

## READY TO RESPOND



by Donna Barton

Anticipating and preparing for a need before there is a need—clearly no small task, but one that members of emergency and trauma services at CoxHealth perform every day.

From specialized pediatric equipment in ambulances and aggressive patient care protocols, to community trauma prevention and safety education and a centralized dispatch center, CoxHealth works to provide maximum care in an emergency.

“You have to be forward-thinking at all times,” says Mark Alexander, director of [Pre-Hospital Services](#) at CoxHealth. “That’s what makes a difference in the outcome of a patient in an emergency.”

One example of that forward-thinking is the computer aided dispatch system or CAD. The system, which is the only one of its kind in southwest Missouri, allows for a coordinated response to any event. It also tracks and records all aspects of a response. Details of the emergency situation, where an ambulance unit is located, the unit’s home station, the staff on board,

travel speed, and if fire and rescue personnel are needed, are made possible with the system. CoxHealth uses those details to keep response times short and to determine the best utilization of emergency resources in the future.

Adding to emergency management efficiency is the centralized dispatch center at CoxHealth. Calls are tracked from one location and dispatchers are trained to help callers before EMS arrives. Emergency and non-emergency activity in seven southwest Missouri counties are serviced through the dispatch center. This is no small feat considering CoxHealth typically logs 35,000 responses a year in southwest Missouri, as well as ambulance stand-by service at many community events such as football games, rodeos, fairs and races.

Another vital component of the emergency and trauma services is [Cox Air Care](#), an extremely dependable twin engine, turbine-powered, fully equipped and medically configured MBB-BO 105 helicopter with an average cruising speed of 120 miles per hour. Air Care recently celebrated 14 years accident free and is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Services for demonstrating a high quality of service and meeting or exceeding air ambulance standards. Cox Air Care is the only program in the state to carry blood and was the first air ambulance in the region to administer the blood clot dissolving treatment TNKase.

Equally as important as sophisticated equipment are the skilled members of the medical staff. CoxHealth is designated a Level II Trauma Center with board-certified emergency physicians and nurses specifically trained in critical care available 24/7 to address the community’s emergency medical needs.

“We don’t want to have to meet you in a professional capacity,” says Mike Dawson, Cox EMS operations manager. “But if you need help ... you want us.”

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### CONTENTS

- HRT questions and answers — 5
- Oxford clients utilize CoaguChek — 10
- Surgery options for acid reflux — 11