



**BELMONT COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS**



**Belmont County
Health Department**
HEALTH PROMOTION, PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Belmont County CARES Program

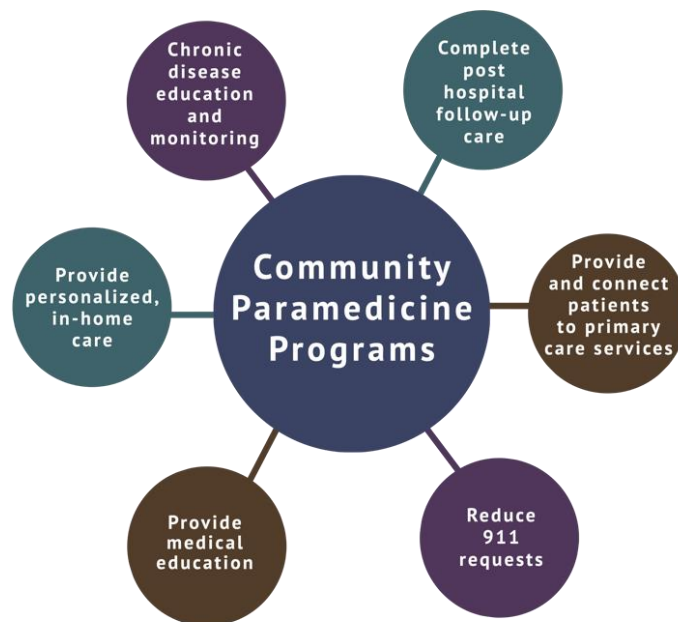
Community Access Resources Education & Solutions

2024

Mid-Year Report

What is Community Paramedicine:

Community Paramedicine represents an innovative approach to healthcare delivery, transcending the traditional boundaries of emergency and first responder services. In this dynamic field, paramedics take on an expanded role, providing essential healthcare services to patients with a focus on those typically underserved by conventional medical avenues. The overarching objectives of community paramedicine programs are twofold: firstly, to enhance accessibility to primary care within medically underserved populations, and secondly, to curtail avoidable utilization of emergency care resources. This evolving model positions EMS providers as integral partners in both public health and community healthcare delivery. Community paramedicine programs leverage the existing expertise and community connections of paramedics while equipping them with additional skills tailored for community engagement, such as motivational interviewing. Beyond the traditional emergency response setting, community paramedics engage in activities such as health screenings, home inspections, and other on-site services, often directly in the client's home. The primary goals of community paramedicine encompass boosting access to primary care services and concurrently mitigating the unnecessary use of emergency care resources. Moreover, these programs align seamlessly with the broader paradigm shift towards mobile integrated healthcare, advocating for healthcare professionals to operate in expanded capacities beyond traditional clinical settings, thereby fostering a more comprehensive and proactive approach to community well-being.



How the CARES Program works:

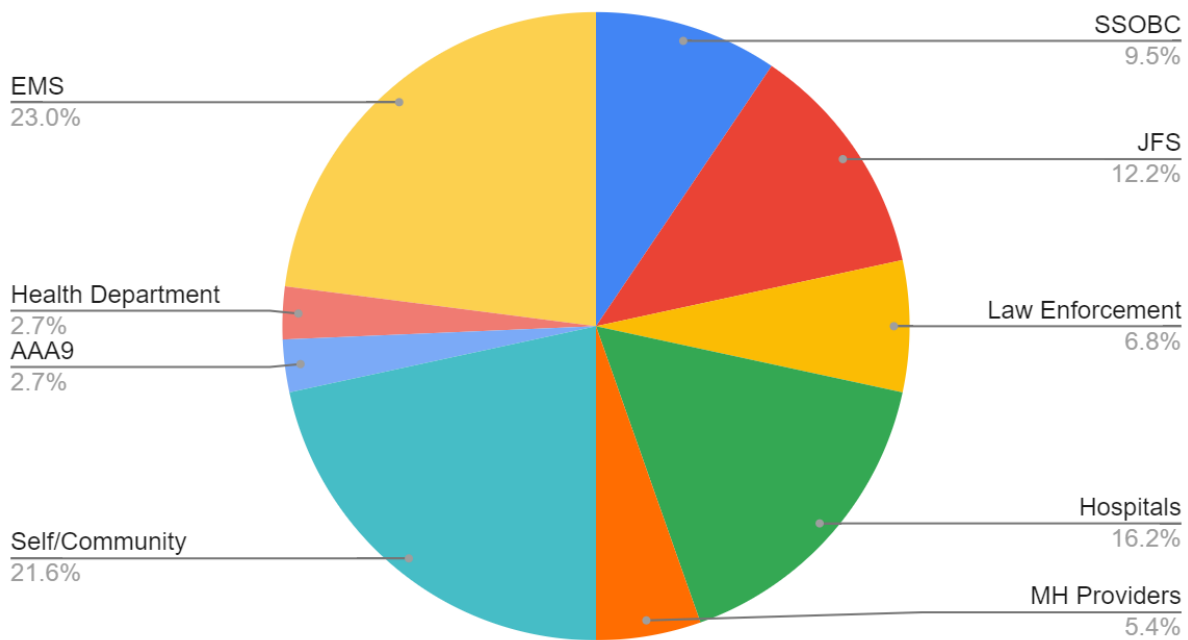
The operational framework of the CARES Program involves a thorough intake process, encompassing a comprehensive review of the client's existing care, an exploration of their support systems, an assessment of their specific needs, and the formulation of a customized plan to secure the necessary services. The intricacies of this process are tailored to the unique

