



## Vermont Ambulance Association

C/O 275 Stratton Rd.  
Rutland, VT 05701

January 14, 2016

Vermont Legislator,

The Vermont Ambulance Association is working to raise awareness of a developing crisis within the state's emergency medical response system. Recent changes in our national health care delivery system have drastically increased the number of patients insured by the state run Medicaid system. The expanded access has shifted the balance of payers to the point that we are no longer able to cost shift the Medicaid losses to other payers. Medicaid pays only a fraction of the cost necessary to provide the service; leaving agencies all over the state with large uncompensated costs. Some services have seen increases as much as 15% in the quantity of Medicaid patients. We understand that this is not an issue isolated to ambulance services, however it is important for you to understand that reimbursements for ambulance treatment and transport are currently at a much lower rate than all other providers in Vermont, making the increasing quantity of Medicaid patients more significant.

Attached is data from services in all areas of the state, illustrating the extent of this crisis. We need your help! Vermonters deserve high quality emergency medical treatment and transportation. Vermont ambulance service professionals work twenty four hours a day responding to the homes of sick Vermonters or accident scenes on our roadways. We are the first response to our mental health and substance abuse crisis. We go into the homes of our ageing population, provide first class medical treatment and reassurance in their time of need. Without legislative action, growing budget gaps caused by low Medicaid payments will result in a greater cost shift to local property taxes or result in a reduction in services. During this session there will be a discussion about the mental health and substance abuse crisis, we ask that you remember that local ambulance services play a critical role responding to these emergencies. We ask that you support legislation that increases Medicaid reimbursement rates for ambulance services. Ambulance services statewide work hard to provide high quality EMS to our residents and guests, this entire system is in danger of failing. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Drew Hazelton  
VAA Legislative Committee Chair  
802-257-7679