

Montgomery County EMS improves communication with mobile hot spots



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Time and accuracy are everything when it comes to saving lives in the event of a heart attack.

Now, Montgomery County Emergency Medical Services can maximize both from the field and communicate in real time with hospital cardiologists.

The local EMS has joined the American Heart Association's national initiative Mission: Lifeline, a program designed to enhance the care systems for patients who suffered a heart attack.

Montgomery County EMS' role in the initiative includes the use of the InMotion Technologies onBoard Mobile Gateway, a new mobile communications and tracking system, according to a news release.

The Mobile Gateways turn EMS vehicles into mobile hot spots, providing "reliable,

secure connectivity to multiple wired and wireless devices."

The Gateway can be equipped with up to six wireless network cards, allowing communications to roam across wireless networks based on coverage, bandwidth or cost effectiveness.

Network cards can be added or swapped out easily, so wireless technologies can be upgraded without the expense or hassle of replacing devices.

"Over the next several years, flexibility will be vital. By selecting a flexible, upgradable platform, we can choose the network technologies and service providers that yield the highest performance at the most affordable price," said Montgomery County EMS Captain Keith Albert in prepared comments. "This is step one, and a big step, in the overall plan we have."

Montgomery County's EMS has routinely performed 12-lead electrocardiograms (ECGs) while en route to the hospital, but

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had no reliable method of transmitting this information to the receiving facility. Emergency physicians and cardiologists at the hospital had no means of interpreting this critical data, as it was seen only by the attending paramedics.

Installation of these Mobile Gateways in every EMS vehicle will allow for what officials call the "seamless transmission of diagnostic-quality ECG data directly to the physicians at the receiving medical facility while the patient is en route.

"This technology will drastically decrease the amount of time necessary for on-site physicians to receive cardiac data, reduce time needed to determine appropriate medical intervention and increase chances of surviving a cardiac or chest pain event," the release said.

"Our department's primary responsibility is to provide the highest-quality, cost-effective and reliable pre-hospital patient care and transport to the citizens and visitors of Montgomery County and Clarksville," said Jimmie Edwards, chief, Montgomery County EMS.

"We have looked all across the state for a way to provide seamless communications ability without having to piecemeal things in our system together over time," he said.

Funding for the system comes through a \$30,000 allocation directly from county government, plus a \$22,000 grant from the Clarksville-Montgomery County Community Health Foundation.



An in-motion, on-board mobile gateway box sits behind

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