

Case Study - Albany (NY) County Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Program



Albany County's Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Program currently delivers exceptional service to 17,000 recipients via more than 264,000 trips per year. Program usage and costs are appropriately controlled and taxpayers are receiving a significant return on their tax dollars.

Albany County provides this program with minimal oversight. The transportation vendors are fully credentialed, and members have reported excellent customer satisfaction. Albany County clearly benefited in many ways when they chose Medical Transportation Management (MTM) to manage their NEMT program.

Program Background –

MTM began managing the Albany County Medicaid NEMT program in January 2003. Prior to MTM's management, Albany County was dissatisfied with the quality of service being provided. There was significant potential for fraud and abuse, the program required a great deal of oversight by Albany County, and the costs of the program were continually rising.

Albany County sought a NEMT management company that could provide the level of service required, minimize the need for oversight, and deliver the program in the most cost-effective manner possible.

After a thorough evaluation of the NEMT management companies available, Albany County chose MTM. Albany County was impressed with MTM's:

- Successful track record
- Commitment to exceptional service
- Reputation with customers and transportation providers
- Ability to understand the specific needs of the local community being served.

Program Goals –

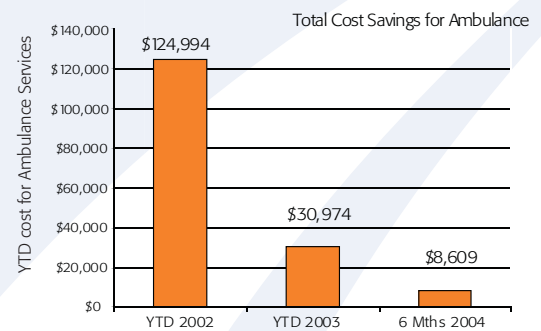
MTM's goals for the first year were to:

- Reduce and control costs
- Prevent fraud and abuse
- Improve quality and reduce liability
- Increase access to healthcare
- Minimize County oversight and management requirements

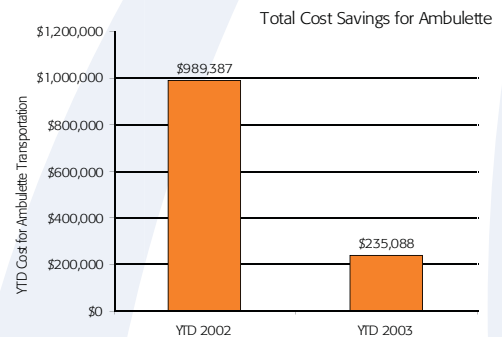
Reducing and Controlling Costs –

MTM's first task when taking on this program was to ensure that the appropriate mode of transportation was being provided only to those eligible to receive it. MTM discovered that hospitals and healthcare facilities had frequently requested higher levels of transportation services than necessary, and services were being provided to ineligible individuals.

MTM implemented strict screening processes to eliminate inappropriate use of transportation services and reduce the number of high cost modes. These changes resulted in a 52% reduction of ambulance trips, freeing ambulances for vital emergency needs, and a over 75% reduction in associated costs.



In addition to addressing ambulance transportation, MTM monitored ambulette utilization (defined as non-ambulatory, such as a wheelchair lift vehicle). In this area, MTM was able to achieve a 49% reduction in the number of trips and a 36% reduction in associated costs year-to-date.

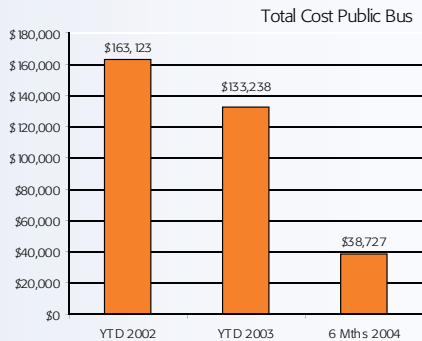


Despite a 12% increase in the number of eligible recipients within the first six months of MTM's management of the transportation program, Albany County's total cost of transportation decreased 2%, and the total number of trips was reduced by 10%.

