

PRIORITY PATIENT TRANSPORT INCREASES DISPATCH EFFICIENCY BY 300%

Steve Higgins,
Executive Vice President,
Priority Patient Transport



PRI*RTY
PATIENT TRANSPORT

VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER

20 vehicles making
15,000 trips per year

The Company

Priority Patient Transport, headquartered in Harrisonburg, Virginia, provides patient transport services – from emergencies, to regularly scheduled transports, to transfers from one healthcare facility to another. The company's vehicles travel throughout Virginia, and in some cases, across the East Coast. The company has three offices and more than 50 employees in the field, driving 20 vehicles, transporting over 15,000 patients each year.

Managing a complex
dispatch process

The Challenge

Because Priority Patient Transport provides a mix of scheduled and emergency services, planning and dispatch can be complicated. In addition to managing the general logistics involved in transporting patients for previously scheduled trips, dispatchers must also balance ever-changing schedules and emergency transports that arise.

Steve Higgins, executive vice president at Priority Patient Transport, knew he needed a better system for dispatch – and a way to gain more visibility into where his vehicles were and what they were doing.

“Dispatch can be challenging for us. We needed a system that could accommodate both repeat trips and real-time scheduling,” explains Higgins. “And once our vehicles were on the road, we really needed to be able to track them in real-time. What we really wanted was a solution where dispatch and telematics could work together.”

Efficiency and visibility

The Solution

Medical transportation brings with it specific challenges – both the healthcare facilities and the patients' families want to be sure the transport is handled on-time, and in the quickest and smoothest fashion. Priority Patient Transport turned to technology from MedaPoint. MedaPoint integrated their EMS dispatching solution, AdvanceDispatch, with WEBFLEET to ensure that they work seamlessly together.



VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER

“The integration enables us to view real-time vehicle location on our dispatch screen and send orders directly to the vehicle. Once drivers are on their way, we can see exactly where they are, how they are driving and when they will arrive,” said Higgins. “The integration eliminated all the calls that were coming into our dispatchers from drivers, and gave us peace of mind knowing where all of our vehicles were at any given time. Now we can always give accurate ETAs and communicate effectively with our drivers and customers.”

Prior to implementing AdvanceDispatch and WEBFLEET, dispatchers communicated with drivers mainly by phone. This resulted in a lot of time spent talking to drivers, and necessitated additional staff. Now, with integrated technology in place, dispatchers can handle three times as many calls.

“During our early days, we used one full time and one part time dispatcher in the office to handle volumes of about 5,000 calls per year,” said Higgins. “Now, we use the same staff to handle more than 15,000 per year. Eliminating all of those phone calls has had an enormous impact.”

“Hospitals and health centers want to work with an ambulance company that is at the top of their game,” continued Higgins. “Facilities like working with us because we’re able to give extremely accurate ETAs, know just where our crews are, and send vehicles where they need to be quickly.”

Higgins also reports that being able to track the vehicles – and integrate that information with dispatch – keeps the crews honest. “People don’t like to talk about it, but this is a business with unsupervised time. We want to be sure that drivers are doing what they are supposed to be doing with our vehicles. This is critically important for a medical service where time can be of the essence.”

Finally, greater visibility has resulted in critical, life-saving capabilities. “On a recent trip, transporting a transplant patient from UVA to Pittsburgh, the patient went into septic shock on the road,” explained Higgins. “With the crew working to save the patient, dispatch was able to find the nearest hospital and divert the ambulance there, getting the patient the help he needed in time.”

Overall, Higgins believes that MedaPoint’s integration with WEBFLEET has had a lasting, and measurable impact on his business. “In this business, performance is non-negotiable. With all the information we need, at our fingertips, we’ve decreased costs and increased peace-of-mind for us, our drivers, our customers and the patients. We couldn’t ask for more than that.”