

EMS Special Needs Bariatric



Debra Anderson Gold
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Recognizing the special EMS needs of Greene County



As the team looked at special needs in the community, it was recognized that one area of need was with those who are morbidly obese, often times called the Bariatric population.

Obesity Today

- As the obesity epidemic grows in society, so does the impact on our first responders.
- Over 67% of Americans are overweight
- Nearly 30% of Ohio residents are obese or have a BMI over 30.
- It is estimated that 5-8% of the population is morbidly obese or 100 pounds or more overweight.
- Based on data from the CDC, it is estimated that as many as 12,000 Greene County residents are morbidly obese.
- The impact of this epidemic plays out daily as our first responders work to move, transport and care for our citizens.

Impact on Community

- Based on Green County EMS 2009 data, nearly 8% of the medical transports involve patients who weigh more than 300 pounds.
- Moving and caring for patients above 300 pounds often requires special equipment and staff training.
- Without appropriate equipment and training, first responders often require additional units and teams to transfer and move morbidly obese patients.



Body board with 400# weight limit

Bariatric Equipment Special Needs



Special equipment needs range from devices to move/transport heavier patients to appropriately sized equipment to assess and care for the morbidly obese.

Larry's Story

- 42 year old male with chest pain
- 450 pounds
- EMS team unable to load on stretcher due to weight and girth.
- 3 units called move and load Pt. onto squad with “Shamu sheet” & propped against drivers seat.
- Unable to move Pt out of squad, Pt reluctant to lay down.
- Pt coded after being convinced to lay flat so that he could be removed from the squad.
- Patient died in the emergency bay of the hospital.

Resources Needed

- Our goal is to transport Bariatric patients safely, efficiently, and with attention to patient dignity
- Equipment to assist first responders in lifting and moving patients
- EMS training in handling techniques for care of the morbidly obese
- Training in sensitivity and attention to patient dignity.





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