



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
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JUDITH M. PERSICHILLI, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner

New Jersey Emergency Medical Services Council
September 14, 2022
Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order: September 14, 2022, 10:07 a.m. – Dr. Mark Merlin

Roll Call – Robert Karch

Approval of Previous Minutes –

- Motion by: **Andy Lovell**, Seconded: **Barbara Schreiberman**
- Discussion: None
- Motion to accept: **Yea: All Nay: 0 Abstain: 0**

Introduction of Assistant Commissioner – Dana Johnson

- Greeted the Council and provided comments

CDC-F – Heather Ogden

- Presented concepts of interactivity between NJ EMS stakeholders and CDC Foundation
 - Replacing law enforcement driven methods of tracking opiate overdose trends
 - Patients and providers can use the Reach NJ telephone system to access treatment, harm reduction strategies, and peer coaches
 - CDC-F will provide additional materials to leave with post-overdose patients as part of the naloxone leave-behind program
 - Timothy Seplaki confirmed that the NJ Department of Human Services has obtained naloxone to make available
 - Naloxone leave-behind kits have been delayed due to material shortages
 - Dr. Jay Stiefel asked if funding exists in the naloxone leave-behind effort for outpatient recovery or suboxone programs
 - Heather Ogden explained that peer support and state-funded recovery centers fill that gap
 - NJ counties have additional programs and funding streams
 - Jay Butterweck asked if the CDC-F efforts are intertwined with the 9-8-8 system, Heather Ogden replied that expansion may occur in the future

Miscellaneous Updates – Dr. Mark Merlin

- Next meeting December 14th, 2022, at 10:00 am. The location for this meeting will be the Middlesex County Fire Academy

Legislative Update – Robert Karch

- Confirmed that all attendees received the legislative update via email

Air Medical – Dr. Albert Ritter

- No report
- The next meeting will be after next the MICU Advisory Committee meeting

BLS Subcommittee – Andy Lovell

- The next meeting of the BLS Subcommittee will be this afternoon, September 14th, 2022
- Discussion had been held at previous BLS Subcommittee meeting regarding EMS use of body cameras or similar recording devices, along the lines of those used by law enforcement
 - Other states have been found to allow the use, and the intent was not to be punitive against crews, but to facilitate crew and patient safety
- Discussion was held regarding the practice of keeping paramedic units responding to calls where the patient intended to refuse medical attention and transportation to a hospital
- Continuation of previous discussions regarding safety concerns of LEO practices of restraining patients with handcuffs behind their backs
 - Andy Lovell requested that NJEMSC provide recommendations for alternative restraint positions
 - Candace Gardner clarified that LEO must ride with any patient that is restrained with handcuffs per N.J.A.C. 8:40-1(10)c
 - Dr. Barbara Schreiberman volunteered to draft a letter of recommendation for alterations of restraint procedures to NJOEMS
 - Dr. Stephen Vetrano asked if NJOEMS could waive restraint requirements and replace them with a best practice policy
 - Candace Gardner replied that a waiver is possible, but that reiteration of current regulation to law enforcement agencies would be more quickly proliferated
- Discussion was held regarding disposition of LEO firearms while in ambulances with patients in custody
- Daniel Kazar made note of increasing reports of weapons being found on patients by EMS after searches were performed by LEO

Training Fund – Dr. Stephen Vetrano

- Meeting was canceled due to lack of quorum
- Next meeting will be December 7, 2022

Communications - Joseph Burlew

- Motorola will be conducting a software update for the state's P25 radio system on September 27, 2022
- Next-gen 911 will be facilitated with 60-month leases of equipment and software by service providers
- Communications Leaders' courses will be conducted at the state level soon, date to be determined

- Urban Areas Security Initiative grant money in the amount of \$450,000 will be used to link the UASI computer-aided dispatch systems used by most NJ advanced life support (ALS) agencies to provide real-time tracking of ALS units
 - Implementation is planned to begin in October
- The 9-8-8 crisis number was soft launched in New Jersey on September 8, 2022

EMS for Children (EMSC) – Dr. Barbara Schreiberman

- Dr. Ernest Leva will replace Dr. Lisa Drago as the EMSC representative to the NJEMSC
- Three new initiatives have been identified as focal points for EMSC
 - Defining levels of pediatric emergency departments
 - Conduct a systematic evaluation of pre-hospital pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation
 - Conduct a retrospective evaluation of the use and proper application of automated external defibrillators at high school sports events

