

JUNE 30, 2019



ANNUAL REPORT

RED LODGE FIRE RESCUE – EMS DIVISION

TIM RYAN
DEPUTY CHIEF
Red Lodge Fire Rescue

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Mission	4
Fiscal Year 2018 – 2019 Executive Summary	4
Operations	5
Call Distribution and Volume	5
Personnel	5
Staff Participation	6
Training	7
Career Staff	7
Community Outreach and Education	8
CPR and First Aid Classes	8
Community Care Program.....	8
Billing and Revenue	9
Billing Reports	9
Revenue Reports.....	10
Adjustments	10
Capital Improvements	11
Future Goals	12

Introduction

The Red Lodge - Roberts Ambulance District is a taxing authority established in July of 2010 for the purpose of providing Emergency Medical and Ambulance Transport services within Carbon County Montana Rural Fire Districts 6 and 7. The District contracts with Red Lodge Rural Fire District 7 (RLFR) for the provision of these services.

RLFR is a combination Fire Department encompassing over 600 square miles of the Southwestern portion of Carbon County including the City of Red Lodge, Town of Bearcreek, and communities of Roberts and Luther. RLFR provides fire response, fire prevention, emergency medical services, search and rescue, fuels mitigation programs, and community education programs. Over 120 volunteers along with 5 full time, 1 part time and a small number of seasonal fuels crew employees provide staffing for the numerous activities of the Department.

This report will detail important aspects of the Level of Service provided by the EMS Division of RLFR under the Inter-local Agreement for Emergency Medical Services (Exhibit A).

Mission

The mission of RLFR is to provide quality fire and emergency services to the community it protects while providing a good value to the taxpayer by reducing insurance premiums, providing the highest possible level of service, and offering increased opportunities for community volunteers.

Fiscal Year 2018 – 2019 Executive Summary

Fiscal Year 2019 showed continued growth and improvement in the delivery of EMS in the District. Several new licensed and student members were brought into the department. Training services were improved and expanded in the EMS Division. Three new career staff members began employment with the District over the year. The EMS Division saw a busy summer season with average call numbers but slightly higher transports. A new ambulance was ordered and placed in service in April of 2019 along with new and safer cot mounting systems in three ambulances and two new stair chair devices.

Operationally, RLFR's EMS Division responded to an average call volume during the reporting period with a total of 523 calls for service and 441 transports (84%). This is a 14% increase in patient transports over last fiscal year.

The EMS Division completed an EMT class in March of 2019 with 13 students successfully completing the course. Of the 13 students in the class, 6 are actively volunteering with the organization. Three were high school students.

Through the hard work of our Community Care Team as well as Beartooth Hospital and other Billings area pediatric providers, RLFR was awarded Level IV Gold Status with a Safety Plus Endorsement for Pediatric Emergency Care by the State of Montana Department of Health and Human Services. This prestigious certification demonstrates our organization's dedication to providing the best possible pre-hospital care to our pediatric patients. Unfortunately, grant funding for the continuation of this program will end at the beginning of FY 2019-2020. Though some new grant funding has been received from the State of Montana, this is only a small portion of the funding needed to sustain the program at historic levels. Our two full time staff were reduced to part time at the end of this fiscal to accommodate the reduced funding.

Overall, service delivery continues to meet or exceed the requirements of the Ambulance District's agreement with the Rural Fire District. The District remains financially sound but faces continued challenges with large capital improvement projects. Significant expenditures are on the horizon for the District with needed station expansion or improvement projects in the future. Finally, the District continues to face challenges with recruitment and retention of EMS volunteers and career staff, with additional career staff likely needed in the next fiscal year.

Operations

The EMS Division of RLFR continues to provide exceptional emergency medical response to the community. The level of professionalism and experience in the department is extraordinary for a community of this size. This fiscal year, the EMS Division responded to a total of 523 calls for service, compared to 526 last fiscal year. Of those 523 calls, 441 resulted in a patient transport, up from 410 last fiscal year (84% transports this fiscal year and 70% transports last fiscal year). This increase in the percentage of transports indicates a higher acuity of calls with a greater need for transport and a slight decrease in cancellations and patient refusals.

