

USDA Rural Development Funded Emergency Equipment Recently Served Over 500 Residents During Cyclone Wilma

The Emergency Medical Service (EMS) American Samoa Department is very happy with the USDA Rural Development funded ambulance. It improved their accountability and their response time especially when accessing narrow un-paved roads and areas with low branched trees that could not be detached when approaching the scene. The vehicle is much more road accessible in high terrain areas, compared to the other ambulances and very convenient with the type of cases they normally receive. EMS response time has improved significantly as well as their service availability and level of patient satisfaction.

Recently with Cyclone Wilma, the ambulance transported approximately 500 plus patients in the Western District during the 8 hours disaster timeframe. Nobody died during the disaster but the feedback from the population showed great appreciation of the service that was made available during their time of need. They felt safe to be transported to the health care facility in the ambulance and are applaud with its condition. It has been a great while since our territory was served with proper equipped ambulances, not to mention its environmental conditions that could be adjusted (air condition) and the cleanliness that enhanced comfort to be treated when being transported. Behavioral wise for general discomfort alleviation cases, people are more responsive to EMT's during their assessments. It increased the public's morale and they are more communicative that they complement a lot on the condition of the new ambulance as it is still a shocking site from what they're used to being transported in. According to staff, the number one request for patient transportation is to lower the air condition temperature.

The service provided has shown increased reliability on EMS for transportation services, especially for non-emergency cases as well. Service availability for medivac cases and inpatient discharge has improved, as well as service for eligible dialysis outpatient individuals. The feedback population has provided staff satisfaction with the service they provide. The physical space ensured quality performance and increased safety for both patient and EMT's during the emergency. Normally in a van, where there is no seated area or enough room to shift around in, the barrier would delay response performance when tending to the patient.

LBJ Hospital and EMS are forever grateful for this ambulance as it has helped the rural populations for the service that is greatly needed. The rural populations greatly appreciate it. Everyone knows that ambulance #5 was funded by USDA Rural Development because it's printed in big letters in front of the ambulance.



USDA Rural Development \$97,000 Community Facilities Grant received in 2008 helps make American Samoa safer.

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