



EMS UPDATE

WINTER/SPRING 2010

Emergency Medical Services

NHTSA OFFICE OF EMS

NHTSA WELCOMES HECTOR WILLIAMS

The NHTSA Office of EMS (OEMS) is happy to announce that Hector Williams has joined our staff. Hector was previously part of NHTSA's Enforcement and Justice Services Division. With OEMS, he will be working on Advanced Automatic Crash Notification and its application to EMS and EMS workforce issues. He will also support national 9-1-1 activities. Welcome, Hector!

AMBULANCE SAFETY

- * **Developing Standards** — NHTSA and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) are collaborating on a four-year research-based project to improve existing standards to make patients and EMS workers safer in the rear compartment of ambulances. The General Services Administration and the National Truck Equipment Association's Ambulance Manufacturer's Division are also participating in the effort, which launched in 2009. Look for NHTSA OEMS to release progress reports as additional information becomes available.
- * **Safely Transporting Children** — OEMS and NHTSA's Occupant Protection Division are continuing work on a two-year research effort to develop a set of recommendations for the EMS community on how to safely transport children by ground ambulance.
- * **Building Consensus** — NHTSA is currently working with the National Fire Protection Association's newly formed Technical Committee on Ambulances to develop consensus-based ambulance safety standards for use by automotive emergency

medical service manufacturers, as well as private and municipal ambulance purchasers and operators.

Questions about ambulance safety or related NHTSA research projects? Please contact Dave Bryson.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE GUIDELINES

If EMS were to adopt a process for developing protocols and guidelines based on scientific evidence, what would that process look like?

After years of basing EMS practice on "we've always done it that way," a more scientific process may be on its way. A draft national model for a process to develop prehospital evidence-based guidelines has been developed. Both the Federal Interagency Committee on EMS (FICEMS) and the National EMS Advisory Council (NEMSAC) have conducted preliminary reviews of the draft model. In May 2009, the model was presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine in New Orleans.

A portion of the model process is currently being pilot-tested by the Emergency Medical Services for Children National Resource Center, which has assembled a group of experts in emergency medicine, pediatric emergency medicine, guideline development, medical library science, prehospital care, and nursing. Using the draft model process, these experts have developed a draft protocol for pediatric seizures and will be publishing the evidence-based protocol and the supportive literature review.

In response to a competitive Request for Proposals, Children's National Medical Center (CNMC) was awarded a project to pilot test the National Evidence-Based Guidelines Model Process.

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CNMC will also develop evidence-based clinical guidelines for helicopter transport of injured patients. It will develop a statewide protocol and pilot-test statewide implementation.

For more information on the evidence-based practice guidelines project, please contact Cathy Gotschall.

FEDERAL INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON EMS

FICEMS meets twice yearly, most typically in June and December. In the interim, the committee's Technical Working Group (TWG) addresses ongoing business and carries out initiatives as directed by the committee. The TWG, which has formed five subcommittees, meets monthly and reports back to FICEMS on activities and progress.

Highlights now available from FICEMS meetings in December 2008 and June 2009 are outlined below:

DECEMBER 2008

* FICEMS TWG committee chairs presented updates on their committees' work:

- **Assessment Committee** — Redrafted the Statement of Work (SOW) for the procurement of a National EMS Assessment with the intention of making the SOW available for bid by early 2009.
- **Medical Oversight Committee** — Reached its first goal of organizing a national Evidence-Based Guidelines Conference for Prehospital Care; circulated a letter to Federal agencies suggesting medical direction be incorporated into Federal EMS-related grants.
- **9-1-1/Medical Communications Committee** — Presented recommendations from the Federal Communications Commission's Joint Advisory Committee on Communications Capabilities of Emergency Medical and Public Health Care Facilities to FICEMS. The committee agreed to investigate two of three recommendations and to help the TWG Preparedness Committee develop a response to the third.
- **Data and Research Committee** — Presented a draft of the *Gap Analysis of EMS-Related Research* to FICEMS and reported it was working with the National Institutes of Health to ensure that prehospital care research experts would be available to review prehospital research grants.
- **Preparedness Committee** — Reviewed the Target Capabilities List (TCL), selected priority measures from the TCL to include in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Capabilities Assessment Tool, and coordinated with the DHS Office of Health Affairs to begin a preparedness assessment process.

* Michael Stern, EMS training specialist at the United States Fire Administration (USFA), reported on the EMS provision of the USFA reauthorization. Section 9 of the Reauthorization Act of 2008 gives the U.S. Fire Administrator the responsibility and authority to:

- Access data and research information from sources available within the Federal Government;
- Provide a liaison to ensure coordination of administration activities related to EMS provided by fire-based services; and
- Study operations and management of fire-based EMS services and examine coordination between EMS and fire systems.