requirements of each client, considering factors such as their resources and insurance coverage, ensuring a personalized and effective approach. Within this structured framework, the Community Paramedic takes on the pivotal role of referring clients to pertinent agencies and providers, actively facilitating the coordination of services. This proactive involvement extends to tasks such as scheduling appointments, arranging transportation, sending reminders, and diligently following up. The Community Paramedic remains closely engaged with the client, ensuring that the proposed solutions are implemented and addressing any potential challenges along the way, thus ensuring a seamless and supportive experience for the individuals under the program's care.

Where do referrals to the program come from?

Referrals for the CARES Program are sourced from a diverse range of channels, including healthcare providers (EMS agencies, hospitals, physicians, etc.), social services (health department, adult/child protective services, senior services), insurance providers, as well as from the network of families, friends, and individuals themselves. This multi-faceted approach ensures that the CARES Program remains accessible and responsive to the varied needs of our community, fostering a comprehensive support system that spans across healthcare, social services, and personal connections.

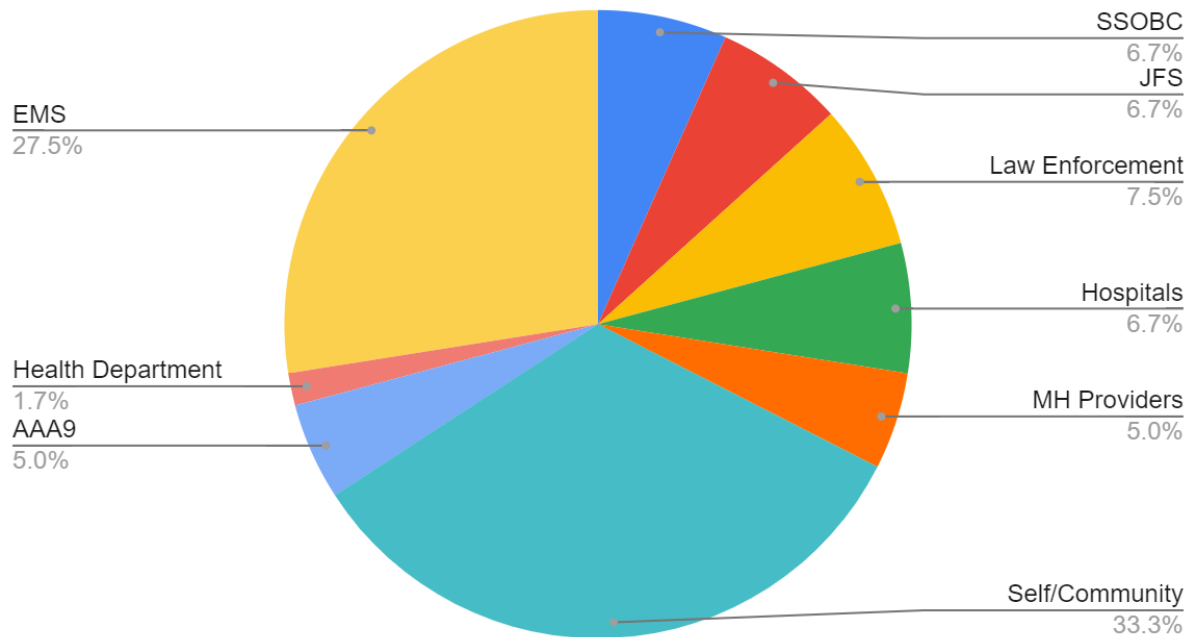
Q1



Q1 2024 Referrals = **74**

64% increase compared to Q1 2023

Q2



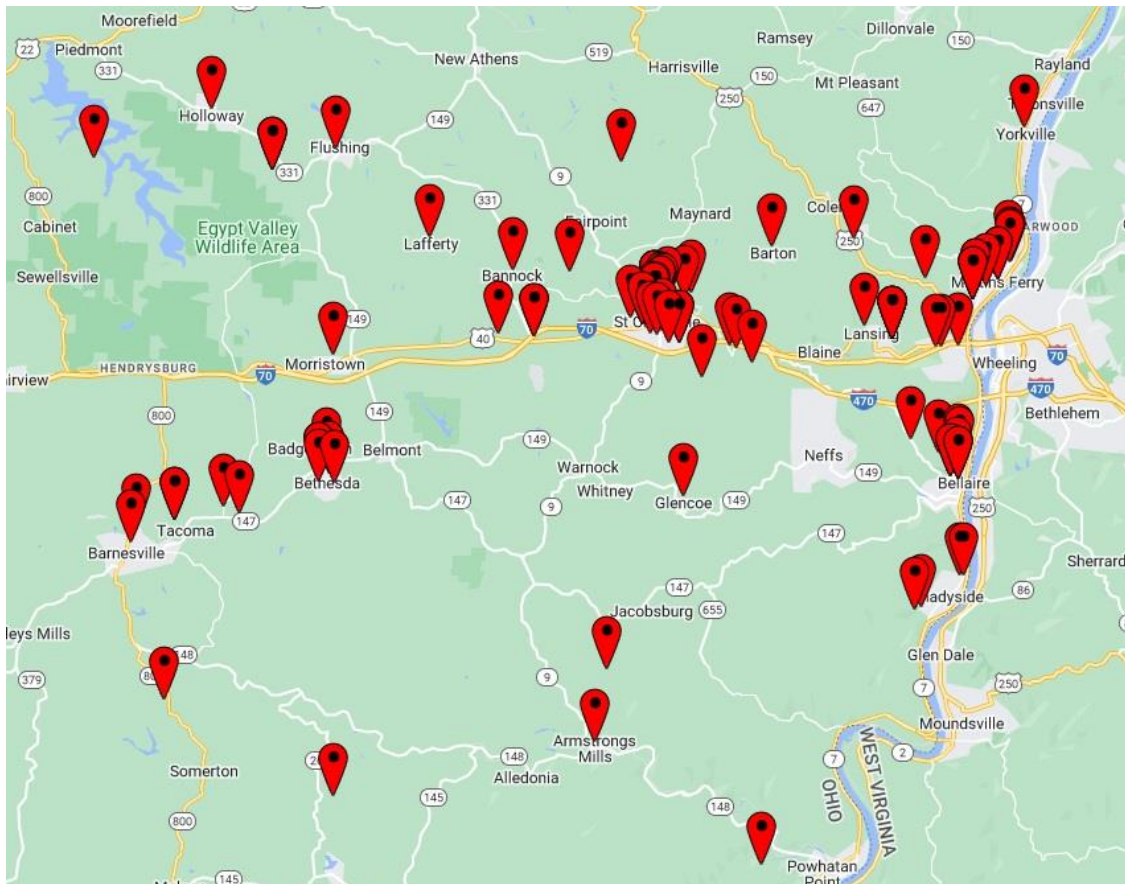
Q2 2024 Referrals = **120**

122% increase compared to Q2 2023

Amidst rising community needs, Belmont County has experienced a remarkable 96% increase in referrals to its CARES Program compared to the same period last year. This surge underscores the critical role of community paramedicine in addressing local health challenges.

