

Darien Emergency Medical Service-Post 53 (DEMS) and Stamford EMS (SEMS) recently celebrated the 12th anniversary of SEMS providing paramedic service to the residents of Darien. Susan Warren, Director of Ambulance Operations and Advisor to Post 53 and Patricia Squires, Chief Executive Officer of Stamford EMS, Eddie Browne, Director of Operations of SEMS, and Dan Connell, President of Post 53, met at Post 53 Headquarters to recognize the special relationship between two highly professional organizations. The SEMS paramedics, who usually respond to Darien, are stationed at the Glenbrook Fire Department, approximately one mile from Post 53 Headquarters on Ledge Road. The paramedics are hand-picked for their medical excellence and their ability to work with the adults and young adults at Post 53.

Darien EMS-Post 53 operates under the strict medical direction and protocols of the Stamford Hospital, its Medical Control Hospital. Post 53 personnel are trained in part by doctors from the hospital and all calls are reviewed for quality assurance by the Quality Assurance Director at Stamford Hospital. This review includes not only patient care, but response and on scene times.

Dr. Dorothy Turnbull, a resident of Darien, an Emergency Room physician at the Stamford Hospital, Medical Director for Darien EMS and Stamford EMS, and Darien EMS-Post 53 Board of Directors members said, "Darien's highly trained personnel, their outstanding stair step response system including EMT-Intermediates, the Darien Police as first responders, and close proximity to Stamford EMS and Norwalk EMS paramedics when needed, and the Stamford and Norwalk Hospitals, provide excellent medical treatment. As a resident of Darien and a doctor, I sleep well at nights knowing the Darien EMS system is solid, totally integrated with surrounding town resources, and ready to respond."

Susan Warren, Director of Ambulance Operations at Post 53, said "Twelve years ago, Darien EMS-Post 53 entered into a contract with Stamford Emergency Medical Services to provide paramedic coverage for certain medical emergencies. The protocols are set by the Stamford Hospital and are in alignment with national protocols for paramedic responses. The paramedic unit at the Glenbrook Fire Department monitors our frequency and knows when we have a call. Because they are listening to our frequency, they are able to respond simultaneously if the call warrants a paramedic. We request and confirm their response if it is a call which, by one of the eleven protocols, requires a paramedic. We provide the paramedic unit with a fly-car and it is stationed sometimes at our headquarters, but normally at the Glenbrook Fire Department, unless there is inclement weather, in these cases, they are stationed at our headquarters."

Mrs. Warren continued, "For every call in Darien, we respond with an ambulance, and EMT-Intermediate (a higher level EMT) who responds with a fly car, and paramedic coverage is provided under contract with Stamford EMS and under mutual aid agreements with Norwalk, when needed. By dispatching multiple vehicles from several locations simultaneously, we accomplish many things: we don't have to occupy the

paramedic units on less critical calls, thus keeping them reserved for the true emergencies, and our response times are among the very best in the State.”

The average response time for an ambulance in the State of CT in 2007 was 9.8 minutes. The average in our region is 7.6 minutes. Darien EMS average is 6.5 minutes. (Data: CT Dept. of Public Health website). Paramedic units arrive on average within several minutes of our ambulances. The nationally accepted protocols require that basic life support precedes any advanced life support efforts and when the paramedic arrives on scene all the EMT and EMT-Intermediate work is done, so the paramedic is ready to administer drugs as needed. Drug administration, in fact, is quite rare, on only 6% of our calls.

Importantly, because the Darien EMS system response protocol is multi-layered, the average time it takes the first responder to arrive on scene is 2.8 minutes. Paramedics responded to 45% of DEMS calls in 2007, a statistic consistent to the rest of the State. Paramedic response into Darien is slightly more than one call per day. Darien’s contract with Stamford and the mutual aid agreement with Norwalk provide a total of five SEMS paramedic units and three Norwalk paramedic units as needed. Darien indeed is well protected.

Because Darien EMS has 3 fully equipped, fully staffed, state of the art ambulances for a relatively small town (far more, per capita, than surrounding towns) all staffed 24/7/365, they rarely need to call in back-up from outside of Darien. All of this, coupled with the service of scores of highly trained and motivated young adults and adults, means the Town of Darien is receiving emergency medical care that is second to none.

Mrs. Susan Warren, Advisor to Darien EMS-Post 53 and Director of Ambulance Operations for the Town of Darien

Mr. Richard Koch, Director of Operations

Mr. Robert Meyjes, Chairman of the Board of Friends of Darien EMS-Post 53

Website: www.post53.org