

Medical transportation provider speeds up inventory procedures with AmbuTrak

TransCare Ambulance Services of the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay improves operational efficiency and increases patient transports

The Challenge:

As a community service partner, TransCare Ambulance Services, a division of the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, is a 24-hour, 7-day per week non-profit organization that serves more than one million citizens of Tampa Bay, Florida. With more than 3,000 calls per day and 1,900 transports per month, TransCare needed to operate as efficiently as possible to provide optimal patient care in the community.

TransCare's inventory restocking process was taking valuable time away from its ambulance crews. If crews could decrease "start of shift" time, they could establish more efficiency and less down time. This improvement could directly translate into savings against the organization's unit hours. TransCare measures operational efficiency in unit hours, which represent the cost to put a serviceable truck on the road. TransCare typically ran 15 trucks for 15 flights per day, equaling a unit hour cost of approximately \$62.

Over the course of three months, TransCare conducted internal agency observations to review procedures for incoming daily supply and equipment checks. They determined that crews made two to three trips in and out of central supply to restock their ambulance. This practice took approximately 25 to 30 minutes.

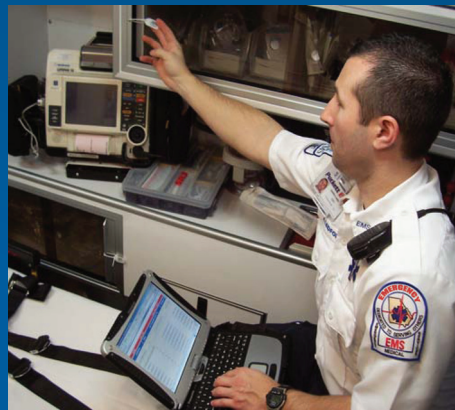
TransCare management recognized that their inventory restocking process was inefficient. They wanted to identify a solution that could help them cost-efficiently restock their trucks and save valuable time so that crews could service more calls and transports in the time saved.

The Solution:

TransCare decided to implement AmbuTrak, a Web-based inventory management system designed specifically for EMS providers. AmbuTrak provided the tools that TransCare needed to efficiently manage operations

and establish accountability with crews and Material Management staff.

First, TransCare piloted a new back-of-truck system of rearranging equipment and supplies according to volume of use, rather than the standard ambulance organization by category or therapy of use. This method allowed the most frequently used equipment to be the most accessible on the ambulance. The lesser used equipment was placed in separate cabinets and sealed.



When completing daily checks, the crews could skip cabinets with seals intact. Instead of checking inventory in every cabinet, they would only have to inventory one or two cabinets, reducing the time needed to perform daily inventory checks. Materials Management would then validate that the appropriate equipment was accessible and loaded onto the trucks. After implementing this change, TransCare realized that the high volume items were comprised of many of the supplies in the crews' bags.

To further increase efficiency, TransCare management sealed all of the cabinets in their ambulances and trained the crews to use their bags as much as possible. The crews preferred this practice already, so the change was not difficult to execute. The new process cut down inventory checking

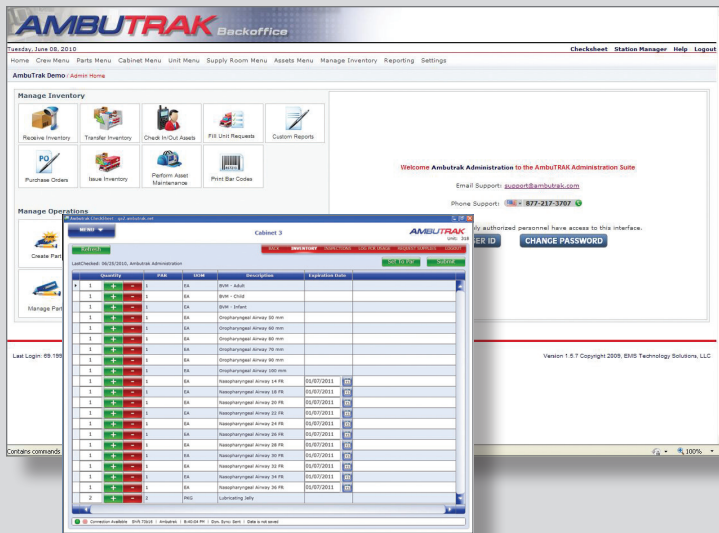
time, but it still did not address the multiple trips in and out of central supply. Again, TransCare looked to AmbuTrak for a solution and found one. Because AmbuTrak can be accessed through the crews' laptops, the crews were able to complete their vehicle inspections on the trucks during their calls in "real time" and send the supply requests proactively. When they returned to central supply, they could make one trip and get all of their stock.

TransCare immediately realized savings in budgeted supply dollars, allowing the organization to hire staff to perform vehicle checks for the crews. Now, when the crews come in to restock, their inventory needs are ready in pre-loaded, sealed kits. The new Materials assistant checks the truck to ensure its cleanliness and make sure the seals are intact. The Materials assistant also assigns any fixed assets to the incoming crew and pre-stocks the ambulance with this equipment.

Implementing this new procedure has decreased TransCare's average "start of shift" time from 25 to 30 minutes to 8 minutes, saving an average of 22 minutes per shift per day.

Additionally, AmbuTrak's vehicle maintenance program allows Operations to record all vehicle inspections. Supervisors are immediately aware of any vehicle problems to be referred for maintenance, resulting in additional "in service" time for trucks through efficient repair operations. TransCare is now able to schedule proactive maintenance and rotate ambulances in a more defined schedule.





The Bottom Line:

TransCare set an initial goal to reduce “start of shift” times to 10 minutes or less. Early in the implementation process, crews experienced a short learning curve as they mastered the new inspection methods. However, after the first 30 days, TransCare continues to exceed goal with an average “start of shift” time of less than 8 minutes.

AmbuTrak helped TransCare achieve significant results that not only addressed patient care needs, but also increased operational savings and billable transports.

Prior to implementing AmbuTrak, TransCare performed approximately 1,900 transports per month. Now, with the same supply budget and staffing, TransCare is transporting approximately 2,300 patients per month.

TransCare results after implementing AmbuTrak:

About the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay:

The Crisis Center of Tampa Bay brings help, hope and healing to people facing serious life challenges or trauma resulting from sexual assault or abuse, violence, financial distress, medical emergency, suicidal thoughts, emotional or situational problems.

The Center operates a medical transportation service called TransCare, which helps support the agency's other services for over 158,000 people a year in Hillsborough County, FL.



Unit Hour Savings

- TransCare saves 22 minutes per shift, equivalent to 330 minutes per day (22 minutes multiplied by 15 shifts), or 5.5 hours. Each month, TransCare saves 165 ineffective hours and applies them to direct service time.
- Using the unit hour calculation, TransCare can transfer an average of **\$122,760** to “direct service” time during first implemented year of AmbuTrak.

Supply Budget Savings

- Since the AmbuTrak system eliminated guesswork from inventory planning, TransCare no longer needs to keep larger amounts of product in stock.
- The inventory control program establishes par levels based on historical data. Orders are now triggered by the established par levels and re-orders are generated automatically, reducing overhead costs.
- TransCare has experienced **5 - 10%** savings in the supply budget since implementing AmbuTrak.



Increase in Patient Care Service

- TransCare frees up time for crews to run additional calls. Assuming each EMS call averages one hour in task time, TransCare has the potential to add 165 billable transports per month.
- TransCare realized increased revenue as a result of increased transports.

For more information, or for a free product demonstration, please call Bound Tree Medical at 800-533-0523 or contact your Account Manager.



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