![UScellular BUSINESS logo]

FIRST RESPONDERS COUNT ON UScellular®
SOLUTIONS TO SAVE DOLLARS AND LIVES

Partnering with UScellular, Randolph County Ambulance District in Missouri has adopted cellular technology to help protect its patients while saving the community thousands of dollars.
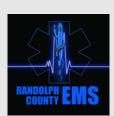
Customer Profile

BUSINESS TYPE:
Randolph County Ambulance District serves 25,000 residents with six ambulances, 24 full-time paramedics and EMTs, plus 20-30 part-time staff.

LOCATION:
Randolph County in northeast Missouri

CHALLENGES:
• Reports and insurance billing were manual, tedious and time-consuming, causing delays in reimbursement
• Needed durable devices for patient and hospital staff mobile signatures as required by Medicare
• Costly data service plans

UScellular® SOLUTIONS:
• Panasonic Toughbooks that withstand extreme conditions to create patient care reports and transmit vitals to the hospital in advance of arrival
• Cradlepoint routers that provide connectivity to Toughbooks via the UScellular network and transmit a signal to the hospital when an ambulance arrives
• MiFleet fleet management to monitor ambulance location plus Surfsight dash cameras for added safety
• Government, priority service and business data plans that save them up to $2,000 per month
• Personalized service from local account manager

RESULTS SINCE 2021 LAUNCH:
• Automated systems resulted in as much as a $100,000 increase in insurance reimbursements annually, and 5% to 10% more claims paid
• UScellular price-protected, bundled government plans reduced expenses by $2,000 per month
• Fleet management increased ambulance efficiency by monitoring idling time and routing
• Ambulances use cellular technology to transmit vitals to physicians who prescribe medicine before the patient arrives at the hospital—a priceless life savings

During the height of the pandemic, paramedics and EMTs faced challenges above and beyond caring for and transporting patients to the hospital. They had to take extra care of themselves too. The job got harder, and many quit the profession for fear of catching COVID and exposing their families.

"When COVID first started, everybody locked down tight and that included ambulance calls. It seemed like if we got a call, it was COVID-related, but nobody else went to the hospital," said Clay Joiner, Randolph County Ambulance District superintendent. "Where were all the sick people with COVID? They were in the hospital. So, if you had a belly ache, you weren't going to go to the hospital because people were scared."

Overcoming Connectivity Challenges

As time passed, and as vaccines became available, those who put off their ailments all of a sudden were facing emergencies. "Almost overnight, everybody's calling for ambulances," Joiner said.

At the same time, Joiner's hardworking crew faced challenges that were slowing their ability to communicate with the hospital, get patient signatures, file reports and submit insurance claims that were tied to reimbursement. They needed to upgrade their technology to keep up with a new world while continuing to save lives.

So, Joiner turned to longtime partner UScellular® for solutions that would improve efficiency and save money while putting the community first. "Clay is a visionary," said Jacob Neeley, UScellular Public Sector Account Manager, "meaning, he knows what it's been like, where it's at now and what it could look like at its best. He's got a good eye and his experience allows him to understand many levels of the operation."

Automating Billing Nets Bigger Reimbursements

Joiner, who has been with the ambulance district for 41 years – 27 as superintendent, knew he faced many challenges, starting with manual reports and billing. Previously, his team would handwrite reports or enter them on a computer, return to the office, print them out and give them to staff who would have to enter the reports again into a billing system.

UScellular recommended installing Cradlepoint routers in each of Randolph County's six ambulances to connect their Panasonic Toughbooks via the UScellular network. "Our dispatch, patient care, records and billing are all tied together. By having the Cradlepoint routers, as soon as a medic finished their patient report, it immediately went to billing and could be filed usually by the next day," Joiner said.

"We literally took a computer out in an ambulance and drove all over the county to see who we could connect, and UScellular was really the best connection."

— **Clay Joiner,** Superintendent, Randolph County Ambulance District, Missouri

In-ambulance technology powered by the UScellular wireless network

A glimpse inside a Randolph County ambulance

In addition, automated billing eliminates delays, so they no longer miss out on reimbursements. "It's helped us financially to get our bills out, especially to the insurance companies. We definitely increased the amount of money received by at least $50,000-$100,000 annually."

Automated reports eliminated delays in billing too. The ambulance district avoids Medicare penalties for late filings, now getting an additional 5%-10% of bills paid.

The Toughest Devices in the Field

Another challenge was choosing the right mobile devices for the medics to use for transmitting patient data and getting signatures. UScellular helped Randolph County choose Panasonic Toughbooks to take vitals and enter them into the patient care report.

"Toughbooks are made exactly for why they're made," Joiner said. "They get left on the back bumper of the ambulance and fall off. They get dropped down the steps at the patient's house, whatever it might be, they survive. We hardly ever have to repair a Toughbook because it just does what it's supposed to do."

Finding the Fastest Route to an Emergency

When responding to an emergency, the ambulance crew and Dispatch counts on UScellular partner MiFleet to improve efficiency. "We know where the ambulance is at all times. By tracking their progress, we can see if they make a left turn instead of a right turn and call and say 'Hey, you need to back up and turn around,'" Joiner said.

The fleet management product also eliminates downtime by helping the staff recognize routing patterns and create better solutions. Joiner says he can track the ambulance location and see how much time is spent between patients and make the crews more productive.

They have also just installed MiFleet's Surfsight dash cameras in each ambulance. "It offers us protection in the case of an accident, and it also allows us to communicate with the crews through the cameras," he said.

Price-Protected Government Business Plans

Joiner credits the government business plans for saving them as much as $2,000 per month. "There was a time when to have the number of phones that we have now and the number of SIM cards and Cradlepoints and other things would have just been cost prohibitive. But UScellular has always really worked for us so we got the very best business deal all the time and Jacob's been really big on that," Joiner said.

"If we were doing today what we're doing 10 years ago, I think it probably would have cost us at least 500% to 1,000% more. The UScellular government plan is saving us at least $1,000 to $2,000 a month compared to what it would have a few years ago."

Neeley added that while cost has decreased, the amount of data has increased significantly. In addition, all charges appear on a single bill, and UScellular has protected it's rate through 2023.

The UScellular Local Difference

Joiner credits his UScellular partner Jacob Neeley for the program's success. "Jacob has really been Jacob on the spot here for us. If we needed something he's driven up here, right away to help us," he said.

"I think the community is in great hands with Clay," Neeley said. "He embraces technology and cares about the experience of his staff. This allows him to increase the efficiency of his technicians, EMTs and paramedics. He knows what will best serve the community."

The Best Local Network for Saving Lives

Like many rural locations across the country, it's not always easy to get a cell signal in northeast Missouri. But Joiner's crew always connects with UScellular. "When we first went to this program, we literally took a computer out in an ambulance and drove all over the county to see who we could connect, and UScellular really was the best connection," he said.

That's important when transporting a patent. Joiner's crew uses a router with UScellular critical connectivity to transmit vitals to the hospital where a physician reviews it and provides instruction. "As far as knowing immediately where to take them, what medications to give, what to do—that's just priceless."

> "Customer service used to mean 'I'll help you right now,' but customer service today means 'send me an email and when I'm done messing with the dog and the kids, I'll get back to you in a couple of days or a week.' But the service that Jacob provides is like it used to be–like we all think the definitions of service should be."
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> — **Clay Joiner,** Superintendent, Randolph County Ambulance District, Missouri

To see how UScellular can help your organization call **866-616-5587** or visit **uscellular.com/business**

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