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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sun Prairie EMS Awarded \$200,000 Grant for EMS Outreach Program

The City of Sun Prairie's Emergency Medical Services Department has been awarded a \$200,000 CDBG-CV grant to assist with the community's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. With this grant, the paramedics at Sun Prairie EMS will be able to provide residents of the City of Sun Prairie and the Town of Bristol with free in-home medical support for all manner of issues related to the pandemic. This grant provides opportunity for people:

- Who contracted COVID-19, so that they can receive in-home medical support during recovery;
- Who are hesitant about getting vaccinated
 - have one-on-one education about the benefits, focused on their specific situation
 - to be supported with daily visits post-vaccination in order to monitor for side effects;
- Who may have lost their insurance to be able to get access to healthcare via the EMS system;
- Who are reluctant to visit the doctor to be able to get in-home visits in coordination with a physician;
- Who have no transportation to a doctor/clinic to be able to have medical care delivered to them in their home;
- Who cannot get to the doctor/clinic during business hours to be able to receive medical care on their schedule;
- Who are affected by the digital divide and cannot participate in tele-health, to be able to have tele-health technologies brought to them.

Paramedics will provide free in-home visits to monitor health, assist with prescribed treatment regimens, and provide education about prevention/mitigation strategies to help reduce the direct and indirect impacts of COVID-19 in the community. All program participants will receive free pulse-oximetry devices and touchless thermometers. Additionally, paramedics will distribute free medication lockboxes and free medication disposal kits from our partners at Public Health Madison and Dane County.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused loss of employment, income, and insurance for thousands of people in Dane County, including the City of Sun Prairie and the Town of Bristol. Citizens of Sun Prairie and Bristol have experienced considerable strain and impact upon their health and well-being, and some of the most vulnerable community members have suffered the worst. Many individuals with a COVID-19 diagnosis are forced to recover and recuperate at home, often without medical surveillance or support. This can be especially challenging for those persons who lack strong social support networks, who do not have access to digital communication tools, and who may be forced to forego healthcare needs due to various reasons including lack of insurance or limited resources. Despite the encouraging decline in cases and the gradual reopening of society, the collateral damage from COVID-19 such as housing/food

insecurity, childcare issues, transportation challenges, and isolation continue to have a negative impact on the physical and mental health of individuals.

The Emergency Medical Services profession is uniquely positioned to be able to address these barriers. EMS is designed, equipped, trained, and staffed to deliver medical care at any location throughout the community and does so on a routine basis. “Paramedics have traditionally focused on emergency care. However, their clinical training, advanced skills, 24/7 availability, and community focus position them perfectly to also take on public health duties. These “community paramedicine” programs are transformative, with EMS providing comprehensive care for patients in their homes without transporting them to a hospital as well as focusing on preventing illnesses. Our research at UW is showing that community paramedicine programs are successful at improving healthcare, particularly for some of the most vulnerable people in our communities”, said Dr. Manish Shah, professor and vice-chair of research at the University of Wisconsin BerbeeWalsh Department of Emergency Medicine. “Congratulations to Sun Prairie EMS for their decision to develop a Community Paramedic program and particularly supporting COVID 19 patients with limited resources.”

Sun Prairie EMS accepts persons and families into the program by referral via its close partnerships with hospital discharge planners and community service groups. Referrals from concerned family/friends, physicians whose patients would benefit from such, and self-referrals from persons who wish to join are also welcome. The program will run from late-June 2021 through the end of March 2022, and participants will self-certify that their household income meets program requirements:

Household Size	Household Income	Household Size	Household Income
1 Person	Less than \$54,950	5 People	Less than \$84,800
2 People	Less than \$62,800	6 People	Less than \$91,100
3 People	Less than \$70,650	7 People	Less than \$97,350
4 People	Less than \$78,500	8 People	Less than \$103,650

Sun Prairie EMS Medical Director Dr. Michael Lohmeier, who provides clinical oversight to paramedics says, “This is such an exciting opportunity for Sun Prairie EMS. Not only does this provide another avenue to care for some of the most at-risk patients in our community, but it also helps strengthen the healthcare safety net and serves to meet the patients at their most vulnerable. In addition, it gives the Sun Prairie EMS team a chance to collaborate with our hospital colleagues, to build on their already strong knowledge base, and to professionally grow in a new direction. I’m honored to be part of such an energetic and forward-thinking organization, and enthusiastically support this program.”

EMS outreach programs such as community paramedicine are familiar in other areas of Wisconsin and around the United States. “This is Sun Prairie’s first venture into an EMS outreach program of this scope. We are very excited for the opportunity and honored to have been selected as a grant recipient”, said EMS Chief Brian Goff. “Sun Prairie is a vibrant, modern community and it makes good sense that its public safety teams engage in public outreach, education, prevention, and support. In these unique and challenging times, we are hopeful that our contribution to individual and community resilience will be especially beneficial.”

For more information, to make a referral, or to inquire about participating in the EMS Outreach program yourself, please contact Sun Prairie Emergency Medical Services via email at EMS@cityofsunprairie.com, or call us at 608-837-3604.