

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT relative to the resources needed to develop a Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) nurse practitioner pilot program for the City of Los Angeles.

Recommendation for Council action, as initiated by Motion (Englander – Krekorian – Bonin):

DIRECT the LAFD:

- a. In consultation with United Firefighters of Los Angeles City (UFLAC), the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA), and the City Administrative Officer (CAO), to report relative to the resources needed to develop a nurse practitioner pilot program for the City of Los Angeles.
- b. To report to the Public Safety Committee on a quarterly basis relative to the implementation and performance of the nurse practitioner program.

Fiscal Impact Statement: Neither the CAO nor the CLA has completed a financial analysis of this report.

Community Impact Statement: None submitted.

(Budget and Finance Committee waived consideration of the above matter.)

SUMMARY

On February 25, 2015, Council considered Motion (Englander – Krekorian – Bonin) relative to establishing an LAFD nurse practitioner pilot program for the City of Los Angeles. Motion states that the volume of Emergency Medical Service (EMS) calls handled by LAFD increases every year. At the same time, the number of emergency room beds in Los Angeles has failed to keep pace with the increased demand. This situation has resulted in long delays both for patients awaiting beds and for LAFD personnel who are required to accompany a patient until a bed is available.

Motion makers report that there are two populations of users that stress the EMS system: individuals that use 911 for minor health care needs that would be best treated at an urgent care facility or by their primary care physician, and a small group of high frequency users. Unless LAFD's current EMS response protocols are reevaluated, the imbalance in the system will continue to grow resulting in higher costs for taxpayers and longer delays for patients. Motion makers believe that a more efficient, coordinated, and integrated approach to delivering health care is needed.

Motion makers go on to report that there are two possible options for relieving the City's EMS system. First, non-urgent, low level 911 call requests can be screened by LAFD Firefighter EMTs and rerouted to nurse practitioners within the LAFD organization. Nurse practitioners can perform comprehensive on-site assessments and perform, treat and release, or treat and transfer. Implementing a nurse practitioner program into LAFD's EMS protocols, can reduce unnecessary and expensive emergency transport. A similar program has been successfully implemented in Mesa, Arizona, providing quality care and saves costs.

Second, a nurse practitioner can be used to coordinate care for high-call individuals to best take advantage of under-used existing resources thereby minimizing their reliance on EMS transport. Motion recommends that LAFD, in consultation with UFLAC, the CLA, and the CAO report relative to the resources needed to develop a nurse practitioner pilot program. Council referred Motion to the Public Safety and Budget and Finance Committees for consideration.

At its meeting held March 27, 2015, the Public Safety Committee discussed this matter with a representative of LAFD. The City's EMS system is under stress by an increasing load of calls for service, hospital closures, and paramedic wait time at emergency rooms. LAFD representative stated that 40 EMS super users alone made 2,400 calls for service in 2014, costing the City of Los Angeles \$2.5 million. The deployment of nurse practitioners can address help reduce the burdens on LAFD's EMS system while providing patients with high quality medical care. It was stated that the LAFD will launch a pilot program using one nurse practitioner as provided in the Department's budget.

The Committee expressed support for the program and enthusiasm for its potential. Ideally, at least one nurse practitioner will be deployed in each LAFD Bureau. In addition to improving EMS efficiency and reducing paramedic wait time at emergency rooms, nurse practitioners will be able to provide support at major disasters. The Committee recommended that Council approve Motion and direct LAFD to report on a quarterly basis relative to the program.

Respectfully Submitted,

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE



<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
ENGLANDER:	YES
BUSCAINO:	YES
BONIN:	YES
O'FARRELL:	ABSENT
MARTINEZ:	YES

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-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-