

County of Monroe

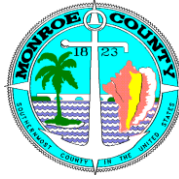
The Florida Keys

DIVISION of EMERGENCY SERVICES

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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MEMORANDUM

To: Monroe County Board of County Commissioners

From: James K. Callahan, Fire Chief/Division Director
Emergency Services, Monroe County Fire Rescue

Date: February 15, 2016

Re: Update - Monroe County Fire Rescue's EMS Billing Program

Per the BOCC's request, below is a recap and update of MCFR's EMS Billing Program.

Prior to 2000, Monroe County employed in-house ambulance billing personnel. On August 16, 2000, the Lower and Middle Keys Fire and Ambulance District Board of Governors (BOG) approved and executed a contract with Advanced Data Processing, Inc. (ADPI) for outsourced billing. Once ADPI began servicing patient accounts, they continued to provide this service until September 2014.

During the course of providing this service, ADPI's service was evaluated by the County Clerk's Office a number of times, generally with regard to contract compliance. In 2013, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and Board of Governors (BOG) approved a contract for an outside consultant to review and evaluate the County's ground and air rescue transport billing and collections provided by ADPI.

The conclusion of this evaluation was that ground- and air-ambulance collections were inadequate and ineffective, and there was a lack of ADPI managerial oversight and responsiveness to Monroe County's needs; all of which attributed to a loss of revenue to the County. The consultant made a number of recommendations, including bringing ambulance billing in-house, the development of policies and procedures to provide for greater control and oversight, and an increase of the base rates for air and ground user fees.

The consultant's evaluation and recommendation report was submitted to the BOCC and BOG with the recommendation that Monroe County cease outsourcing billing and collections by bringing these revenue-generating activities in-house. The recommendation included the creation of two full-time positions, principally funded by funds previously budgeted for the payment to ADPI.

On December 11, 2013, the BOCC and BOG approved the purchase of necessary billing software, and the creation of the EMS Billing Supervisor and EMS Billing Specialist contractual positions. These two positions were subsequently filled and the individuals trained in the use of the software, and Monroe County began in-house billing April 1, 2014. To facilitate this transition, ADPI's contract was extended for an additional six months for them to conclude and service previously billed accounts.

At the conclusion of ADPI's contract, a baseline collection rate was established in order to continually evaluate the performance and efficiency of the in-house billing and collections program compared to the prior outsourced contractor. For FY 2013, ADPI's base collection rate was determined to be 33.70% for the combined air and ground collections. For the twelve month period of May 1, 2014, through April 30, 2015, the first full year of in-house billing, the in-house program's collection rate was 46.09%. The combined in-house collection rate for the following Fiscal Year 2015 was 50.11%.

In addition to a substantially improved rate of collection, in-house billing has greatly improved the efficiency of billing by shortening the length of time to process the initial claim and secondary fillings, and adhering to a consistent timeline with regard to subsequent billings and follow-up. Having an in-house billing program has increased the responsiveness to managerial needs for information and follow-up. Further, customer service has greatly improved by having two dedicated employees, whose sole focus and responsibility is to serve our customers.

As the in-house billing program approaches its second full year, the collection rate improvement from ADPI's 33.70% to the in-house rate of 50.11% in FY 15 clearly demonstrates migrating to an in-house billing program has been a positive step for Monroe County. MCFR will continue to monitor and evaluate revenues and collections and provide periodic updates to the BOCC as requested. If any additional information is needed, please contact MCFR.

COLLECTION RATE COMPARISON