* Section 4 of the Reauthorization Act includes "Advanced Emergency Medical Services Training," and the National Fire Academy will:

- Create a definition of advanced emergency medical services;
- Examine, update, and replace existing course work, as necessary;
- Include "EMS" in the title of course offerings;
- Insert EMS scenarios and examples into existing course work, where appropriate; and
- Convene a steering committee in April 2009 to conduct a needs assessment and identify which courses should be offered.

* Dr. Joseph Wright, a member of NEMSAC, presented on NEMSAC activities.

* FICEMS members reviewed a draft of its 2008 report to Congress.

JUNE 2009

* FICEMS unanimously adopted a letter drafted by the TWG Preparedness Committee recommending that EMS be integrated into the National Health Security Strategy (NHSS).

* FICEMS supported the conduct of an EMS Stakeholders' Meeting to inform stakeholders of Federal EMS activities and provide a forum for stakeholders to present comments to Federal agencies.

* Robert Sumwalt, National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) member, presented on NTSB investigations into Helicopter EMS (HEMS) and a motorcoach crash in Mexican Hat, Utah.

- In February 2009, the NTSB conducted a four-day public hearing on HEMS.
- The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee held a hearing in April 2009 on HEMS.

- Based on its investigation of the motorcoach crash in Mexican Hat, the NTSB issued two recommendations to FICEMS:

- 1) Develop a plan that can be used by the States and Public Safety Answering Points to pursue funding for enhancements of wireless communications coverage that can facilitate prompt accident notification and emergency response along high-risk rural roads, as identified under SAFETEA-LU criteria, and along rural roads having substantial large-bus traffic (as defined by the criteria established in Safety Recommendation H-09-7 and Safety Recommendation H-09-4).
- 2) Evaluate the system of emergency care response to large-scale transportation-related rural accidents and, once that evaluation is completed, develop guidelines for emergency medical services response and provide those guidelines to the States. (H-09-5)

* FICEMS TWG committee chairs presented updates on their committees' work:

- **Medical Oversight Committee** — Finished a draft model for Prehospital Evidence-Based Guidelines Development that will be pilot-tested by the EMS for Children's National Resource Center.
- **Data and Research Committee** — Presented the completed *Gap Analysis of EMS-Related Research*.
- **Preparedness Committee** — Drafted a letter recommending EMS be included in the NHSS.
- **Assessment Committee** — Anticipates NHTSA will publish a Request for Proposal for a National EMS Assessment procurement by the end of June 2009.
- **9-1-1/Medical Communications Committee** — Will draft a response to the first NTSB recommendation issued as a result of its investigation into the Mexican Hat motorcoach crash.

* FICEMS approved priority activities recommended by the TWG. The TWG will draft work plans and submit them to FICEMS for approval.

For more information on FICEMS and its activities, please visit www.ems.gov.

NATIONAL 9-1-1 OFFICE

RECENT ACTIVITIES

* **9-1-1 Resource Center.** A cooperative agreement has been established with a team led by the Pennsylvania-based firm of L. Robert Kimball and Associates to create a 9-1-1 Resource Center. Kimball's partner in this effort is the National Emer-

gency Number Association. The Resource Center will make available a range of 9-1-1 information covering topics such as technology, operations, and governance. The Resource Center is currently seeking articles of interest to include in its information base. If you would like to contribute an article, please contact Laurie Flaherty for more information.

* **9-1-1 Grant Program.** The National 9-1-1 Office is charged with administering a grant program for the benefit of 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Points. With an appropriation of \$43.5 million, the office awarded grants to 30 States and Territories for implementation and operation of phase II enhanced 9-1-1 services and for migration to an Internet-protocol-enabled emergency network. For additional details on the 9-1-1 grant program, go to www.e-911ico.gov or contact Laurie Flaherty.

* **A National Migration Plan.** On September 25, 2009, "A National Plan for Migrating to IP-Enabled 9-1-1 Systems: A Report to Congress" was completed and delivered. As directed by the NET 911 Improvement Act, this document provides answers to 10 specific requests for information on national NG9-1-1 migration. Note that this migration plan is not a deployment plan with a prescribed design, timeline, or budget. Contact Laurie Flaherty for details, or view and download the full report at www.e-911ico.gov.

