



**CONFIRE**

## STAFF REPORT

**DATE: 6/25/2024**

**FROM: Nathan Cooke, Interim Director**

**BY: Damian Parsons, Finance/Administrative Director**

**TO: Administrative Committee**

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**SUBJECT: Emergency Communications Nurse System- EMK Consulting Contract**

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve a contract with EMK Consultants to support the Emergency Communication Nurse System (ECNS).

### **BACKGROUND**

CONFIRE, supported by San Bernardino County Council of Governments (SBCOG), facilitated the rapid implementation of the ECNS program during the heightened hospital surge resulting from COVID-19. SBCOG had entered into an agreement with Mission Critical Partners (MCP) to evaluate utilizing Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) to enhance emergency medical services in the pre-hospital environment. Recommendations are focused on ECNS as a priority.

Elaine Messerli-Kelly is widely considered a subject matter expert in ECNS and was instrumental in the implementation of an identical program in Reno, Nevada. EMK Consultants is owned and operated by Elaine. CONFIRE has utilized EMK to assist CONFIRE and her expertise has been instrumental for the success of ECNS at CONFIRE.

This new agreement will allow EMK Consultants to continue to support dispatch and nursing staff on how to navigate low acuity patients to the most appropriate care level, thereby reducing non-emergent transports. This agreement would further allow EMK Consultants to perform certain functions previously performed by the Nurse Manager position, which is being transitioned to part time until a permanent replacement can be hired. These additional duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- As a Regional Instructor for the International Academy of Emergency Dispatch, conduct ECNS and ECN-Q courses for CONFIRE as an in-house instructor.

- Collaborate with CONFIRE to identify and address obstacles with a goal to ultimately maintain ACE (Accredited Center of Excellence) Accreditation for EMD and to achieve ACE Accreditation for ECNS and support the program's sustainability.
- Provide support and subject matter expertise for the new nurse manager to ensure success of this new program within the community by mentoring as requested and needed.

CONFIRE may, at any time, with or without reason, terminate this agreement and compensate the contractor only for services satisfactorily rendered to the date of termination. Written notice by CONFIRE shall be sufficient to stop further performance of services by Contractor.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The total not to exceed cost of this contract is \$85,000 and will be funded by American Rescue Plan Act funds received from San Bernardino County, through December 1, 2024. CONFIRE has requested additional ARPA funding from the County to secure funding for the program through December 2026. CONFIRE Staff are also working on securing funding from the Payors (insurance companies) to help offset staffing costs. It is estimated that the payors will provide 50% of the overall funding for the program moving forward. If CONFIRE cannot secure additional ARPA funding and/or funding from the payors, it is recommended that funds from 5020 (EMS) be used and if those funds do not materialize, it is recommended that 5008 (Operations) be used to fund the ECNS program including contract costs for EMK Consultants for the remainder of the FY 24-25 budget. Staff will return to the Administrative Committee to make a formal request for funding.