

May 11, 2009

Alderman Robert Donovan  
Chair, Public Safety Committee  
City Hall Room 205  
200 East Wells Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Alderman Donovan:

Pursuant to Milwaukee Codes, it is the responsibility of the Commissioner of Health to review each year ambulance conveyance rates and fees for equipment and procedures for calls dispatched by the City's Emergency Medical Services-911 dispatch system. The Commissioner of Health is to report these findings and any recommended rate adjustments to the Common Council.

My recommendations for rate adjustments have been based on health related cost indexes specified in section 75-15-14-b. In addition I have consulted with the City Economist, Dennis Yaccarino and reviewed the recommendations set forth in City of Milwaukee Common Council Legislative File Number 071613.

Attached is information on the health related cost indexes specified in section 75-15-14-b. There was a 4.4% increase in the Milwaukee Consumer Price Index (CPI) for medical care from 2007 to 2008.

For residents of the City of Milwaukee, I am recommending that the Basic Life Support (BLS) Emergency rates be increased 4.4%. This would set both the resident BLS and resident BLS-Emergency conveyance rates at \$441.00. Two years ago a treatment without transport fee was added to the ordinance. I am recommending that when patients do receive treatment and are not transported, a \$75.00 BLS non-transport fee will remain in effect.

For non-residents both the BLS and non-resident BLS-Emergency conveyance rates would be set at \$510.00. When patients receive treatment and are not transported, a \$125.00 BLS non-transport fee will remain in effect.

Whenever a certified ambulance provider provides an advanced life support conveyance under the terms of the Private Provider Interfacility Unit Protocol, my recommendation is that the provider is authorized to charge the same rates as established by the fire department and set forth in 75-17-a through d. I am further proposing that the ancillary charges and drug rates set by the fire department be accepted. Until such time that these rates are changed, the current rates established in 2008 shall remain in effect.

The mileage rate contains reimbursement for both vehicle maintenance and fuel costs. The current mileage rate is \$12.60. It is my recommendation that the mileage rate increase to \$14.00 based on the recommended revised rates endorsed by the Milwaukee County Intergovernmental Corporation Council.

Currently the MFD has an agreement with the private providers to transport bariatric (extremely heavy or obese) patients which is quite labor intensive. I recommend that the MFD is able to bill at the BLS rate of \$441 for these patients. Currently they transport these patients but do not bill BLS for them.

The MFD also provides services to non-resuscitative cardiac arrest patients. I recommend that they are able to bill under BLS for this service. Currently they can bill the private insurance but need the authority to bill Medicare under BLS rates.

If you have further questions or require additional clarifications, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bevan K. Baker". The signature is stylized with large, overlapping loops for the letters.

Bevan K. Baker, FACHE  
Commissioner of Health

Attachment

cc: Douglas Holton, Fire Chief  
Renee Joos, Budget Manager  
Rick Zethner, Bell Ambulance  
Jim Baker, Curtis Ambulance  
Linda Wiedmann, MedaCare Ambulance  
Bob Rausch, Paratech Ambulance