



So many lives are *riding* on us

March 3, 2014

Kevin G. Munjal, MD, MPH  
Founder, NY Mobile Integrated Healthcare Association (NYMIHA)  
c/o Mount Sinai Medical Center  
One Gustave Levy Place, Box 1620  
New York, NY 10029

Dear Dr. Munjal,

Empress EMS is pleased to endorse and fully supports the efforts of the New York Mobile Integrated Healthcare Association (formerly NY Community Paramedicine Task Force). Specifically, we support the Association's model of improved out-of-hospital care including all efforts to make emergency medical services (EMS) more patient-centered and adaptive to changes in the healthcare system. We also endorse efforts to make out-of-hospital care more integrated into the continuum of healthcare delivery and to integrate EMS into the public health infrastructure.

Empress responds to more than 80,000 EMS request annually. We are the primary 911 EMS provider to various cities and towns throughout Westchester County. Additionally we provide comprehensive services to major healthcare facilities in Westchester and the Bronx.

In many cases our EMT's and Paramedics are the primary access point to healthcare that many of our citizens have come to trust and rely upon. This diverse population would realize significant benefit from a Mobile Integrated Healthcare Program as would the frequently overcrowded local emergency departments. We have extensively researched the role of MIH and how we can deliver this platform of care to our communities and are 100% committed to develop and implement a program in the near future.

The current New York State Medicaid reimbursement policy does not allow EMS providers to deliver higher quality, patient-centered healthcare. Instead, it emphasizes transport. We support any effort by the NYMIHA to realign financial incentives for out-of-hospital care. We believe that changing New York State Medicaid reimbursement policy will enable providers of EMS to make a wide array of contributions to improving the public health while lowering costs.

We are pleased to be a member of your coalition and are happy to help support and advance the development these services. We look forward to implementing a pilot program in the very near future. We have met with leading agencies from other states that are already providing MIH services, to better understand various delivery and reimbursement models so as to better structure our own.

We recognize and thank the NY Mobile Integrated Healthcare Association for initiating a statewide dialogue about the potential impact of improved out-of-hospital care. We encourage other organizations, hospital systems, public and private healthcare insurers, and government regulators to engage in this important discussion about the numerous social and financial benefits prehospital care can have throughout the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Minerva". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Michael Minerva  
President