Preventing Fraud and Abuse –

Prior to MTM managing the program, local facilities distributed bus passes and tokens without screening for Albany County Medicaid eligibility. In addition, services were being provided to individuals covered under different county Medicaid programs, and unused or missing passes and tokens were not tracked or reported.

MTM established distribution procedures for bus passes and tokens and developed processes for tracking and reconciling each facility's inventory. Thus, bus transportation is now being provided only to those who are eligible, the number of bus trips has decreased, and costs have been reduced by 7%, while maintaining a 65% bus utilization for eligible recipients.



Improving Quality and Reducing Liability –

Under MTM's management, transportation providers, including taxis, are committed to delivering high-quality, safe transportation services. MTM conducts transportation vendor education seminars to ensure the level of service is as high as possible. MTM's Quality Improvement Department monitors all services provided and tracks any incident that occurs.

In the event an incident occurs, it is reported within 24 hours, a thorough investigation is conducted, and it is resolved quickly. MTM ensures that providers take the appropriate corrective actions and provide the required documentation.

MTM has reduced Albany County's liability by enforcing transportation provider compliance in areas such as driver background checks, vehicle inspections, site visits, and driver training. Various insurance providers categorize MTM's vendors as "low risk" transportation companies due to their adherence to MTM's strict guidelines, and subsequently pay reduced insurance premiums.

Customer satisfaction is substantially higher and the healthcare facilities acknowledge tremendous improvement in the overall transportation program. MTM has achieved an overall satisfaction rate of 99.75% in all areas of the program – from customer service center intake to vehicles and driver services.

Increasing Access to Healthcare –

Prior to MTM's management, Albany County's recipients were frequently denied non-ambulatory transportation due to limited vehicle capacity.

MTM's Network Development Department recruited transportation providers in the rural communities and encouraged current providers to add vehicles to increase capacity. This resulted in the establishment of three new transportation providers and the significant expansion of two others.

MTM is committed to continually developing a variety of transportation services and increasing the number of vehicles available for individuals living outside of the urban districts.

Minimizing Management Oversight –

MTM provides Albany County monthly summary reports within 45 days of month end, a substantial improvement over the six-month delay in receiving reports prior to MTM's management. The timely receipt of reports allows MTM and Albany County to make immediate and effective adjustments in the program, as needed.

Albany County has access to MTM's extensive management services. This direct link to MTM's extensive management system, including transportation specialists working with local providers, social service representatives in daily contact with local facilities, and customer service representatives scheduling and monitoring all trips, has significantly reduced the need for oversight and additional staffing by Albany County's Department of Social Services.

MTM and Albany Today –

MTM has developed strong support in the local communities through face-to-face meetings with the organizations involved and by establishing and maintaining relationships with local transportation providers, the local bus entity CDTA/ACCESS, and local healthcare providers. The local community benefits, as tax dollars remain in Albany County.

Albany County's NEMT program, under MTM's management, is delivering the appropriate level of service to eligible recipients in the most cost-effective manner possible and Albany County, its recipients, taxpayers, and providers are all extremely satisfied with the program.

About MTM –

Each year, MTM satisfies the NEMT needs of 1.8 million people. Our portfolio consists of 30 state, county, and Managed Care Organization clients. We currently manage programs in Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, and Virginia. We currently contract with 340+ transportation providers with over 3,500 vehicles.

MTM is a privately held corporation and a certified Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE). For additional information, please visit our website at www.mtm-inc.net.

Ed Shannon, Albany County's Executive Director for Planning:

"Albany County awarded a contract to MTM, Inc. for brokering non-emergency medical transportation services beginning in 2003. The transition from the previous broker was as smoothly handled as possible. MTM, Inc. won the award in large part on the basis of its quality assurance, its clear commitment to the needs of the consumers and the County and its sophisticated management and reporting capabilities. Once MTM began managing our nearly \$2 million transportation program, we realized containment in transportation costs for the next year and a half. We are very pleased with the high level of satisfaction reported in our County and continue to look forward to MTM's transportation management skills."