RLFR's EMS Division successfully handled all calls for service at an appropriate level. Peak days during the reporting period included Saturday July 12 with a total of 8 calls and Monday June 24, 2019 with a total of 9 calls for service.

Summary of Calls by Disposition - Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019													
	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	Total
Assist, Public		1		1			1		1		2	1	7
DOA - No Resuscitation Attempted	1						1			1			3
DOA - Resuscitation Attempted					1		1	3					5
No Treatment/Transport Required	8	9	10	3	6	4	2	1		2	2	5	52
Patient Treated, Released (AMA)					1		2	1		2	2	5	13
Patient Treated, Transported LEO				1									1
Patient Treated, Transported POV	1												1
Transported Lights/Siren	9	2	4			2	1	3	1	3	4	4	33
Transported No Lights/Siren	50	26	35	38	34	27	31	30	34	27	26	47	405
Transported No Lights/Siren, Upgraded	1				1				1				3
Total	70	38	49	43	43	33	39	38	37	35	36	62	523

Calls By Zone - Four Year History				
Zone	FY 16-17	FY 17-18	FY 18-19	19-20
Uncategorized	17	0	0	0
Out of District	28	30	30	23
City of Red Lodge	160	239	239	243
Rural District 6	64	37	37	47
Rural District 7	113	107	107	109
Interfacility Transfer	146	113	113	101
Total	528	526	526	523

Call Distribution and Volume

In addition to responding to calls within the District's response area, the EMS Division responded to 23 calls outside of the District's jurisdiction.

Of the 441 patients transported by RLFR, 205 were ALS Level Calls, 189 were BLS level calls, and 47 were considered Critical Care Transports.

Over 55% of call occur between 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM, with most calls occurring (10%) around 1:00 PM.

Personnel

RLFR's EMS Division continues to maintain an adequate volunteer roster to serve the needs of the community. Though calls for service are being answered, recruitment and retention of new and existing volunteers continues to challenge the organization. Total EMS Division operational personnel include 5 career staff and 36 volunteers. Of the volunteer staff, 21 are EMT Basics, 11 are Advanced EMTs, and 4 are trained at the physician, RN, or CRNA level. Of the career staff, 2 are Critical Care Paramedics and 1 is Paramedic Level with some Critical Care Endorsements authorized by the Medical Director, and two are Advanced EMTs.

Staff Participation

RLFR's volunteer EMS Division staff participate in an extraordinary amount of department related activities. Volunteers are vital to the delivery of adequate emergency medical services in the Red Lodge Area. The majority of the volunteer time commitment is taking call, or simply being available and signed up in the call book to respond. Volunteers also spend considerable time training, and completing work in the station such as apparatus and equipment readiness checks.

The EMS Division continues to recruit new members to replace several members who retired in the last few fiscal years. These departures continue to result in substantially lower call time participation numbers than previous years. Also, volunteers are spending more time responding to an immediate need for help rather than signing up for call time and are taking more partial call time shifts than historically.

Members continue to dedicate a great deal of time to the organization through training, association activities, responding to calls, and assisting with teaching EMT classes.

Volunteer Hours by Activity - FY 2018-2019				
Activity	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
911 Calls	392	207	191	133
Interfacility Transport	397	265	275	323
Event Standby	70	14	48	35
Support Standby	28	1	2	0
Total hours running call	887	487	516	491
On Call Hours	3,495	3,116	3,466	3,303
Training Hours:	197	406	1,167	227
Station Activity Hours:	106	229	330	184

Volunteer Hours by Activity - Four Year History				
Activity	FY 2015-2016	FY 2016-2017	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019
911 Calls	1008	844	889	923
Interfacility Transport	1246	932	1226	1260
Event Standby	238	191	132	167
Support Standby	40	36	46	31
Total hours running call	2532	2003	2293	2381
On Call Hours	23,944	20,290	19,452	13,380
Training Hours	1,447	1,505	1,297	1997
Station Activity Hours	1,270	727	605	849
Total Activity Hours	29193	24525	23647	18607