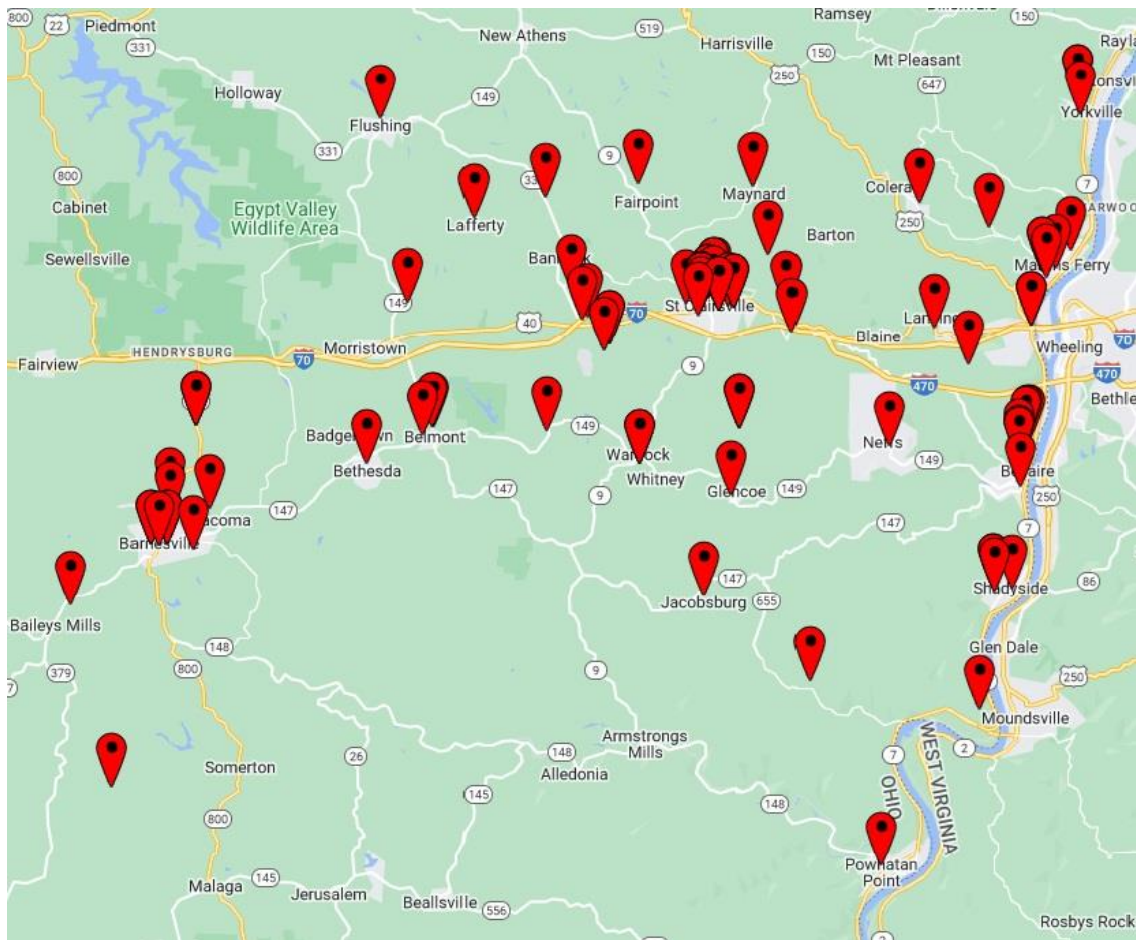
Recognizing the necessity for proactive health management, Belmont County's CARES Program offers vital short-term case management services. These initiatives are designed to ensure the safety and well-being of residents facing diverse health and social challenges. By providing tailored support and interventions, the program aims to enhance community resilience and promote long-term health outcomes.

