

Ohio Township Receives National Award and Recognition for Opioid Prevention Programming

For Immediate Release:

November 19, 2019, New Orleans, La. The California Paramedic Foundation is pleased to announce the 2019 Nicholas Rosecrans Award winner: the Colerain Township Fire and EMS Department, for their invaluable work addressing opioid use disorder. The award was conferred to Colerain during the keynote address at the 2019 EMS World Expo in New Orleans in front of thousands of EMS leaders from around the country. As part of the awarding, Colerain Fire and EMS hosted a workshop for conference participants demonstrating how others might implement successful prevention programming in their region.

Colerain's high-impact program reflects a paradigm shift throughout the country in which paramedics—often as a part of multidisciplinary teams—try to prevent 911 incidents before they happen. The Township's program was born out of the personal experience of Colerain Assistant Chief Mueller's 911 responses to local drug overdoses. During his presentation to attendees, Chief Mueller recalled the final precipitating event leading to his creation of the Colerain program.

"I went on an overdose response for a young woman. I found her curled up in the corner of a room with a friend at her side. This woman was someone's daughter or sister. It could have been my daughter. The worst part was a friend of the victim was present throughout the whole ordeal and could have activated 911 but was too afraid. I knew we had to do more," he shared with the group.

Since that event, Chief Mueller and Colerain Fire and EMS have worked to address the opioid crisis through multifaceted prevention programming. Their efforts include a "Safe Station Program" offering round-the-clock resources at each fire station, distributable materials in the hands of frontline paramedics, and a multidisciplinary quick response team (or QRT). The QRT consists of a fire-paramedic, a chemical dependency specialist, and a police officer who work together directly with at-risk individuals identified through 911 incidents.

To date, their programming has been wildly successful. The team has had a 72% success rate in helping more than 350 individuals enter into substance abuse treatment. As a direct result, the Colerain Fire and EMS Department have seen a 70% reduction in 911 requests for opioid overdose.

At the heart of Colerain's high impact programming is the idea of "meeting patients where they are." The US government refers to this as people-centered care and has identified it as a

transformative idea in the way our country delivers prehospital care. Hannah Dawes—the Colerain QRT’s chemical dependency specialist—echoed this sentiment when she told the audience, “it is so important to develop a trusting relationship between all members of the team and then with those individuals in need of help wherever they may be. This relationship will serve as the foundation for any subsequent successful action plan and follow-up.”

“Prevention is the future of emergency medical services and paramedicine,” states Paul Maxwell, founder of the Nicholas Rosecrans Award and a Director at the California Paramedic Foundation. “It is a paradigm-shift where paramedics are working ahead of 911 calls to reduce injury and illness in their communities. We are incredibly proud of Colerain Fire and EMS for the impact they have had on their Ohioan community.”

Background:

The Nicholas Rosecrans Award has provided national recognition to outstanding EMS-driven prevention programming for the last 17 years. The award is named after a young toddler whose tragic drowning sparked incredible child safety programming across Southern California and a subsequent national campaign to promote EMS-driven prevention programming.

The California Paramedic Foundation is a charitable nonprofit built by paramedics to advance their industry and the health and wellness of their communities. It achieves this goal through strategic programming in the areas of education, prevention, and advocacy.

RedFlash Group is a national consulting firm that specializes in communications, marketing, and project management for public safety. With deep expertise in the 911, emergency communications, fire, and emergency care markets, RedFlash has been a partner to government agencies, private companies, and nonprofit organizations for more than two decades.

EMS World is a leader in paramedicine meetings, content, and education, with a mission to connect the healthcare community with practical and evidence-based education and information that leads to better treatments, lower costs, expanded access, and improved patient care.

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