

Among those to whom Brown’s letter went is County Administrator Birgitta Corsello, who chairs the Solano County EMS Cooperative. There was no immediate response Monday to a request for an interview.

The report was developed by the cooperative, which hired the Pennsylvania-based EMS legal and consulting firm of Page Wolfberg & Wirth to evaluate the existing system, then assist in designing and implementing a request for proposals for ambulance services from 2020-30.

The summary asserts that since 2010, when the last contract was awarded to Medic Ambulance, there have been many changes to how health care is paid for as well as changes to clinical practices.

“There are two overarching concerns which have guided the development of our recommendations for the next 10-year cycle,” the executive summary of the 67-page draft EMS System Review and Blueprint Report states.

The first priority is “incorporating evidence-based, clinical best practices to allow the EMS system to improve its focus on optimizing patient outcomes.”

The second priority is “maintaining and ensuring system financial stability for the term of the contract in light of recent high-profile EMS system failures in other California counties.”

“An EMS system can deploy resources and perform only to a level that is allowed by the revenues that support it,” the report states.

“EMS system revenues derive only from a subset of patient transports, yet transport revenues can fall short of covering broader system costs. In the Solano County EMS system this is not currently an acute problem, but (the Solano EMS Cooperative) must always be forward-looking. If substantial costs above revenues for reimbursed transports are added via response time requirements for 911 calls, non-emergency, interfacility and critical care transports, or if an undue amount of system costs are imposed on the contracted provider, such ‘negative subsidies’ can impose financial stress on the contractor – and thus the EMS system – and cause the EMS system to fail. Other EMS systems in California faced insolvency or collapse, largely due to these unsustainable costs placed on the contracted providers,” the report adds.

Going to a centralized, or privatized, dispatcher system is a conclusion based on the recommendation to go to a tiered system that would evaluate the kind of response that is needed based on the level of medical need or emergency.

“Tiered (emergency medical system) response cannot be implemented in the (contract area) without the use of Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) with medically valid (advanced-life support) and (basic-life support) response determinants,” the report states. “The issue then becomes whether it is preferable for all of the PSAP to employ EMD to make tiered dispatching decisions or for one entity to carry out centralized EMD.”

READ THE REPORT

The full draft report can be accessed at www.solanocounty.com, then by clicking on departments and going to the EMS link.

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