

Taney County Ambulance District: Using Surveys to Boost Team Morale

ABOUT TANEY COUNTY AMBULANCE DISTRICT

Located in Southwest Missouri within the heart of the Ozark Mountains, Taney County Ambulance District, or TCAD, manages the 632 square miles that make up Taney County, which houses nearly 54,000 residents and hosts more than 7.5 million visitors annually. TCAD has been providing services since 1976, responding to more than 12,000 calls every year.

With a fleet of 12 paramedic-equipped ambulances and six on-duty teams at various locations around the county, TCAD can rapidly respond to both emergency and nonemergency services. In addition to ambulances, TCAD utilizes fast-response fly-car units that can answer calls quickly, report back on the situation, and either cancel or request additional units at the scene. As a team of emergency responders, TCAD is taking mobile healthcare to the next level.

CHALLENGES

When using only city funding, TCAD couldn't maximize efficiency in its operations and provide the necessary transparency to the public or the EMTs working for the ambulance district. Team morale declined and, as a result, turnover increased. With low team morale, patient relationships suffered, and patient surveys revealed negative reviews.





SOLUTIONS

TCAD came to EMS Survey Team to address team morale problems using data that highlights the impact EMTs have on patients and shows where the patient experience is great. That positive feedback bolsters team members' spirits and shows that what they are doing has a lasting impact on patients.

In addition, TCAD's annual employee engagement survey provided by EMSST revealed that EMTs were unhappy that they had to cover up their tattoos. To make the work environment more positive, Darryl Coontz, chief of TCAD, decided to determine whether patients minded if the EMTs had tattoos by adding a question to the patient experience survey: "Did the uniformed responders have a good and professional appearance?"



After two months of making EMTs cover their tattoos and two months of allowing EMTs to show their tattoos, the data from the patient surveys showed no difference in patient scores. In fact, both approaches resulted in professional appearance ratings in the high 90s. As a result, TCAD does not require EMTs to cover their tattoos anymore, which has been a huge boost to employee morale. That change would not have been possible without the insights from EMSST's patient experience surveys.

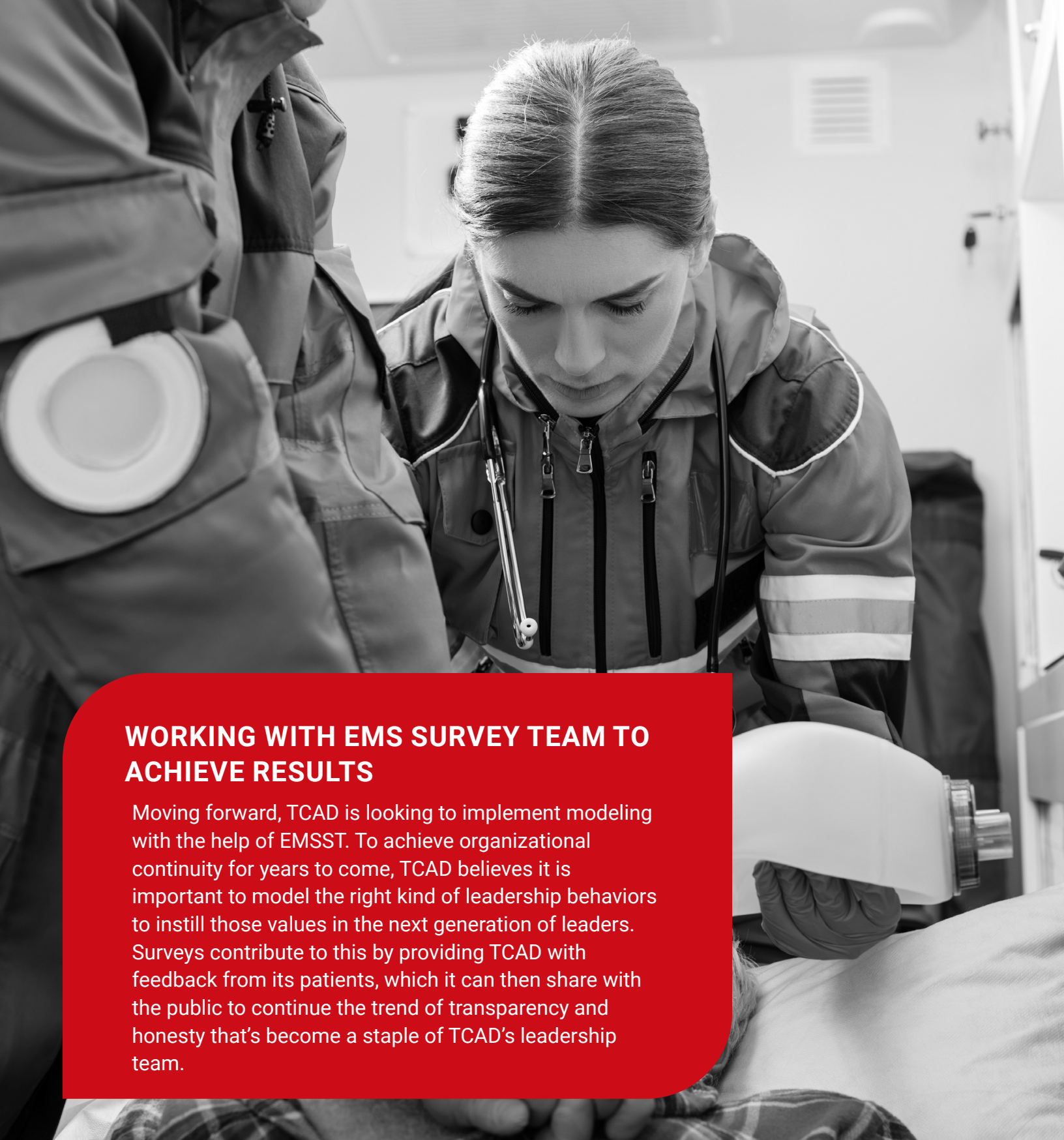
People care if the crew is kind and knowledgeable; they don't care if they have tattoos. I never would've known that without the EMSST survey.



With direct insights from patients, TCAD has the data to make informed decisions about team members, patients, and the organization as a whole.



The survey results show that people like working here and that we put people first.



WORKING WITH EMS SURVEY TEAM TO ACHIEVE RESULTS

Moving forward, TCAD is looking to implement modeling with the help of EMSST. To achieve organizational continuity for years to come, TCAD believes it is important to model the right kind of leadership behaviors to instill those values in the next generation of leaders. Surveys contribute to this by providing TCAD with feedback from its patients, which it can then share with the public to continue the trend of transparency and honesty that's become a staple of TCAD's leadership team.



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