Number of Staff Taking A Call Shift												
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
FY 15-16	46	39	34	32	30	37	17	42	42	41	37	13
FY 16-17	44	36	36	42	29	38	34	32	35	38	31	34
FY 17-18	32	29	27	46	39	41	34	32	26	34	31	27
FY 18-19	30	29	32	22	34	36	34	41	38	27	24	31

Recruitment and Retention

The EMS Division began a fall EMT class in October 2018. There were 17 students enrolled in the class. One high school student left the program to focus on their school work and two students left the class due to family obligations. Out of the 2017 – 2018 class, six have successfully passed all of the practical and written exams and five are currently actively volunteering with the EMS Division.

Volunteer retention continues to be a primary goal of the organization, as well as succession planning for future department leadership. Our current roster of EMS Division members is being modified and analyzed to provide increased opportunities for experienced volunteer members to advance in the organization and eventually lead the department into the future.

Efforts over the fiscal year to increase advancement opportunities through leadership positions and advanced training have been successful. The EMS Officer Group, re-formed in early July of 2017, has provided great insight into what our volunteer staff need from the organization and have helped streamline training, recruitment, and boosted morale. An increased focus on team building has brought more social gatherings and camaraderie to the EMS Division. These efforts will continue and hopefully increase over the next fiscal year.

Though our current recruitment rate is sustaining the department at an adequate level of personnel, ongoing efforts to bring in younger volunteer members who are committed to stay in the Red Lodge Area have seen only moderate success. A subcommittee of the EMS Officers, the Recruitment and Retention Committee, is working on possible solutions to this issue. Their work began with a survey of our EMS membership this spring which provided insight into what motivates our volunteers.

Training

Ongoing training is integral to providing high level emergency medical services and also plays a big role in retention efforts. EMS Division volunteers dedicated a total of 1,997 hours of their time to EMS training during the reporting period, exceeding the four year average for training hours by over 500 hours. A major overhaul of our training program took place over the fiscal year with much focus placed on planning out training events far into the future to allow volunteers to plan ahead and attend the training they need ahead of time. Also, our training officer has brought in outside trainers to make our training more attractive. Finally, we have streamlined the renewal process for our members, making it easier for them to target their continuing education to meet the needs of their recertification process and lessen the time they have to spend entering their records into the national registry database.

Highlights of the training year so far included hosting a Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support class in December, which was well attended by department staff. RLFR hosted the annual Carbon County EMT Refresher in February which was very well attended. Many members continue to attend the Big Sky EMS Symposium in Billings as well as other regional training events such as the Montana EMS Association Conference in Bozeman. RLFR staff and volunteers consistently demonstrate a desire to seek advancement through outside training and conference events as well as internal department sponsored training events.

Career Staff

The primary mission of RLFR's five career staff members is to enable our volunteer staff to be successful in their jobs with the organization. To that end, all five career staff members are dedicated to managing EMS Division operations and providing advanced level care to patients.

Two vacant paramedic positions were filled this fiscal year, one with Joel Anthes, a Critical Care Paramedic who has been a longtime volunteer with us and another with Kristi Hein, a Critical Care Paramedic who came to us from Big Horn County. Both new employees have been tremendous additions to the career staff. Joel Anthes has taken on the role of EMS Training Officer. Additionally, Brad Hauge joined the career staff as a part-time AEMT in March of 2019 and is

currently enrolled in paramedic school with an estimated completion date of July 2020. There is a need in the coming fiscal year to increase our full time staff by one paramedic through a combination of consolidating part time positions or using per diem personnel to cover vacation and training events.

In June of 2019, our rotating on shift paramedic staff began a new 48/96 schedule. This scheduled has proven to be much better for our career staff, allowing them more time away from work while spending more time dedicated to station staffing. This scheduled removed the majority of their on-call requirements.

Community Outreach and Education

The EMS Division provides several community outreach and education programs including the grant funded Community Care Program, CPR and First Aid Program, as well as several scheduled events such as open houses, blood pressure checks, and other events.

