



**Caledonia Essex Area Ambulance Service Inc.**  
**2023 Town Report**  
**Concord**  
**2023 CALEX Responses**  
**137 Responses**  
**60 Non-Transports**

Compassionate professionals delivering the highest quality emergency medicine, specialty care, and training to our providers and communities.

2023 has been a record-breaking year for us in our overall volume, however we are seeing a growing percentage of non-transports and reduced amount of inter-facility transfers. As we monitor trending in post pandemic healthcare, 2023 has yet again had some unique challenges. While our 911 volume is up and our inter-facility transfers are down. We continue see many of our tertiary care centers such as DHMC and UVMMC that we commonly transfer overwhelmed and unable to accept. We see more local care due to the system being overwhelmed. Our agency relies heavily on inter-facility transports to support our budget as our 911 transports do not cover the expenses to maintain a 24/7/365 Paramedic level EMS service. This is not unique to CALEX as most EMS agencies rely on inter-facility transports to help support their budgets and to keep town funding requests as reasonable as possible. State and Federal reimbursements, specifically Medicare and Medicaid, do not cover the actual costs. Roughly, we lose about 51.65% due to fee schedules that we don't have control over. This is called contractual discounts. We only get paid by Medicare / Medicaid what they reimburse and that is not the actual costs to deliver the service. Inter-facility transports, due to the longer distance billable loaded miles, generates a more substantial part of the budget. This is a well-known problem EMS financial problem state and nationally. Local and state legislative leaders are discussing in hopes to support for more funding for EMS. Our non-transport rate system wide is about 32%, 1,045 calls for service in 2023 were non-billable responses. Vermont currently is allowing services to bill Medicaid a fee (\$108) for some of these non-transport services. This is new and we will begin this process moving into 2024. Responses such as lift assist, medical aid, treat/release calls we will be able to bill Medicaid. Unfortunately, at this time Medicare does not allow for billing of non-transports and they are our most commonly billed provider. We are hopeful that we will see some changes soon, but we have had no choice but to raise our contracts beginning in January 2024.

Many EMS systems are struggling around the state and nationally with funding due to rising costs to provide the service, along with reimbursements are not keeping up with those increases. The workforce, since the pandemic, has also created challenges as many other careers are paying much higher hourly rates than we can afford in EMS. This is currently a point of discussion that state leaders and legislators are looking to find some funding mechanisms to support. We will closely monitor this and support any opportunities to assure EMS is an essential service supported appropriately to provide workforce professionals that stand ready 24/7/365.

We are looking forward to beginning another EMT course in early January with St. Johnsbury Academy Adult Education and are hopeful for some additional staffing from this program. We are also hosting several other EMS programs and advanced certifications this year from funding that was support by Vermont.

CALEX continues to provide the highest quality of prehospital care to all the towns we serve providing 911 coverage at the Paramedic level 24/7/365. We have been asked to provide services to Granby this year, so we are now serving 10 towns – Saint Johnsbury, Waterford, Barnet, Concord, South Kirby, Victory, Granby, Danville, Walden and Peacham. Our 2023 volumes were up overall by about 9% this year. CALEX responded to 2,646 911 responses and 606 being Interfacility Transfers and Medical transports. Our average response time to the scene for our entire service area 8 minutes 05 secs. Overall, our agency responded to 3,252 requests for service. These interfacility transports are a critical part of our service, reducing any delays of getting our patients to definitive care whether it be trauma services, cardiac care, or other specialty services at a higher-level care facility such as DHMC or UVMMC and other hospitals across the New England. This year we transported as far as Albany, NY a couple times and Portsmouth, NH 15 due to other hospitals declining admissions.

As we end 2023, I look forward to a safe and successful year of providing the very best pre hospital care to our communities. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated and experienced team providing care for when it is needed. We hope you will continue to support us and approve our funding requests so we can continue providing the very best Emergency Medical Care to the region. Lastly, please take some time and learn CPR /AED use, we would be glad to assist you. You could save a life!

In closing, I would like to thank all of our staff, their families, and the CALEX Board of Directors and our dedicated dispatchers for their continued support and dedication to the Agency's mission.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael J. Wright, NRP  
Chief Executive Officer