



Independence

HEALTH SYSTEM

TO MEDIA

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Photo: (Left to Right) Karen Allen, President of Clarion & Butler Hospitals; Dr. Michael Fiorina, CMO Clarion & Butler Hospitals; Ken DeFurio, President Independence Health System; Sen. Scott Hutchinson; Rep. Donna Oberlander; Jarred Heuer, Executive Director CCEDC; Leslie Walters, Clarion Hospital CNO; Mike Bell, CHEMS Van Driver; Scott Koscho, VP Support Services

CLARION HOSPITAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES ENHANCES EMERGENCY VEHICLE FLEET

Enhancements were made possible through the support of the Clarion County Economic Corporation and LSA Funding

Clarion, PA, January 26, 2024... The Clarion Hospital Emergency Medical Services (CHEMS), part of Independence Health System, received a new ambulance and emergency squad vehicle through the support of a \$268k Local Share Account (LSA) Statewide grant. The funding was requested on behalf of CHEMS by the Clarion County Economic Development Corporation (CCEDC) in an effort to replace higher mileage vehicles in the emergency fleet and upgrade aging equipment. The CCEDC is a non-profit organization that promotes economic growth and development through a number of initiatives, which includes locating available funding and resources to help businesses

thrive and grow. Local dignitaries and the CCEDC presented the new vehicles to the Clarion Hospital Ambulance Service and hospital leadership outside the hospital entrance on January 26.

“I’d like to thank the CHEMS team and the staff at CCEDC for their leadership in pursuing this funding opportunity,” said Sen. Scott Hutchinson. “These new vehicles and the highly trained professionals who will operate them are a vital benefit to each and every one of us who reside in the communities they serve.”

“We are incredibly grateful to receive the LSA grant money to purchase a new ambulance and emergency squad vehicle,” said Karen Allen, President of Clarion & Butler Memorial Hospitals. “Time is of the essence in an emergency, and it is essential that the emergency fleet can support our EMS when called upon to provide life-saving pre-hospital services. We are proud of the CHEMS staff, their commitment to the community, and their dedication to providing exemplary services.”

The Clarion Hospital Ambulance Service covers approximately 750 square miles of service area throughout Clarion, Forest, and Northern Armstrong Counties. It has provided emergency medical services to the area for more than 30 years. In 2023, they completed more than 7,000 service requests from 911 emergencies and patient transports. The newly acquired ambulance will provide necessary updates to the emergency fleet. The addition of an emergency squad vehicle will allow paramedics to provide supplemental coverage to emergency calls requiring Advanced Life Support (ALS), expand coverage area, and reduce emergency response time.

“As a rural legislator, I know first-hand the crisis our emergency services community is facing and I’m thrilled that this state funding is being utilized to upgrade aging equipment to benefit our local communities and our residents,” said Rep. Donna Oberlander (R-Clarion/Armstrong). “New emergency vehicles will ensure that patients receive immediate attention and care.”

In addition, the Clarion Hospital Foundation set up an 'Ambulance Fund' to help raise additional money to replace a second ambulance in the fleet. The first fundraiser will be held on Saturday, Feb. 24, with a 'Handbags for Health' Designer Purse Bingo from 2 p.m. – 5 p.m. at the American Legion, 530 Main Street, Clarion. Tickets are \$35 each and can be purchased at the Clarion Hospital Registration/Front Lobby, the Clarion County YMCA, Clarion Area Chamber of Business & Industry, or online at <https://www.butlerhealthsystem.org/bhs-foundation/clarion/handbags-for-health/>. All proceeds will support the Clarion Hospital Ambulance Fund. Sponsorship opportunities are still available for organizations interested in supporting the cause. Contact the Clarion Hospital Foundation at 814-226-1258 for additional information.

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Nationally recognized for quality care, Independence Health System comprises Butler Memorial, Clarion, Frick, Latrobe and Westmoreland Hospitals with a combined bed count of 925. With more than 1,000 physicians and advanced practice providers and 7,300 employees, the System is now the third largest in western Pennsylvania serving a population base of 750,000 in a footprint spanning more than 10 counties.

The System includes tertiary programs that are rated among America's best for cardiac care and surgery by Healthgrades in its Top 100 and Top 50 designations, and one of only five in Pennsylvania to achieve a five-star rating in cardiac surgery. In similar fashion, the prestigious Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) bestowed its top three-star rating. Historically, less than 10 percent of programs within the STS data base achieve this elite standing. The hospitals of Independence Health System also have earned a host of accolades from such prestigious outlets and sources as US News and World Report, Newsweek Magazine, the American College of Radiology, the American College of Cardiology, the American College of Surgeons, the Joint Commission, Leapfrog and the American Heart/Stroke Association.

Locally owned and locally controlled, Independence Health System offers its patients low-cost, high-quality care across the care spectrum in such specialties as cardiology, cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, orthopedics and sports medicine, minimally invasive and robotic surgery, women's health and obstetrics, emergency medicine, behavioral health and primary care. Its network of outpatient centers sees more than 1.2 million visits annually. The homecare division further supports patients at all stages of life with home health and hospice services.

Independence Health System continues to change the healthcare landscape in western Pennsylvania by meeting patient needs through superb physician expertise, outstanding nursing, the latest in technology and programmatic depth.