CPR and First Aid Classes

The EMS Division hosted a total of 60 public education classes with 419 students in attendance during the year. The classes are organized and scheduled by members of the Community Care Program and taught by volunteer and paid staff. This number is down from last fiscal year where 70 classes with 601 students were presented.

Public Education - CPR and First Aid Program Fiscal Year 2018 - 2019								
	1st Quarter		2nd Quarter		3rd Quarter		4th Quarter	
Class	Classes	Students	Classes	Students	Classes	Students	Classes	Students
CPR for Healthcare Providers	10	39	3	47	7	54	3	10
First Aid / CPR	5	25	4	30	9	61	6	29
Heart Saver CPR	0	0	0	0	1	7	6	49
Heart Saver First Aid	0	0	0	0	2	21	0	0
Friends and Family CPR	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	23
Wilderness First Aid	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	20
Friends and Family First Aid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Camp First Aid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	15	64	7	77	20	147	18	131

Community Care Program

The Community Care Program is a grant funded program, hosted by RLFR that aims to address the needs of community members who find themselves outside the scope of other medical services. The program reaches out to patients and community members to assist with making physician visits, picking up medications, and reducing home hazards. All of these items can lead to an EMS call if problems like regular health care visits, medication compliance, and nutrition are not addressed. The goal is to catch the emergency before it happens and improve the overall safety and health of the community.

This fiscal year marks the third year of the program. Transportation continues to be very sought after service as well general public health work. The program assists with a wide range of community health education campaigns such as Child Passenger Safety, child health and safety education, First Aid and CPR classes, informal youth counseling, as well as assistance with Adult Protective Services.

The program coordinators are also working closely with the Montana State Legislature to change state law that currently prohibits billing for services like the Community Care Program. That work paid off this year with the passage of legislation that will allow EMS agencies in Montana to provide non-emergency community integrated health services. There is still much work to make this law come to fruition. Demand for these services in our community continues to grow, as shown in the numbers above.

The community care team was instrumental in obtaining RLFR's Level IV Gold with a Safety Plus Endorsement in Pediatric Emergency Care, a prestigious award from the State of Montana that demonstrates our commitment to providing the best possible pre-hospital care for our pediatric patients as well as pediatric injury prevention.

Community Care Program Activity			
Service Provided	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19
Transportation	116	217	220
Welfare Check	33	84	14
Prevention and Public Health	81	112	145
Total	230	413	379

