Emergency Departments are good at handling patients suffering from a severe acute mental health crisis, they are not equipped to handle patients with chronic mental health problems. In-patient psychiatric beds are usually full, meaning there is a wait to get these patients admitted. This means a patient suffering from a chronic mental health crisis may stay in the emergency department for days, not necessarily receiving the focused care that they deserve.

**988** SUICIDE & CRISIS  
**LIFELINE**

**24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT**

In December of 2023, Sanford Ambulance and Lakeland Mental Health collaborated and partnered to form a mobile mental health pilot project in Moorhead, MN, which hopes to help patients who are experiencing a mental health crisis but don't need care in the emergency department. The goal of the project is to bring mental health services to those in crisis instead of bringing those patients to the hospital.

In the past, there have been mobile mental health programs, but they struggled with availability and response times. To bridge the gap between a 911 call and the time it typically took a mobile mental health team to respond to a patient's home, the current mobile mental health pilot project works by dispatching two mental health practitioners at the same time as the ambulance. Sanford Ambulance dispatchers notify the two practitioners to meet the ambulance crew wherever the need is identified. Together, the ambulance crew and the mental health practitioners assess the patient and figure out the best options to help them. Sometimes, the best thing for the patient is to be transported to the emergency department, but other times, the practitioners can meet the patient's needs in their home by calling in a crisis team, who can ideally be there to help the patient soon after the 911 call.

While this pilot project is currently only taking place in Moorhead, our entire community is lucky to have a strong support for people experiencing a mental health crisis with the 988 system, answered locally by FirstLink. Calling or texting 988 is not just for suicidal patients, it's for anyone in distress. If you or someone you know is struggling or doesn't know where to find resources, 988 is a great place to start – they have many community resources and can connect people to many services.

## Welcome to the Team!

Tyler Spanier	EMT
Katie Klundt	EMT
Katie Martineau	EMT
Deserae Werlinger	EMT
Chase Johnson	Paramedic
JoDee Deike	Paramedic
James Simmons	Paramedic
Tanner Hill	EMT
Ashton Hollingsworth	EMT

*Are you an EMT or paramedic who is interested in working in a fun, fast-paced atmosphere? Sanford Ambulance is hiring!*

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



## EMS Education

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

### Sanford Paramedic Apprenticeship

Applications are open taken for the second cohort of the Sanford Paramedic Apprenticeship (SPA) program. SPA participants are paid as full-time employees to attend lectures, labs, and clinical experiences, and all college costs are covered. The SPA program begins at the EMT level by offering a scholarship for tuition in the fall or spring semester. Once licensed as an EMT, select students are offered positions with the Sanford Ambulance Non-Emergency Ambulance Transport (NEAT) division. After working as a NEAT EMT for some time, employees can apply for the Sanford Paramedic Apprenticeship. Upon licensure as a paramedic, SPA apprentices agree to work for Sanford Ambulance for at least three years.

Out of the 20 students in the current paramedic program, eight of them are both Sanford Ambulance apprentices and NDSOS students. There will be nine apprenticeship positions open in the upcoming paramedic course. For more information, go to [www.shemse.org](http://www.shemse.org) and click on the 'EMS' tab.

### Career and Job Fairs

SHEMSE staff are attending more career and job fairs than ever. If you know of a career or job fair that is scheduled for any time in 2024, please let us know - we'd love to attend and showcase all of the career opportunities in EMS!

### Sanford Ambulance Explorers & Field Experience Ride-Along

The Sanford Ambulance Explorers is the largest in history, with 36 students participating! Sanford Ambulance Explorers are high school students that meet once/month to learn more about emergency medical services (EMS). If you know a high school student that is interested in EMS (or any healthcare field), please encourage them to participate in the Explorers program. The main chapter meets in Fargo, but there are also chapters in Hunter (ND), Hillsboro (ND), and Thief River Falls (MN).

The Sanford Ambulance Field Experience Ride-Along (SAFER) program is a branch of the Explorers for students who are over the age of 16 and in good academic standing with their school. SAFER participants are Explorers who are allowed to do ride alongs with Sanford Ambulance and job shadow EMTs and paramedics. For more information, please call 701-364-1750 or go to [www.shemse.org](http://www.shemse.org) and click on 'Other Programs'.



# **Sanford Ambulance**

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