

Communications Upgrade to Save Time and Lives

New medical communications facility at OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony

Among the myriad of medical services and programs provided by OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center in Rockford, there is an important behind-the-scenes service aimed at saving lives.

The medical communications (MedComm) department at the hospital has the primary responsibility of dispatching OSF Lifeline Ambulance EMT's in emergent and non-emergent medical situations.

Work was recently completed on a \$1 million upgrade to a space that has outlived its purpose. Accommodating two around-the-clock dispatchers, the new facility provides for more flexibility.

"In the past, we had room for two dispatchers," says E.J. Dilonardo, Pre Hospital Services for OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center. "And there's times when we could use four in the room. We've proven that. So, the new center here is set up with four stations. Right now, it will be staffed with two dispatchers at all times. And then, have the ability to add a third and a fourth, if necessary."

With all new state-of-the-art equipment and processes, the MedComm space is also ready to become a community command center for any larger emergency or disaster.

"We built this room large enough and we really planned for the future," says Dilonardo. "If there was an incident anywhere in Winnebago or Boone County and resources were needed and they needed a remote command center, MedComm could fulfill that need."

Aside from dispatching OSF Lifeline Ambulance, the OSF Saint Anthony MedComm also handles calls for two regional first responders - North Park Fire and Boone County Dist. 3 ambulance – plus is the Regional Referral Line for OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center.