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PRESS RELEASE

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KFD contracts Dr. Stephen Harper to provide medical direction for EMS

Kerrville, Texas (Jan. 5, 2023) – The City of Kerrville Fire Department, working with the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio (UTHSCSA) through its Department of Emergency Health Services, has contracted Dr. Stephen Harper to provide medical direction for the department's emergency medical services (EMS) operations.



As medical director, Harper is responsible for all patient care related to the KFD's EMS and Special Operations Unit (SOU) tactical paramedics, the City of Kerrville Police Department's emergency medical dispatchers, and Kerr County First Responders. Harper or his staff will be available 24/7 for EMS crews to contact for guidance, direction, and support. This is an enhanced service to provide patient and EMS access to a physician on scene.

Harper and his staff will also provide regular continuing education, a quality assurance program, progressive medical protocols, and ensure the highest quality patient care.

Harper is board certified in emergency medicine/emergency medical services. He previously served in the United States Army, completing his residency as chief resident at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. He deployed as the brigade surgeon with the 170th Infantry Brigade Combat Team out of Baumholder, Germany, where he was responsible for 200 combat medics and six physician assistants providing care for more than 4,000 soldiers assigned to the brigade. In 2011-12, the brigade deployed to Afghanistan, partnering with Afghan forces to provide security and counter insurgency operations in the area.

Returning to Texas, Harper was stationed at the William Beaumont Army Medical Center in El Paso as a staff physician in the emergency room and the medical director for Fire and EMS at Fort Bliss. Harper later returned to San Antonio, where he completed a two-year fellowship in Military EMS and Disaster Medicine while earning a master's in public health. He served as the department chair and director of the Department of Combat Medic Training (DCMT) at Fort Sam Houston. DCMT is the largest pre-hospital training program in the country, graduating over 6,000 students a year and supplying combatant commanders with soldiers that are proficient in the latest advancements in Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC).

After leaving active duty in 2019, Harper continued to serve at Brooke Army Medical Center as a contractor in the emergency department and has worked part-time with UT Health San Antonio in the emergency department at University Hospital. Continuing service in the U.S. Army Reserves, Harper deployed to Kuwait in 2020-21 as the deputy commander for clinical services at the U.S. Military Hospital-Kuwait.

Harper has been the full-time deputy medical director with the Office of the Medical Director since September, 2021.

“My background in the Army has developed a true passion for ensuring that prehospital providers are given the support they need to be successful in caring for the most critically ill patients in the most austere of environments,” Harper said. “To that end, it is my philosophy that the medics I provide medical direction for are an extension of my practice of medicine, and I should make sure that we continually work towards the highest quality care informed by the latest in evidence-based medicine.”

“We are honored to have Dr. Stephen Harper serve as our fourth EMS medical director,” KFD Fire Chief Eric Maloney said. “His military background and passion as an EMS medical director is evident in his dedication to service to prehospital healthcare. We look forward to our partnership to continue to provide the highest quality patient care for our community.”

Harper replaces Dr. Steven Nail, who served as the KFD’s EMS medical director for 21 years.

The UTHSCSA has partnered with the City of Kerrville Fire Department for over a decade to provide paramedic certification training for firefighters and also serves as the department’s training center for American Heart Association instructors to teach the members of the department. The UTHSCSA also provides EMS Medical Direction for the San Antonio Fire Department, Bandera EMS, Converse FD, and multiple other EMS and First Responder Organizations.

The City of Kerrville Fire Department provides emergency medical services to most of Kerr County via an Interlocal agreement.

For additional questions, please contact Fire Chief Eric Maloney at (830) 257-8449 or Eric.Maloney@kerrvilletx.gov.

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