

RESOLUTION NO. 20230816-014

WHEREAS, Austin's medical first responders are key to advancing the City's public safety and public health initiatives and play an important role in our local healthcare ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, data shows that 30 to 40 percent of 911 calls are not life-threatening calls requiring transport in an ambulance to an emergency room; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (OCMO), Austin launched one of the first Paramedic Practitioner programs in the country in 2020; and

WHEREAS, Paramedic Practitioners deliver care that can help bridge the difference between critical care services and services that do not result in a transport by an ambulance; and

WHEREAS, as noted by the City in 2022, this service helps to relieve emergency room congestion and takes some of the workload off Emergency Medical Service (EMS) responders by freeing up ambulances and fire trucks to focus on critical care emergency calls that require transportation to the hospital; and

WHEREAS, this program also helps manage growth and response times for both the first responders and for vulnerable Austin-Travis County residents; and

WHEREAS, this program can also save money, improve training and response times, and enhance recruitment and retention efforts; and

WHEREAS, OCMO has estimated that the Paramedic Practitioner Program saved approximately 840 hours in ambulance time, which amounts to approximately \$1.05 million in savings, and is particularly important given the significant staff shortages in EMS; and

WHEREAS, to continue the success of the critical work of this program and OCMO's other duties, OCMO and EMS require additional resources for the Paramedic Practitioner Service Line; and

WHEREAS, we currently employ four Paramedic Practitioners and would need four more to expand to 24 / 7 coverage; and

WHEREAS, another program that results in savings to our community is the Collaborative Care Communication Center (C4), an EMS program that responds to low-acuity calls from patients that do not require transport by an ambulance or to emergency room; and

WHEREAS, this EMS program helps provide appropriate triage, resulting in cost savings to the City, patients, and broader healthcare system; and

WHEREAS, the C4 program allows our ambulances to be ready and available for more extreme health emergencies; and

WHEREAS, this program also plays an important role in our opioid response efforts; and

WHEREAS, during natural disasters or high call volume events, the C4 program plays a pivotal role in the 911 system; and

WHEREAS, the C4 program currently operates from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day of the week; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Council recognizes the importance of the Paramedic Practitioners and the Collaborative Care Communication Center (C4) and seeks to expand these programs to operate 24 / 7, and the City Manager is directed to achieve this goal no later than Fiscal Year 2024-25.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to engage other relevant entities and stakeholders in the local medical system, including but not limited to Central Health and our local hospitals, to determine if these entities are able and willing to contribute to these critical, cost-saving investments in our local healthcare ecosystem and is further directed to explore other opportunities for further collaboration and cost recovery. Should these conversations regarding funding and expanding the Paramedic Practitioner and C4 programs be fruitful, the City Manager is directed to return to Council with a budget amendment for approval

and any related agreement as soon as possible.

ADOPTED: August 16, 2023 **ATTEST:** Stephanie Hall for
Myrna Rios
City Clerk