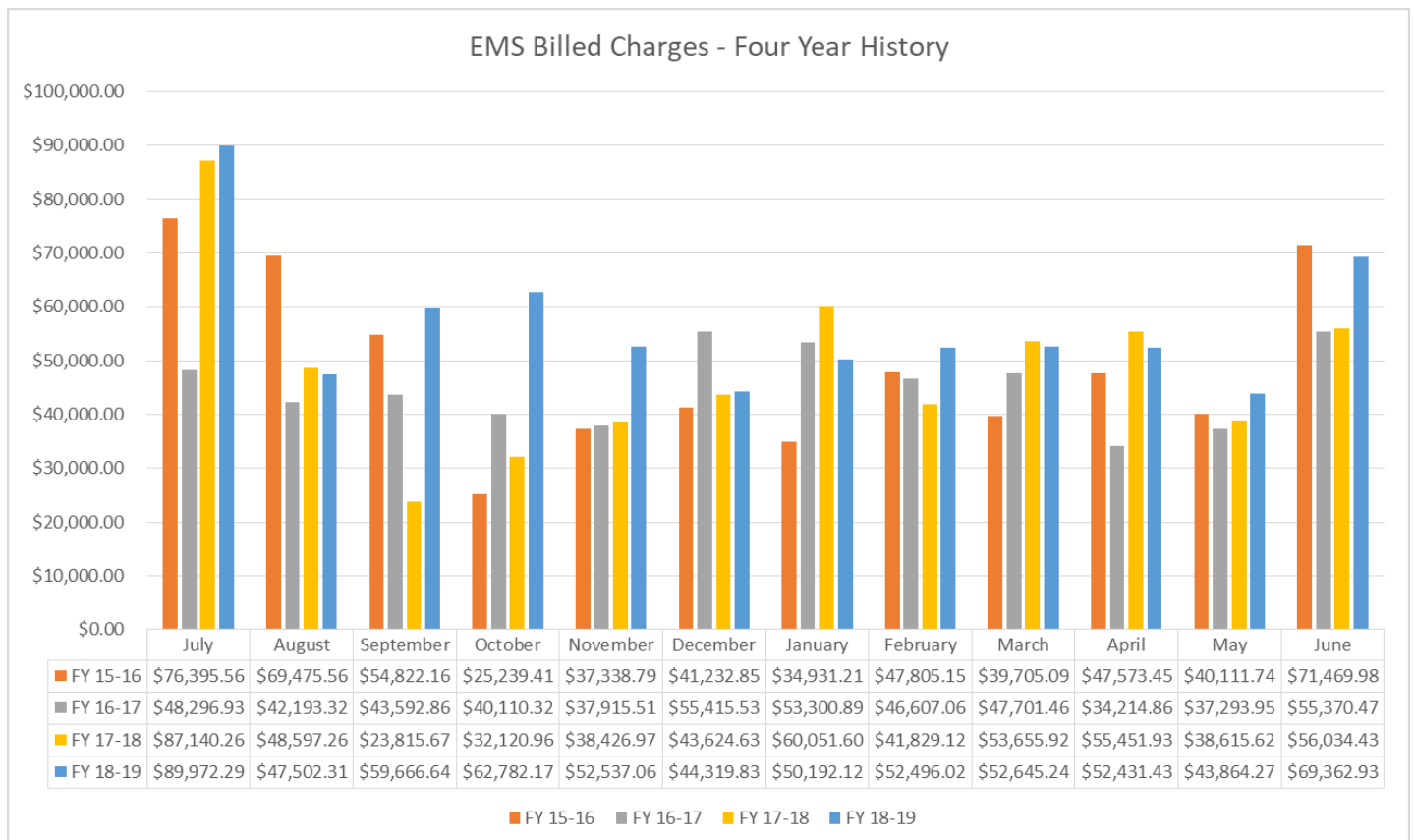
Unfortunately, the grant program that funded Community Care has been suspended. It is hoped that sometime in September, additional funding will be made available through the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation. RLFR did receive a grant from the Montana Department of Health and Human Services in the amount of \$50,000.00 to continue this program on a much lower level for the next two years and has received a small grant of \$4000.00 to assist in the required training under the newly passed law mentioned above. This resulted in a reduction in force for both CCP employees to part time at 16 hours per week. This reduction in force will result in a reduction in services available to the community through this program. RLFR will continue to seek funding streams to continue this program.

Billing and Revenue

The EMS Division continues to operate in a financially sound and responsible manner, balancing expenses and revenue to provide the best possible service to the community at the best value to our patients.