Home Visits Q1: 145



compared to 87 home visits in Q1 2023 this shows a **66% increase**

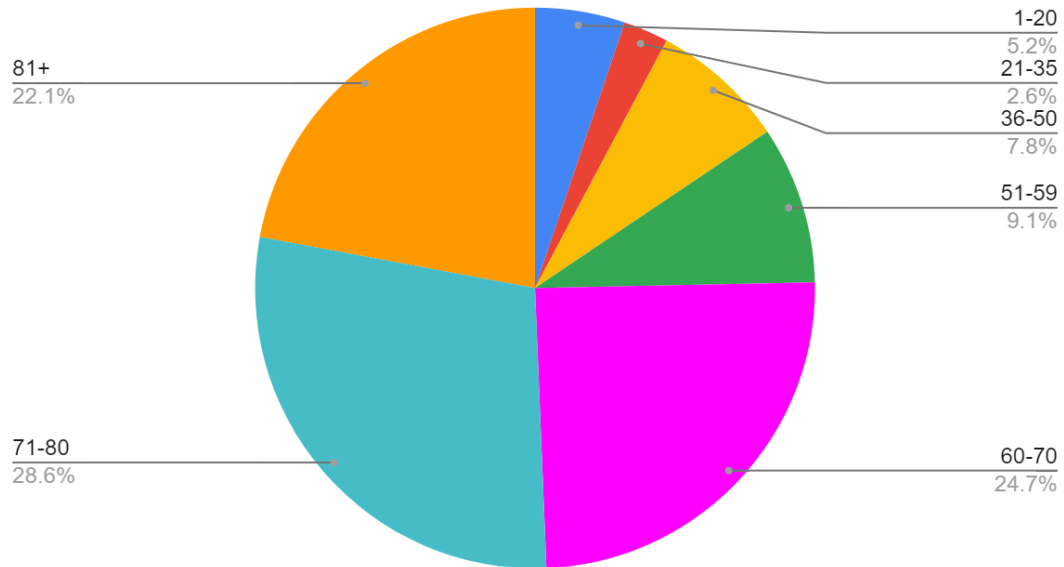
Home Visits Q2: 173



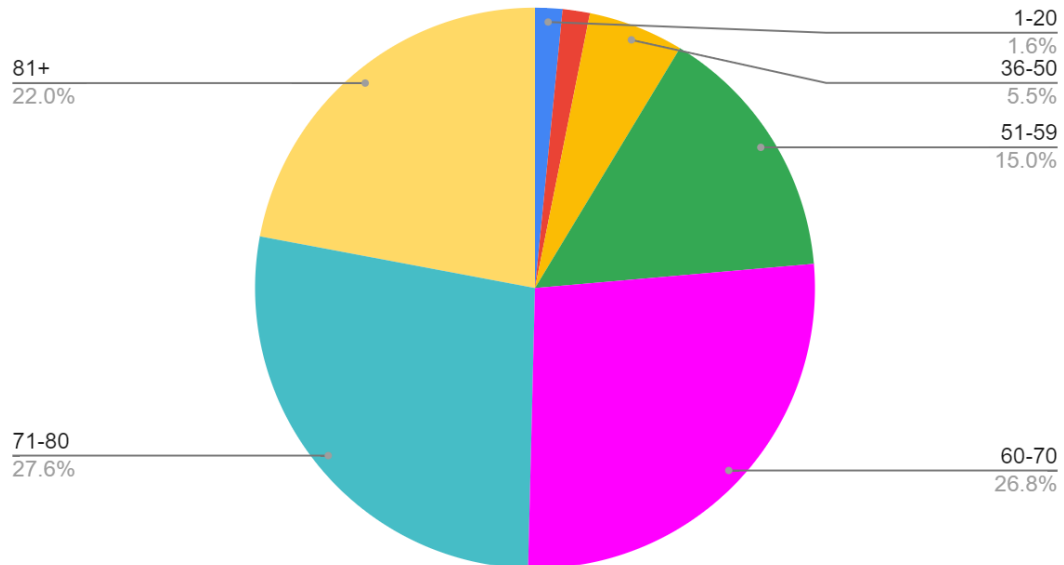
compared to 106 home visits in Q2 2023 this shows a **61% increase**

Age of Population Served:

Q1



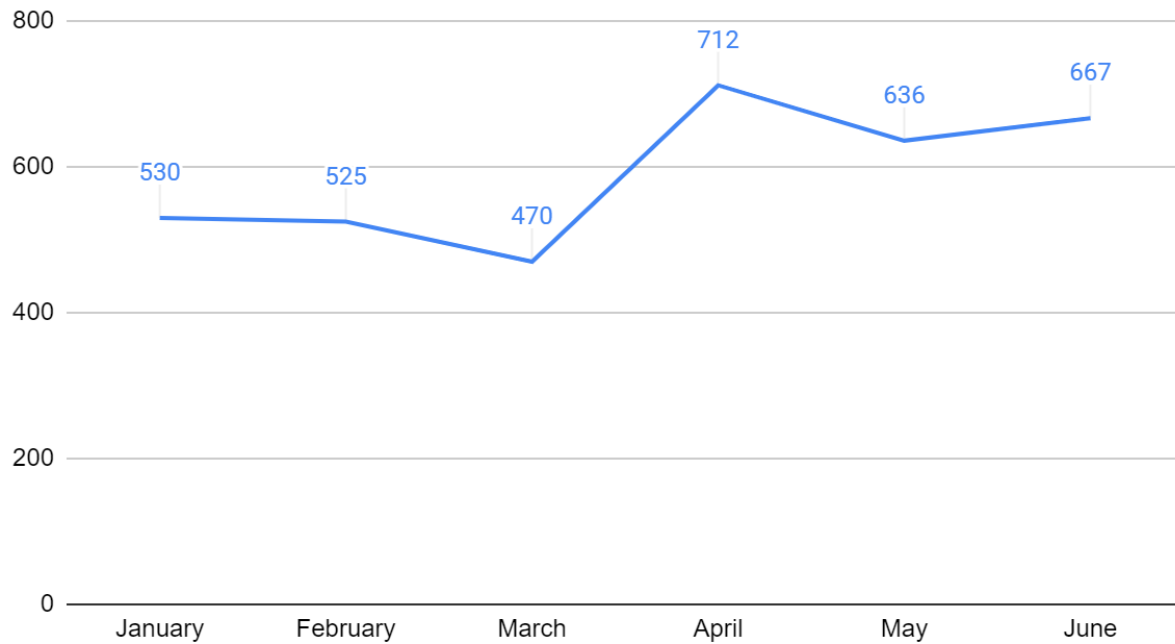
Q2



Over 75% of clients are age 60+

Calls Received: **3540**

this is a **45% increase** compared to Q1 and Q2 of 2023



Phone Calls Received: 3540

MH Crisis Responses:

In the fourth quarter of 2023, the CARES Program embarked on a pivotal initiative, prioritizing its commitment to addressing and responding to mental health crises. Within this realm, the CARES Program plays a crucial role in bolstering the efforts of the mobile response team by orchestrating a seamless collaboration of essential resources. This collaborative approach involves the integration of various stakeholders, including law enforcement, mental health clinicians, Adult Protective Services, primary care providers, emergency departments, and Emergency Medical Services. Through strategic coordination, the CARES Program aims to optimize the effectiveness of its response to mental health crises, ensuring a comprehensive and supportive network for individuals in need.

