



WESTERN EMERGENCY SERVICES

P.O. Box 350 Anchor Point, AK 99556
72440 Milo Fritz Ave Anchor Point, AK99556
907-567-3342 Station 1
907-235-6700 Station 3

December 3, 2021

Re: Sponsorship Opportunity: Emergency Responder Agency Integration of Technology to Enhance Linkage to Care SUD Treatment

To The State of Alaska:

Thank you for providing our department an opportunity to apply for the Emergency Responder/Public Safety Integration of Technology to Enhance Substance Use Disorder Treatment Linkage to Care Sponsorships. Funding for a technology purchase would assist our department with accessibility and training of personnel on substance use, associated treatments, and behavioral health issues.

Western Emergency Services is a newly formed service area of less than one year, created by merging two previously existing smaller agencies, Anchor Point Fire and Emergency Medical Services and Ninilchik Emergency Services. While this merger was much needed and provided the area with more reliable fire and EMS responses, these two stations are located twenty (20) miles apart. This has identified a unique challenge for our administration as we attempt to provide training to our personnel over the long distance, continue to staff stations, and meet any 911 response needs for the communities.

Even though we are a combination department, our main staffing coverage is two career responders per station. While our volunteer staff is active, there is no guarantee they would be available for station coverage. In many instances this does not allow the career staff from both stations to participate person for joint training. Additionally, the volunteers face these same issues as the administration must be mindful not deplete personnel and/or resources in one area during training events.

Neither station is equipped with technology we can use for effective, on-line interactive training. Connecting the two stations, and their personnel, which allows them to interact and train together as a cohesive unit is our vision. We are now looking for funding sources to assist us in purchasing current technology that will bridge our distance gap and introduce a way for us to bring current, relevant, and interactive training into the stations for our personnel. To help assist with this training need, we are looking for funding to purchase two SMART boards, at a cost of \$7,500 each and a total of \$15,000.00.

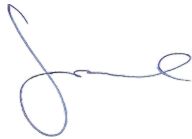
A vast portion of the medical training we provide or receive has a component of interactive or distance learning which can come from anywhere in the US. Our local resources range from hospitals and physicians to our own personnel. The teaching can range from continuing

education lectures to certification courses to scenario-based sessions. During our EMS initial certification and refresher classes there is a component of behavior health and opioid/addiction along with treatment specific information for overdoses and the skill of medication administration for Naloxone. All prehospital providers participate multiple times a year in continuing education to review and practice dealing with behavioral and opioid emergencies. Additionally, responders receive instruction on the behavioral emergencies and opioid emergencies the department responded to through HIPPA compliant case reviews with the department Medical Director each month.

Addiction and behavioral emergencies are a part of our community, affecting both family and neighbors. We see the requests for assistance reflected within our call volume, and it is our commitment to train our responders to access, identify and respond to these emergencies properly.

The addition of SMART boards at our two stations would allow us to bring our personnel together, allowing them to listen, learn and share information on addiction, opioid use and treatments, and behavioral emergencies. It would allow us to learn together and provide the same professional care to our patients. This in turn brings a higher quality of care to those in crisis and in need of care during an opioid or behavioral emergency.

Thank you for considering our request and we look forward to hearing from you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jon Marsh', with a stylized, cursive style.

Jon Marsh
Fire Chief, WES