

February 2018

Number of City-Run Ambulances Continues to Grow Under Budget Plan

Mayor de Blasio’s latest budget plan would provide the fire department with a total of \$4.0 million starting this fiscal year through 2022 to increase the number of ambulances on the city’s streets. The additional city ambulances are needed to compensate for the loss of private (voluntary) ambulances operated by New York Community Hospital, which decided to drop its ambulances from the city’s 911 system.

The total number of ambulances—city-run and privately operated—responding to medical emergencies called into New York’s 911 system has increased substantially in recent years. Last year, there were on average 1,167 eight-hour ambulance tours on city streets each day—or 217 (23 percent) more than the comparable number in 2010. Most of this growth has come with an increase in the number of ambulances run by the New York City Fire Department (FDNY). The additional funding proposed by the de Blasio Administration will add an average of three tours per day.

Revenue Generator or Loser? The increased deployment of FDNY ambulances by the city is not expected to pay for itself through additional revenue. The revenue generated

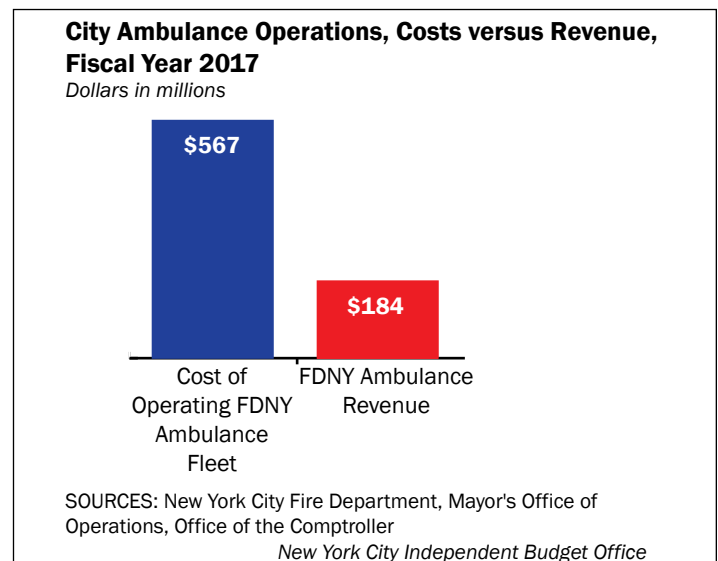
from ambulance operations is well below the cost of delivering emergency medical services. The city spent about \$567 million last year staffing and operating FDNY ambulances. That cost is more than three times the \$184 million in revenue generated for the city from a combination of private insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, and individuals paying out of pocket.

Driving the need to deploy additional ambulances in the 911 system is a steady rise in the annual number of reported medical emergencies and patients transported to hospitals by ambulances in New York City. The roughly 1.4 million medical emergencies ambulances responded to in 2016 was a 14 percent increase from the comparable figure in 2010. Likewise, the number of patients brought by ambulance to hospitals grew by 15 percent over the same period.

Both the annual number of reported medical emergencies and patients transported to hospitals increased by more

Average Daily Number of Ambulance Tours				
	Calendar Year			
	2010		2017	
	Number	Share	Number	Share
FDNY-Operated Ambulance Tours	591	62%	790	68%
Private (Voluntary) Ambulance Tours	358	38%	377	32%
Total	950	100%	1,167	100%

SOURCE: New York City Fire Department
New York City Independent Budget Office



Increase in Ambulance Runs Outpaces City's Population Growth

	2010	2016	Percent Growth (2010-2016)
Medical Emergencies	1,261,993	1,440,268	14%
Patients Transported to Hospitals	786,513	1,092,752	15%
NYC Population	8,192,026	8,537,673	4%

SOURCES: New York City Fire Department, New York City Comptroller
New York City Independent Budget Office

than three times the percentage growth in the city's population over the same time period.

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