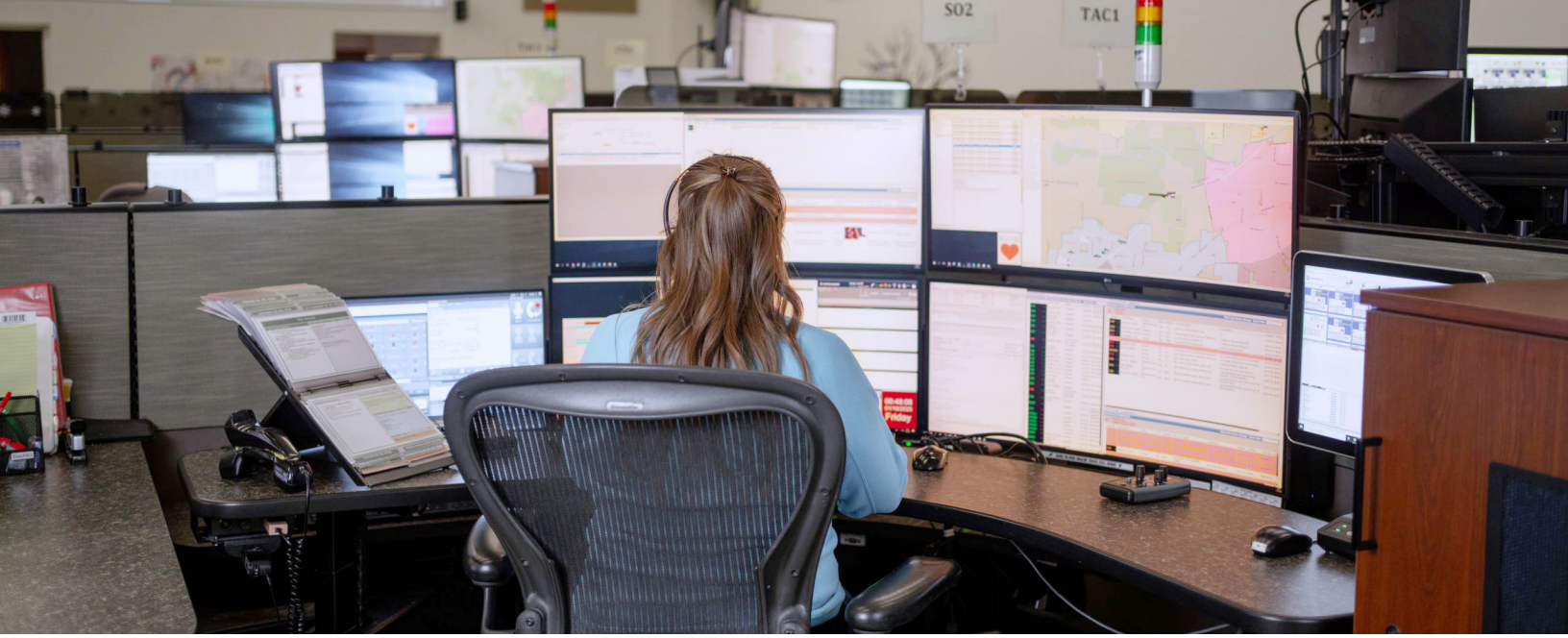

YAKIMA COUNTY 911 NURSE NAVIGATION PROGRAM

When you call 911 during a medical event, you may not need an ambulance trip to your local hospital emergency department. Yakima County's new program, developed in collaboration with the 911 center, Yakima County Department of EMS, local EMS provider American Medical Response and program pioneer Global Medical Response, gives 911 call takers the option to connect you with a Nurse Navigator to figure out the right type of care for your situation, including how and where you get it.

How does the Yakima County 911 Nurse Navigation program work?

If you call 911 with a non-life-threatening situation, dispatchers will connect you to a Nurse Navigator who uses physician protocols to guide you through options for the most appropriate care. These may include local urgent care facilities, telehealth services or self-care at home. Additionally, nurses can arrange transportation for callers.

Will EMS providers still respond and transport me to a hospital if I call 911?

If you call 911 with a serious condition or a potentially life-threatening emergency, the 911 call taker will send EMS first responders to determine if you need a trip to the hospital.

Even if you're initially transferred to the Nurse Navigation program for a non-life-threatening situation, the Nurse Navigator using the physician protocols may determine your condition requires a hospital emergency room visit as the most appropriate medical care. In those instances, they will send out an ambulance to you.

What factors determine whether my call is transferred to the Yakima County 911 Nurse Navigation program?

The 911 operator reviews your symptoms using industry best-practice medical protocols and questions to thoroughly assess your medical needs. The protocols determine if you can be transferred to the Nurse Navigation line. If so, the 911 center will offer you the option of being connected to a Nurse Navigator instead of immediately sending out first responders.

How does Nurse Navigation determine which medical clinic I will be referred to?

Using physician protocols, the Nurse Navigator will connect you to an appropriate level of care available based on:

- Your existing primary care provider (if you have one)
- Where you regularly receive care
- Your current location and time of day
- Local healthcare providers' availability

Additionally, if you have a preferred provider network (PPN) through your insurance, the Nurse Navigator will look for in-network options. If you do not have insurance, the Nurse Navigator helps identify options for low-cost care.

Will the nurse schedule a medical clinic appointment for me in advance at a set time? Will the staff know when I arrive and why?

Each clinic has walk-in appointments available for Yakima County 911 Nurse Navigation program callers. The Nurse Navigator will notify the clinic about your situation, including your estimated arrival time and your reason(s) for seeking medical care. The clinic will see you as soon as possible upon your arrival on-site.

What are the Nurse Navigators' qualifications?

Nurse Navigators are nurses trained in using physician protocols that guide care in 911 Nurse Navigation. These physician protocols determine the best course of care accordingly.

If I talk to the nurse and still want to be taken to the hospital by ambulance, what happens then?

Every caller has the right to have an ambulance respond to their 911 call. The 911 Nurse Navigation program suggests alternative options which may better match your specific needs at likely a lower cost. Even so, this program will send an ambulance your way if one is requested.

When should I call 911?

You should call 911 for a serious medical emergency that you believe is or has the potential to become a serious or life-threatening condition. Examples include:

- Trouble breathing
- Chest pain
- Heart attack
- Fainting
- A severe allergic reaction
- Severe injuries from a fall or accident
- Seizures
- Severe pain
- Other urgent matters

It is recommended that you do not call 911 for minor illnesses or injuries that can be addressed through an appointment with a primary care provider, like a cold, a minor cut or a routine medical matter.

SCAN OR CALL **509.574.2145** TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PROGRAM.

Yakima County Department of EMS

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