NATIONAL EMS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The National EMS Advisory Council was created to formalize NHTSA's long-standing collaborative approach to working with members of the EMS community, EMS consumers, and other EMS stakeholders. Since its April 2008 inaugural meeting, NEMSAC has been active in addressing national EMS issues and concerns. Look for news of the December 2009 meeting on EMS.gov. Highlights from other 2009 NEMSAC meetings follow.

JANUARY 2009

* John Becknell, publisher of *Best Practices in Emergency Services*, presented an overview of the *EMS Workforce Agenda for the Future*.

* Thomas Judge, NEMSAC member, presented on trends in air medicine and addressed current topics in safety and appropriateness of air medical transport.

* Skip Kirkwood, president-elect of the National EMS Management Association (NEMSMA), presented on the NEMSMA *EMS Management and Leadership Development in America: An Agenda for the Future*.

* Mike Stearn presented an overview of the National Fire Academy's "Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education Program."

* NEMSAC revised its committee reporting template.

APRIL 2009 TELECONFERENCE

- * **Finance Committee** — Presented an interim report on EMS finance and discussed recommendations with the council.
- * **Systems Committee** — Presented its interim report on EMS systems design.
- * **Education and Workforce Committee** — Presented its final report to the council recommending NHTSA continue to support adoption and implementation of the *EMS Education Agenda for the Future*.

JUNE 2009

- * NEMSAC adopted a position statement on including EMS in health care reform.
- * NEMSAC approved the safety committee's report on EMS worker safety.
- * **Finance Committee** — Presented an interim report on EMS finance and a white paper, "EMS Makes a Difference." The report and white paper recommend changes to the current EMS reimbursement structure, including provisions for payment without transport.
- * **Systems Committee** — Presented an interim report on guiding principles for developing EMS systems.
- * **Oversight, Analysis, and Research Committee** — Presented an interim report on EMS medical errors, patient safety, and establishing a "culture of safety" in EMS.

SEPTEMBER 2009

- * **Finance Committee** — Submitted the "EMS Makes a Difference" white paper as part of its formal report to the council. The council voted to adopt the committee's formal report; the white paper will be posted on www.ems.gov upon clearance by NHTSA.
- * Rick Patrick (DHS/OHA) and Gamunu Wijetunge (NHTSA/OEMS) — Conducted a panel presentation on current activities related to H1N1 and providing resources to EMS and 9-1-1.
- * **Safety Committee** — Submitted a provider safety position statement to the council. The council adopted the position statement as a council advisory.
- * **Systems Committee and Oversight, Analysis and Research Committee** — Submitted final reports and both were adopted.

For more information on NEMSAC and its activities, go to www.ems.gov.

NATIONAL EMS EDUCATION STANDARDS PROJECT

THE STANDARDS: ONLINE NOW

Completed in 2009 and posted to EMS.gov, the *National EMS Education Standards* define the minimal entry-level competencies for each level of EMS personnel as identified in the *National EMS Scope of Practice Model*. Eventually, the standards will replace the current DOT National Standard Curricula. The less rigid standards format supports diverse implementation methods and more frequent content updates.

Instructional guidelines (IG) for the standards have also been posted online. As content and minor implementation errors are identified in the IG, they will be posted online under a "corrections" link.

The posting of the standards represents yet another step toward realizing the vision of the 1996 EMS Agenda for the Future, as articulated in the *2000 EMS Education Agenda for the Future: A Systems Approach*.

For more information, please contact Dave Bryson.

NATIONAL EMS INFORMATION SYSTEM

PROGRESS REPORT

- * **Over 7 Million Records and Counting.** Development of a National EMS Database continues at the NEMSIS Technical Assistance Center (TAC) with 30 States now regularly submitting data. Since July 2009, an additional two States have been sending test data. The national database count currently tops 6 million records. Plus, at this writing, an additional 10 States are planning to submit data to the TAC by the middle of 2010.
- * **National Reporting System Expanded.** In spring 2009, the NEMSIS TAC expanded the National Reporting System to support State-specific reporting for all States submitting data to the National EMS Database. This additional functionality will allow States to benchmark data with similar State and national totals.
- * **NEMSIS Version 3.0 Dataset Posted.** The final draft of the NEMSIS Version 3.0 dataset is posted on the NEMSIS Web site (www.nemsis.org), with corresponding WIKI for submitting comments and/or suggestions for this revision. This new version of the dataset focuses more specifically on several time-sensitive conditions, such as trauma, stroke, STEMI, and cardiac arrest.

For more information, please visit www.nemsis.org.

