Region's EMS Service Agency to Close

Emergency medical service providers could soon handle patient care differently.

An EMS program in the region is scheduled to shut down.

And as Action News Reporter Julianne Sweeney tells us, this could create more work for medical responders on the front lines.

Ambulance crews rely on the help of the Susquehanna Regional Emergency Medical Services or SREMS.

But that help will only be available for 2 more weeks.

SREMS will close operations November 30th.

"EMT and paramedics on the front line will probably begin to see changes almost immediately." said SREMS Treasurer Ray Serowik.

The program agency operates each year on a 153-thousand dollar grant from the New York State Department of Health.

But its contract is pending, and without funding, it's being forced to shut down.

SREMS serves EMS providers in Broome, Chenango and Tioga Counties.

One role is to act as a call center for patient complaints.

"There's going to be nobody on the other end of that phone, that phone line's going to shut down." said Serowik.

SREMS also manages an electronic database that tracks patient care details.
It's now helping providers prepare to do this administrative work on their own.

"It may go back to the process we used in the early 80's, where it was all done through paper and it was labor intensive." said SREMS Executive Director Jim Morris.

Its contract is dependent on whether funds are allocated from the Division of Budget.

SREMS is meeting with elected leaders in our area for help.

"We're certainly hoping that the hold up, the road block for freeing up these funds can be quickly overcome." said Serowik.

Even if the funds are released by November 30th, SREMS is afraid work in the month December will be delayed.

11 other EMS programs in New York State are facing similar situations.

SREMS is the first one scheduled to close its doors.