Billing Reports

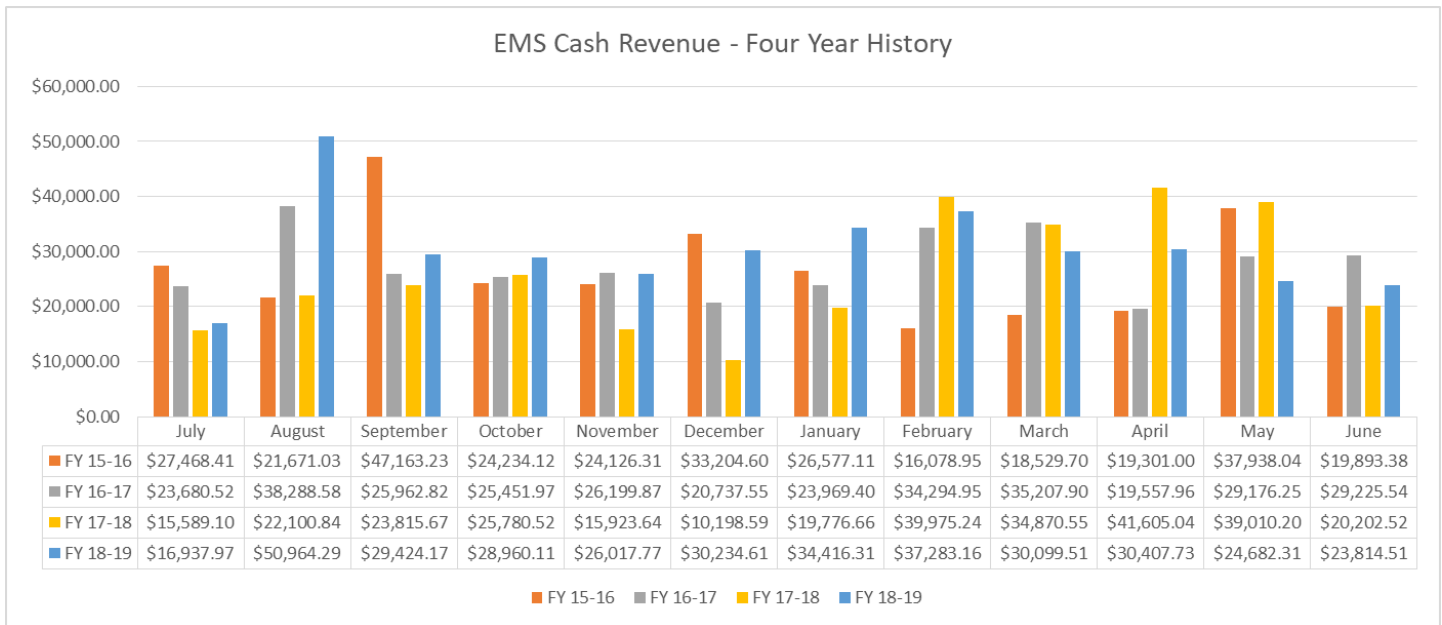
Billed charges for this reporting period are much higher than years past. Improved billing and documentation processes as well as gradual rate increases (tied to the Consumer Price Index) resulted in a record high year compared to the last four years for billing, coming in a total of \$677,772.31, nearly \$100,000.00 higher than last year and \$108,612.82 higher than the average of the previous three fiscal years.



Revenue Reports

RLFR collected a total of \$363,242.45 in cash receipts for medical transports during the fiscal year. This is \$27,993.65 higher than the average of the previous four years. The EMS Division exceeded previous revenue amounts largely due to improved billing processes and close monitoring of our billing company, Solestone Reimbursement, after serious internal issues at their office were discovered last fiscal year and remedied.

RLFR negotiated a second three month grace period of no charges for billing services as well as a 1% permanent decrease in the billing company fees for services to remediate losses generated by their previous timeliness with Medicare and Medicaid billing submissions.



