

Madeline Island Ambulance Service Report

June 19, 2020

We have entered our busy season. Everyone on the service remains in good health and is taking all precautions to protect themselves during responses.

I would like to thank John Carlson for his many years of great service to the Madeline Island Ambulance Service. He has recently retired from the service. He has been a great asset to our team, and we will miss him. I am grateful that he is on the town board and remains a knowledgeable and fine advocate for the service.

We had our first in person meeting this month. Everyone wore masks and we practiced social distancing. We needed to meet to all get on the same page for the busy summer season and to emphasize that with the traffic now on the island, precautions are extremely important. We are seeing a great number of people without masks and not social distancing. I encourage everyone to still wear a mask in public. Everyone practiced driving the ambulances to re-familiarize themselves with the rigs and equipment. We also went through sanitation of the rigs and re-stocked our ditch kits.

We are still having regular zoom meetings with our regional medical director. He is seeing a large number of cases in the Minneapolis area and warns us about their population that is heading this way for vacation. Minnesota's numbers are now higher than Wisconsin's. I also attend the regular monthly zoom meeting with our area service directors, medical director, hospital staff, helicopter staff and paramedics. We are lucky to have stocked our PPE early on. Many services do not have the supplies they need to respond safely. We will still be taking temperatures of all patients and crew as we meet with patients or transport them. When we do transport to the hospital, only the patient is allowed into the hospital. Family and friends are not allowed at this time.

I discussed with the ferry line the possibility of a self-transport option since the boats stop running so early in the day. So many of our calls are after their hours of operation. Many of these calls do not require an ambulance to transport a patient but they need to be seen by a doctor. For instance, a cut on a lip that needs a stitch but does not require care all of the way to a hospital. The ferry line has agreed to add self-transports to their tariff schedule, but the charge is quite high. I understand their case and hope we can work together to make it easier for our patients to seek the treatments that they need. It would be great if we could provide more of these services on the island and I hope to approach the town board and the clinic about this issue.

Bob Pokorney joined the service on weekends when he is here on the island. He lives in Duluth and has his Wisconsin license. Isa Teisberg has finished her patient contacts and is scheduling her tests. We also have Alex Nelson who is not licensed but wants to volunteer with the service. We will find small jobs for him to do without patient contact. We are hoping he is interested in taking the class soon.

It is exciting to see the beginnings of construction of the new Emergency Services Building. I also want to thank the Wilderness Preserve for their generous donation for landscaping the grounds. We have had such tremendous support from the community, and I want everyone who has donated to the cause, just how appreciative we are.

Please stay safe, wash your hands, social distance, get some fresh air, eat a good diet, exercise and stay healthy! Respectfully Submitted, Cynthia Dalzell, Madeline Island Ambulance Service