NEXT GENERATION 9-1-1 INITIATIVE

In today's 9-1-1 communications, we have yet to see the promise of today's IP-based technologies fulfilled. However, the DOT Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) Initiative project represents the first step in moving our national 9-1-1 system out of the analog age and into the digital world.

Specifically, the goal of the NG9-1-1 Initiative is to define a system architecture plan that considers the responsibilities, costs, schedule, and benefits of deploying an NG9-1-1 system nationwide.

The final product of the U.S. DOT NG9-1-1 Initiative is a procurement toolkit. The toolkit is designed to help PSAPs and State and local 9-1-1 authorities:

- * Assess their current technology;
- * Plan for the update;
- * Acquire digital and Internet-protocol-based infrastructure; and
- * Evaluate the success of their deployment project.

To access the toolkit, go to www.its.dot.gov/ng911/index.htm and click on "Presentations and Publications."

The NG9-1-1 Initiative has been funded by the Intelligent Transportation System Joint Program Office. To learn more about NG9-1-1, please contact Laurie Flaherty.

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS

NEW! FICEMS STATE PAN FLU PREPAREDNESS REPORT

In 2008, the Federal Government initiated an assessment of State pandemic influenza plans. The resulting report, *Assessment of States' Operating Plans to Combat Pandemic Influenza: A Report to Homeland Security Council*, found State EMS and 9-1-1 integration plans for response to pan flu generally lacking. In response to this assessment, FICEMS directed its TWG Preparedness Committee to conduct a more detailed analysis. The resulting report, *State EMS System Pandemic Influenza Preparedness*, was published in December 2009. Visit EMS.gov to view the report.

H1N1 OUTBREAK — CDC GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

On April 23, 2009, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported seven confirmed cases of illness caused by a novel influenza A (H1N1) virus within the United States. In response to the developing situation, on April 25, CDC and OEMS staff brought together staff from FICEMS member agencies, subject matter experts from national EMS organizations, and medical directors of 9-1-1 systems to provide H1N1 recommendations

for EMS and 9-1-1. Based upon knowledge of H1N1 at that time, the CDC published its *Interim Guidance for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Systems and 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Points for Management of Patients With Confirmed or Suspected Swine-Origin Influenza A (H1N1) Infection*. Visit www.cdc.gov to access the document.

OEMS-NAEMSO GUIDELINES

In 2007, NHTSA OEMS, in conjunction with the National Association of State EMS Officials (NAEMSO), published the following two documents to help State and local EMS and 9-1-1 authorities plan for pandemic influenza. These two documents were extremely useful during the H1N1 pandemic:

- 1) *EMS Pandemic Influenza Guidelines for Statewide Adoption*
- 2) *Preparing for Pandemic Influenza: Recommendations for Protocol Development for 9-1-1 Personnel and Public Safety Answering Points*

To view these publications, please go to www.EMS.gov and click on "Pandemic News."

STATE EMS TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS

To date, 52 State, Territory, and Program EMS Assessments have been conducted, as well as 17 State EMS Reassessments. During FY 09, State EMS Reassessments were conducted in Nevada and Oklahoma. For more information on State EMS Technical Assessments, please contact Susan McHenry.

THE EMS WORKFORCE

COMING SOON! A "VISION FOR THE FUTURE"

NHTSA and its partners are leveraging the findings of last year's "EMS Workforce for the 21st Century: A National Assessment" report as they continue to draft the new EMS Workforce Agenda for the Future. Scheduled to debut in early 2010, this publication will provide a vision for the future of the EMS workforce. Look for it to post first on EMS.gov.

NHTSA-NIOSH: WORKFORCE SAFETY PROJECT

NHTSA is involved in ongoing efforts to improve the safety, health, and wellness of EMS workers, including collaborating with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to improve worker injury surveillance and ambulance safety. Currently NIOSH and NHTSA are collaborating to use the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) to collect nationally representative data on EMS worker line-of-duty injuries.

For more information on EMS workforce publications, projects, and issues, please contact Gamunu Wijetunge.

EMS TODAY 2010

VISIT US AT THE NHTSA EMS BOOTH

The staff of NHTSA OEMS is looking forward to hosting a booth at the 2010 EMS Today Conference & Exposition. This year's event is being held March 2-6, 2010, at the Baltimore Convention Center in Baltimore, MD. During regular booth hours, one or more of us will always be on hand to greet you and answer any questions you may have about NHTSA EMS initiatives or programs.

Plus, make plans now to attend the EMS Today "Advocates for EMS: EMS Policy Summit" Super Session on Thursday, March 4. Our own Office of EMS Director Drew Dawson will be co-presenting during the session.

See you in Baltimore!

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