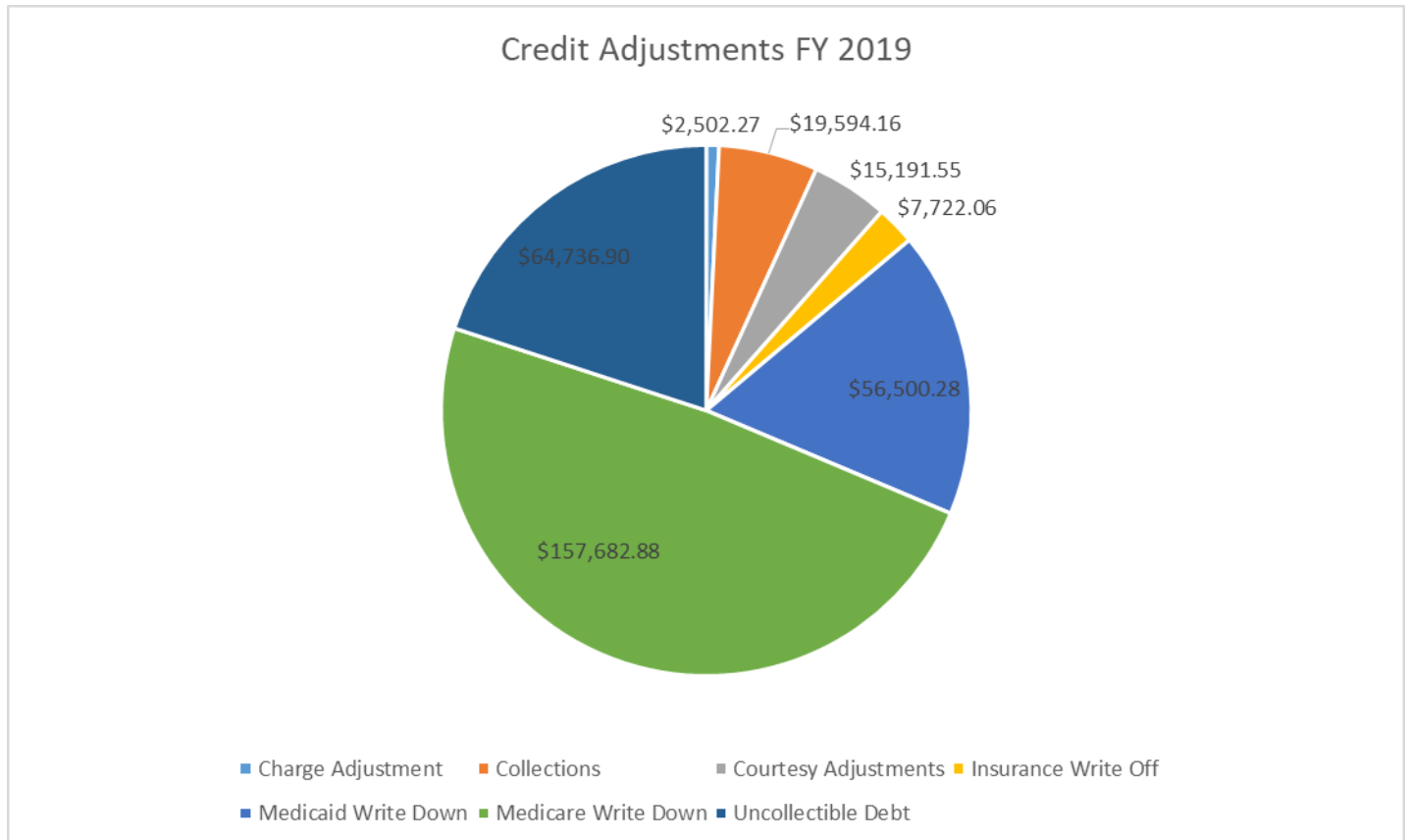
Adjustments

Charge adjustments, bad debt, and write offs make up the difference between billed charges and collected revenue. RLFR uses Global Collections to collect bad debt and handles Medicare, Medicaid, insurance, and courtesy write offs through its billing company, Solestone Reimbursement; based in Missoula, MT. In December 2019 and again March 2019, a comprehensive review of aging accounts was undertaken and several accounts were written off as uncollectible debt or were sent a Settlement Letter, offering to settle with the patient for whatever amount they could pay. Those that did not respond to the settlement request were sent to collections the first week of January 2019.

Credit Adjustments			
Adjustment Reason	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
Charge Adjustment	\$1,294.95	\$3,726.65	\$2,502.27
Collections	\$36,973.79	\$29,987.19	\$19,594.16
Courtesy Adjustments	\$9,588.92	\$10,707.15	\$15,191.55
Insurance Write Off	\$3,487.32	\$7,753.60	\$7,722.06
Medicaid Write Down	\$38,788.21	\$70,522.08	\$56,500.28
Medicare Write Down	\$103,997.80	\$116,864.32	\$157,682.88
Uncollectible Debt	\$17,246.85	\$10,710.10	\$64,736.90
Total	\$211,377.84	\$250,271.09	\$323,930.10

As a result of this account review, the write down amounts for this fiscal year are higher than in years past. At the recommendation of our auditors, carrying these uncollectible balances on our register does not constitute accurate book keeping. Moving into the future, all accounts exceeding 180 days will undergo review and have action taken on them in a timely manner.