Notably, the CARES Program extends its support beyond immediate crisis intervention, actively engaging in the evaluation of individuals who may need additional support or guardianship. In collaboration with County-appointed guardians and mental health and primary care providers, the CARES Program facilitates the exploration of alternative measures, ensuring that individuals receive personalized assessments and access to appropriate interventions. This commitment reflects the program's dedication to promoting the autonomy and well-being of individuals while addressing their unique mental health needs.

Responses in Quarter 1 2024: **20**

Responses in Quarter 2 2024: **20**



Overdose Prevention:

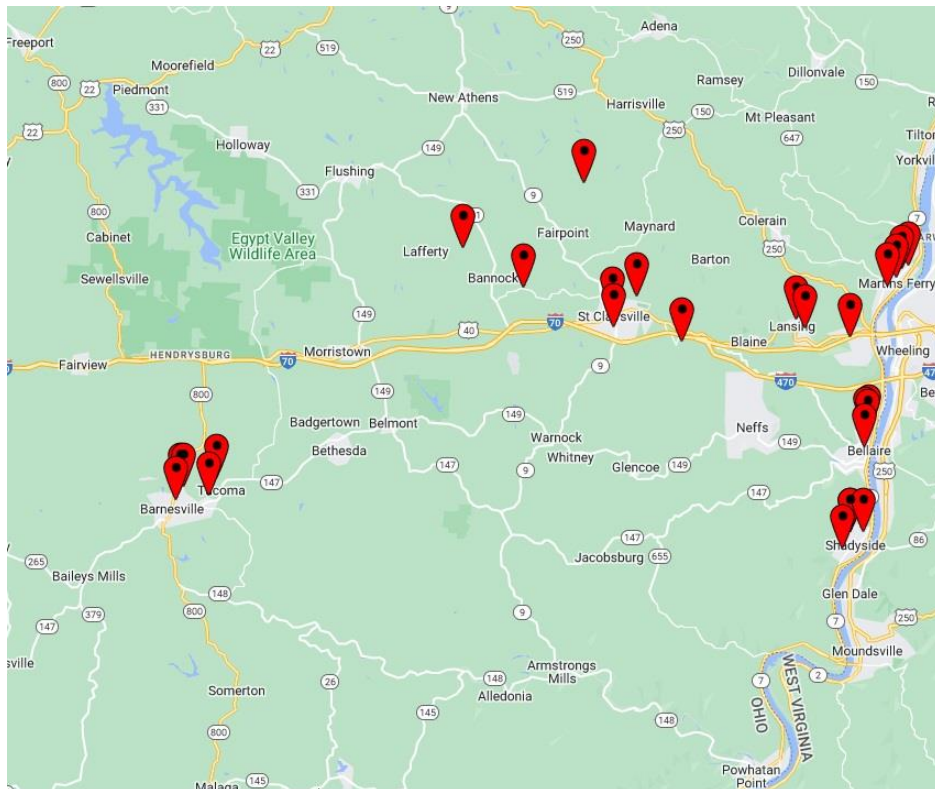
The Belmont County CARES Program works closely with the Belmont County Health Department, BHM Mental Health & Recovery Board, and Belmont County 911 to distribute overdose prevention kits following reported overdoses. These kits contain vital resources such as an overdose treatment guide, mental health and addiction resources, naloxone, CPR masks, and fentanyl test strips.

Distributing these kits to overdose sites is crucial for effective postvention. By ensuring immediate access to resources, the program empowers community members to respond effectively in emergencies. Naloxone is particularly pivotal as it can reverse opioid overdoses, potentially saving lives. CPR masks enable safe administration of rescue breaths, and fentanyl test strips help identify the presence of potent opioids, reducing accidental overdoses.

Integrating these efforts with community paramedicine programs enhances their impact. Community paramedics not only provide emergency medical response but also offer ongoing support and education. They engage directly with individuals affected by substance use disorders, offering preventive interventions, connecting them with treatment resources, and promoting harm reduction practices.

Through collaboration among the Belmont County CARES Program, Health Department, BHM Mental Health & Recovery Board, and local emergency services, distributing overdose prevention kits represents a significant step in reducing opioid overdoses. This initiative not only saves lives during crises but also supports long-term prevention, education, and community support for those affected by substance use disorders.

