



**SPOKANE REGIONAL
EMERGENCY
COMMUNICATIONS**



AMR
A Global Medical Response Solution

Beginning on Tuesday, June 18, 2024, residents of Spokane who call 911 will have access to expanded medical services through the new Spokane Nurse Navigation program. This innovative healthcare solution is a collaboration between the Spokane Fire Department, Spokane Regional Emergency Communications (SREC), and American Medical Response (AMR). The program aims to provide the appropriate level of medical care to 911 callers at the right time and place.

If a condition is deemed non-emergency, callers will be transferred to a "Nurse Navigator" who will determine the best treatment path and help coordinate access to care. This initiative ensures that Spokane residents receive the care they need, which might include a referral to a local clinic or urgent care facility. There is no cost to the caller for accessing Nurse Navigator services.

Spokane Fire Chief Julie O’Berg said that the program enhances service to the City of Spokane and routes some 911 callers to alternative care destinations such as area health clinics or even virtual appointments. “Through this new partnership with AMR, Spokane Regional Emergency Communications Officers will now have capability to transfer thousands of calls annually to the Nurse Navigation. This program allows us to better serve our community by more appropriately triaging the needs of some of our 911 utilizers. In many cases, this will help to divert 911 callers with non-emergency issues away from an ambulance transport to a hospital’s emergency department, and connect patients instead towards self-treatment, urgent care, or a telehealth appointment.”

Nurse Navigators are licensed nurses in Washington state with professional experience in emergency nursing and specialized training in managing and triaging medical calls. After triaging the call, these nurses can connect callers to local clinics, arrange transportation to and from appointments, or link callers directly to telehealth physicians who can provide online care and prescribe medication if necessary. The service is available to all callers, regardless of whether they have medical insurance.

AMR Operations Manager Jack Busch said, “We are excited to offer this solution to our Spokane community through our partnership with the Spokane Fire Department and Spokane Regional Emergency Communications. Adding this tool to our system will help to ensure we are getting the right resource to the right patients at the right time to meet the care needs of all. We applaud these partner agencies for their patient-focused approach to caring for the communities we serve.”

Residents will see no change when calling 911 for life-threatening emergencies. An ambulance will still be dispatched for urgent, life-threatening, or potentially life-threatening situations.

Lori Markham, the Executive Director of SREC, expressed enthusiasm about the collaboration with the City of Spokane on the Nurse Navigation Program, stating, "We are excited to support the City of Spokane with the launch of the Nurse Navigation Program. Embracing innovation and collaboration with our partners allows us to better serve the Spokane community."

With the launch of the Spokane Nurse Navigation program, Spokane joins 22 other cities and counties across the U.S. in integrating this system into 911 services. This program aims to alleviate the strain on EMS and healthcare systems by ensuring that both high- and low-acuity calls receive the most appropriate level of care.

“Improving public safety in Spokane requires improving the systems our City uses to provide public safety support,” said Mayor Lisa Brown. “The Nurse Navigation Program is a strong example for how we can make our systems more efficient and ensure better care at the same time.”

Additional information can be found online at: <https://my.spokanecity.org/fire/operations/nurse-navigation-program/>
For information related to the dispatch side of this program contact Kelly Conley at SREC @ 509-822-1846
For general program information contact Justin de Ruyter at SFD @ 509-625-7110

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