The chart below details where the majority of our credit adjustments are occurring. Despite a large amount of accounts being sent to collections, by far the largest reason for adjusting accounts continues to be Medicaid and Medicare write downs.



Capital Improvements

The EMS Division took delivery of a new ambulance in April of 2019. This new unit replaced A71, which was subsequently donated to Joliet EMS. The division retained its oldest unit, A74, to accommodate space needs in the Luther station. With the additional of this new ambulance, which is required to meet modern safety standards, new power cot mounts had to be purchased for A72 and A75, increasing the safety in these units for patients as well as our personnel. Finally, two new patient moving

EMS Division Vehicle Inventory			
Vehicle	Mileage	Year / Make	Replacement
Ambulance 71	5,345	2019 Ford	2039
Ambulance 72	50,646	2014 Dodge	2026
Ambulance 73	150,220	2002 Ford	2014
Ambulance 74	112,429	1997 Ford	2009
Ambulance 75	107,140	2013 Mercedes	2025
Quick Response 703	35,123	2014 Jeep	2024
Quick Response 704	73,696	2010 Jeep	2020
Quick Response 705	9,015	2017 Jeep	2027
Quick Response 706	50,317	2012 Jeep	2022
CC Program Vehicle	27,520	2017 Chevy	2027

devices were purchased. These stair chair units are much safer and ergonomically designed. These units replaced two older less functional units.

With continuing mechanical issues, the divisions two wheel drive transport ambulance, A75, will likely need to be replaced next. If funding is available this coming fiscal year, the division would also like to replace the oldest monitor and defibrillator in our fleet with a new X Series model as well as replace our transport ventilator, used in the transport of patients with a breathing tube in place.

EMS Division Equipment Inventory			
Equipment	Age	Age	Replacement
Monitor - M Series	8 Years	Zoll / 2009	2019
Monitor - E Series	6 Years	Zoll / 2012	2022
Monitor - E Series	6 Years	Zoll / 2012	2022
Monitor - X Series	2 Years	Zoll / 2014	2024
Monitor - X Series	1 Year	Zoll / 2015	2025
Monitor - X Series	1 Year	Zoll / 2015	2025
Monitor - X Series	NEW	Zoll / 2017	2027
Monitor - X Series	NEW	Zoll / 2017	2027
Power Cot	4 Years	Stryker / 2013	2023
Power Cot	6 Years	Stryker / 2011	2021
Power Cot	3 Years	Stryker / 2017	2027

Future Goals

Recruitment and retention was the focus of this fiscal year and will remain a primary focus moving into the next fiscal year. With a large and optimistic batch of new licensed recruits as well a record size EMT Class, the EMS Division has a tremendous opportunity to fill our ranks and study how we bring in new volunteers, training them, and retain them in an active role. Further development of the AEMT program, which aims to provide advancement opportunity for our basic EMT level providers, will continue.

While looking closely at our volunteer intake process and recruitment and retention programs, the EMS Division will continue to invest in and develop our senior leadership team of EMS Officers. This group continues to be a vital link between the Ambulance District Board, administration, paid staff members, and our volunteers. Volunteers are the backbone of our service delivery model and must be included in, and encouraged to advance through, the Division's leadership structure.

The Community Care Program has become a vital asset to RLFR and the community as a whole. The uncertainty of funding for this program weighs heavily on the EMS Division's members and management. The organization will continue to seek funding opportunities for this program while making the most of the \$50,000.00 grant from the state received during fiscal year 2018-2019.

RLFR's three divisions (Fire, SAR, and EMS) continue to grow and offer more services to the community. With that growth and expansion of services several key changes to our staffing model, program delivery, training, and organizational structure have occurred. As the organization has grown and changed organically, a need for strategic and master planning over the long term has developed. All divisions are looking forward to developing a master planning document over the next fiscal year to capture these changes and establish goals to streamline the organization into the future. This will be a large undertaking, with several stakeholders involved.