31 Kits Distributed



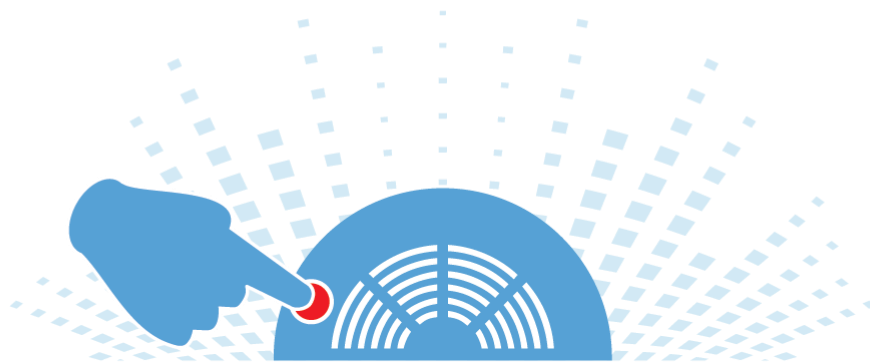
Smoke Detectors:

The CARES Program in Belmont County has teamed up with the Red Cross to offer free smoke detectors to county residents. These detectors are provided at no cost and installed by certified fire safety inspectors from the CARES Program. They also provide valuable home fire safety tips during the installation.

Community paramedics play a crucial role in this initiative by visiting homes, installing smoke detectors, and educating residents about fire safety. They help identify potential fire hazards and teach residents how to prevent fires and stay safe in emergencies. This proactive approach helps reduce the risk of fire-related accidents and promotes a safer community.

By working together, the CARES Program and the Red Cross are making Belmont County safer. Providing free smoke detectors and educating residents about fire safety not only protects people from immediate dangers but also empowers them to take proactive steps in preventing fires at home.

41 FREE Smoke Detectors Installed



SOUND THE ALARM

Save a Life

Assistance Provided:

Frequent Use of Emergency Services: Individuals who recurrently utilize 911 or emergency services for non-emergent matters undergo dedicated case management within our program. This involves a tailored approach to link them with more suitable services, encompassing primary care, behavioral health support, housing assistance, and social services. By addressing the root causes and channeling individuals toward appropriate resources, we aim to reduce the reliance on emergency services for non-urgent situations.

Mental Health: Every eligible client undergoes comprehensive education on available behavioral health resources within the county, sourced from the Mental Health & Recovery Board. Additionally, they receive information about crisis hotlines and text lines. Should a client express a need for behavioral health treatment, our Community Paramedic collaborates closely with them to identify suitable mental health resources, ranging from counselors and therapists to licensed social workers (LSW), psychologists, or psychiatrists. As part of this process, the Community Paramedic often administers the PHQ-9, a diagnostic tool screening for the presence and severity of depression. If applicable, results are promptly reported to a clinician for further evaluation. In cases involving patients in mental health crises, the Community Paramedic adeptly navigates the complexities, working collaboratively with the individual and their provider to facilitate emergency treatment or initiate an application for emergency admission. Our commitment extends beyond immediate care, ensuring a comprehensive and supportive approach to mental health needs.

Mental Health Crisis Response: In instances where deemed both available and essential, the CARES Program seamlessly collaborates with the Mobile Response Team, playing a pivotal role in resource coordination. This collaborative effort extends to liaising with various entities, such as law enforcement, mental health clinicians, and emergency medical services, ensuring a comprehensive and cohesive approach to crisis intervention. Moreover, the CARES Program actively engages in the coordination and communication efforts with emergency department providers and nursing staff, fostering an integrated response that addresses the multifaceted needs of individuals in crisis with precision and care.

Home Health, PT/OT, or Palliative Care: When a client necessitates or requests in-home assistance, a meticulous assessment is conducted. For Home Health, Skilled Nursing Care, Physical Therapy, and Palliative care, the Community Paramedic collaborates with the client's provider to obtain a tailored order. This involves scheduling appointments in their office or facilitating alternative plans, such as virtual consultations. This approach ensures a seamless transition to specialized care, addressing the unique needs of each individual.

Health Education: Often, clients grapple with understanding their health or disease. Providing personalized education at their comprehension level proves to be profoundly informative, aiding clients in comprehending their treatment needs. By offering tailored health education, we empower individuals to actively participate in their well-being journey.

Primary Care: If a client lacks a primary care provider, the Community Paramedic underscores the critical importance of establishing one. A proactive approach follows, involving scheduling,

sending reminders, arranging transportation, and conducting medication assessments before appointments. This comprehensive support ensures clients have access to essential primary care services.

