



EMSUUPDATE

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Emergency Medical Services

WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA FOR EMS EDUCATION?

There's so much going on today with the implementation of the *EMS Education Agenda for the Future: A Systems Approach* (Education Agenda) that it sometimes seems overwhelming to keep track of its progress. One thing is certain: For implementation to be successful it is critical that **you**—the most important person in this process—are involved.

The most common question asked about the Education Agenda by today's EMS providers is, "How does the *Education Agenda* affect **me** and what I do every day in my community?"

This is a great question and the answers are in the following scenarios you are likely to encounter as EMS professionals:

Growing and fostering the profession

Perhaps there have been times in your career when you've had little or no success explaining that being an EMS provider is a **profession** and deserves to be considered on the same level as any other health profession such as being a doctor or a nurse. Wouldn't it be great if the national EMS education system could align itself more with that of the other health professions and that EMS would finally be recognized as a true profession with the potential for better career advancement?

Moving to a new State

You're an experienced EMS provider who needs to move to a different State. You want to get back to work quickly in the field you love. Even though you would have to complete background checks and State-specific requirements, wouldn't it be great if every State honored national EMS certification?

Helping during a disaster

Disaster strikes and there is a need for help. Wouldn't it be great if all levels of EMS personnel were more uniform across

the country so you could more easily share your skills in other States when disaster strikes?

Educating to improve our future

In addition to providing emergency medical care in your community, you may also instruct future EMTs and paramedics. Wouldn't it be great if your educational institution, in conjunction with State needs and requirements, could adapt the material to better address the specific needs of your system and your patient population?

WHAT MAKES THE EDUCATION AGENDA AN EFFECTIVE SOLUTION?

The *Education Agenda* includes five major components, a systems approach:

- * National EMS Core Content – defines the entire range of out-of-hospital practice from the most basic to the most advanced, and identifies the universal body of knowledge and skills for EMS providers who do not function as independent practitioners. (Completed)
- * National EMS Scope of Practice Model – defines and describes the entry-level knowledge, skills, and abilities of four levels of EMS licensure. (Completed)
 - 1) Emergency Medical Responder (EMR);
 - 2) Emergency Medical Technician (EMT);
 - 3) Advanced EMT (AEMT); and
 - 4) Paramedic
- * National EMS Education Standards – outline the minimal objectives to be achieved for entry into the four levels of practice outlined in the *National EMS Scope of Practice*. (Completed)
- * National EMS Education Program Accreditation – The Education Agenda recommends an individual must graduate from a nationally accredited EMS education program to be eligible for National EMS Certification.
- * National EMS Certification – the Education agenda recommends a single National EMS Certification Agency to ensure consistency and quality of EMS personnel.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What's on the Agenda for EMS Education.....	1
What Makes the <i>Education Agenda</i> an Effective Solution	1
Implementing the <i>Education Agenda</i>	2
Enhancing EMS Education — A Call to Action.....	2

The EMS stakeholders who participated in the development of the *Education Agenda* believe that:

- * An established national EMS education system will align EMS with other health professions and enhance the professional credibility of EMS practitioners.
- * *National EMS Education Standards (Education Standards)* should replace the National Standard Curricula to increase instructor flexibility and provide a greater ability to adapt to local needs and resources.
- * *Education Standards* will permit the introduction of new technologies and evidence-based medicine without requiring a full revision of the entire program of education.
- * The *Education Agenda* will assist States in standardizing provider levels across the Nation affording ease of reciprocity and greater opportunities for career growth in EMS.
- * National EMS certification standardizes verification of entry-level competency and supports EMS career mobility.
- * The *Education Agenda* defines an EMS education system that is national in scope while being responsive to local needs. It will foster consistency of provider levels across political jurisdictions.

IMPLEMENTING THE EDUCATION AGENDA

The Office of EMS has tasked the National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO) to develop an implementation strategy for the Education Agenda. NASEMSO has worked closely with all the national EMS organizations to identify potential

barriers to implementation and to develop possible solutions and examples of “best practices” to assist in the implementation of the *Education Agenda*.

To learn more about the NASEMSO effort and find useful online tools and resources, including talking points and FAQs, please visit: <http://www.nasemso.org/EMSEducationImplementationPlanning/index.asp>.

ENHANCING EMS EDUCATION — A CALL TO ACTION

All of us working within the EMS profession recognize the enormous debt of gratitude that we owe to our predecessors for the astounding progress that has been made during our professional lifetimes — in all aspects of the field, including education. We owe it to them, our patients, and ourselves to carry on the work they began in such a way that their pioneering vision will extend to the next millennium.

EMS education is currently at a crossroad in its evolution. To continue to advance EMS as a true profession, it is time to implement an education system on par with those of other health professions. The *EMS Education Agenda* will do that by creating an education system that will honor the foresight of our predecessors by outliving its architects and ensuring a viable and predictable future framework. Won't it be great?

Information on the *National EMS Education Agenda: A Systems Approach* and its five components are available by visiting www.EMS.gov and clicking on the “Education” tab on the top navigation bar. You can also contact Dave Bryson at dave.bryson@dot.gov or 202-366-4302.

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