Guardianship of Person: Community paramedics play a crucial role in assisting individuals with obtaining guardianship through coordinated efforts with Adult Protective Services, Coleman Health Services, and the primary care provider. By leveraging their unique position in the community, paramedics facilitate communication and collaboration between these essential parties. They work closely with APS to identify individuals in need of guardianship, providing critical insights into the individual's health and living conditions. Through partnerships with Coleman Health Services and the primary care provider, community paramedics ensure comprehensive medical assessments and expert evaluations are conducted, which are essential in supporting guardianship petitions. Their proactive approach not only enhances the assessment process but also promotes the well-being and safety of vulnerable individuals, ultimately contributing to better outcomes in guardianship proceedings.

Medical Care: For clients already linked with a primary care provider but who haven't had a visit in 6+ months, education is provided, and efforts are made to schedule appointments. Recognizing potential obstacles to attending appointments, the Community Paramedic facilitates solutions, be it transportation assistance, preparation guidance, or organizing virtual appointments.

Dental Care: Clients are screened for their last dental appointment, with education provided if it's been over a year. Efforts are made to schedule appointments with their dental provider. For those without a dental provider, the Community Paramedic aids in establishing a connection with one, emphasizing the importance of oral health.

Fall Risk Assessment: Recognizing the prevalence of falls in adults aged 65 and older, a thorough fall risk assessment is conducted. This assessment includes an initial screening encompassing questions about overall health and previous falls, followed by tasks assessing strength, balance, and gait. This proactive approach helps identify and address factors contributing to fall risk.

APS/CPS Referral: In cases where seniors/children are found living in deplorable conditions, a referral is made to Adult/Child Protective Services. Collaborating with APS/CPS workers, the Community Paramedic assists in addressing the needs of individuals, particularly in situations involving abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Home Care Waiver / PASSPORT: For Ohio Home Care Waiver and/or PASSPORT, the Area Agency on Aging Region 9 is contacted, and a referral is initiated. The Community Paramedic ensures the completion of assessments by AAA9, followed by ongoing support to meet the client's needs.

Placement – Nursing Home or Assisted Living: When a client's needs surpass the capacity of staying at home, health education becomes paramount. Personal conversations comprehensively review their health status, ensuring a clear understanding of their needs and the available options

for care. All placement decisions are made with the client's consent after thorough education, fostering an informed and empowered decision-making process.

Health Insurance: Clients without insurance receive guidance from the Community Paramedic to review eligible programs, including Medicaid, Medicare, and supplemental plans. Assistance is provided in completing necessary applications and gathering required paperwork.

Medical Transportation: The Community Paramedic assists in reviewing eligibility for transportation, exploring various options based on age and insurance provider. This includes coordinating with services like Senior Services of Belmont County Transportation, non-emergency transportation services with Job and Family Services, and insurance-specific transport services.

Housing Assistance: For clients in need of permanent housing, the Community Paramedic collaborates to locate suitable housing, aiding in the application process. This extends to working with senior living facilities, public housing, and other apartment facilities. Emergency funds to cover rent or security deposits are sought when necessary.

Utility Assistance: Clients requiring assistance with utilities are referred to the Community Action Commission Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and other relevant programs. The Community Paramedic assists with application filing and ensures the proper documentation for programs like the Area Agency on Aging's Utility Assistance Program.

Clothing and Food Assistance: Referrals are made to community organizations such as the Salvation Army, Greater Wheeling Coalition for the Homeless, Catholic Charities West Virginia, Project Manna, St. Vincent De Paul Society, and the Miracle of Life Group. This includes hands-on assistance with picking up and delivering items.

Smoke Detectors: Clients are queried about the presence of working smoke detectors in their homes. If absent, the Community Paramedic provides and installs one as needed, promoting a safer living environment.

Medical Alarm: If clients need a medical alarm, they likely have other needs. They may qualify for home health, PASSPORT, etc. – this may qualify them for a medical alarm. If they are unable to qualify for coverage the Community Paramedic can help them shop for one – typically online.

Specialty Care: Clients requiring or benefiting from specific health treatments, such as wound care or specialist care, receive support from the Community Paramedic. This encompasses communication with providers' offices, scheduling appointments, and involving their primary care provider in the process.

Home Repair/Accommodations: Clients needing home repairs or accommodations for safe living are referred to charitable organizations. The Community Paramedic advocates on their behalf and may assist in obtaining quotes from area businesses for necessary improvements.

Immunizations: Clients are screened for immunizations, and those lacking common immunizations receive assistance from the Community Paramedic in obtaining them. This may involve coordination with the Belmont County Health Department or their primary care provider.

Employment Assistance: The Community Paramedic collaborates with clients seeking employment, offering education, access assistance, and referrals to Ohio Means Jobs. Ongoing support and follow-up ensure a comprehensive approach to employment needs.

Medical Supplies/Equipment: The Community Paramedic can assist clients with obtaining needed medical supplies. This includes communication with their insurance, providers, and area agencies.