Trauma Center Council - Vacant

- No report
- Daniel Kazar noted that Dr. Adam Fox from University Hospital in Newark, NJ has been recommended to represent the Trauma Center Council at the NJEMSC

MICU Advisory Council (MAC) – Dr. Barbara Schreiberman

- Concerns were raised in reference to prior discussion of EMS use of body cameras with regards to patient privacy and modesty
- Dr. Gerald Carroll noted that aeromedical programs have not been sharing data amongst themselves
 - Dr. Barbara Schreiberman noted that the MAC would like to receive data on requests, cancellations, and both emergent and interfacility transportations
 - Eric Hicken explained that data is shared quarterly and distributed, but that the related council did not hold a meeting in the past quarter
 - Joseph Burlew stated that REMSC reports the data that the MAC is requesting to NJOEMS monthly
 - Daniel Kazar noted that not all data can be released due to HIPAA concerns
- Cooper University Health Care’s pre-hospital suboxone program had 174 patients, 35% of whom presented to their first scheduled clinic visit, and 25% of the total attended subsequent visits, despite transportation challenges

Specialty Care Transportation Unit (SCTU) Committee - Vacant

- The body of NJEMSC agreed that SCTU must have a representative at this council
- Dr. Mark Merlin stated that he would meet with Candace Gardner to discuss options for representatives

OEMS – Candace Gardner

- Dr. Adinaro resigned effective September 6, 2022
- Dr. Margaret Fisher is the Acting Deputy Commissioner of Health
- New NJOEMS staff Fatima Manzoor and Andrew Rivera were introduced
- All waivers issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have been revoked

- This includes the PPE waiver requiring full contact precautions on all patient interactions
- Current best practice is to follow the guidance of the CDC, OSHA, and individual facilities
- Agencies must send graphic schematics to NJOEMS prior to vehicle inspections to ensure compliance
- Vehicles must be up to date on MVC inspections
- NJOEMS inspections will be held at several locations throughout the state
 - Weekly at the Union County Fire/EMS Training Academy and the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center
 - Monthly at the Bergen County EMS Training Center
 - Bi-monthly at the Morris County Public Safety Training Academy
 - Other options are still being explored to expand inspection availability
- Inspections for agencies D-H are overdue as of July 1, 2022
- Inspections for agencies I-L will be due December 22, 2022
- All agencies' leadership information must be added to ImageTrend
- Cape Regional Medical Center has closed their obstetric services, including labor and delivery
 - Area agencies must be notified and made aware of the closest appropriate facility for OB/GYN emergencies
- Aeromedical Unit inspections are currently 51% complete
- Agencies can contact Timothy Seplaki at NJOEMS for naloxone leave-behind program registration
 - Naloxone leave-behind must be documented in the electronic patient care report
- NJOEMS is working with ePCR vendors for NEMSIS 3.5 migration by the first quarter of 2023
- EMS Conference attendee registration is now open, vendor and sponsor registrations both remain open, awards submissions are closed, and SIM Team competitions have a waitlist for both BLS and ALS
 - Pre-conference will be held on November 2, 2022, the conference proper will run from November 3, 2022, through November 5, 2022
- EMSC Newsletter will be published in October to include information on treatment of bone fractures in pediatric patients
 - EMSC is working on developing video education content
 - Continuing education units will be associated with EMSC training
- A virtual in-service for school nurses regarding active shooter response, behavior health emergencies, and medical emergencies will be held via GoToMeeting on October 13, 2022
- NJOEMS will be purchasing 600 child passenger car seats

EMS Education, Licensure, and Enforcement – Daniel Kazar

- There are no certification extensions for NJ EMS certifications
- Elective CEU classes must be submitted to NJOEMS at least 30 days prior to the first day of the training for review

- EMT Refresher classes must be submitted to NJOEMS at least 90 days prior to the first day of training for review
- There have been no changes to EMT renewal requirements in NJ
- EMT Instructor screenings will be held again on November 11, 2022, at Bergen County EMS Training Center, December 10, 2022, at RWJBH EMS in East Brunswick, and December 17, 2022, at Gloucester County EMS
- New CEU values of “canned” classes such as those offered by the National Association of EMTs are intended to be released by January 1, 2023
 - Intent is to reduce CEU value for classes that do not involve direct patient care considerations, such as ICS classes
- NJOEMS does not print or mail physical copies of certification cards
- Paula Weiler asked if NJOEMS has plans on improving the certification platform website
 - Daniel Kazar replied that NJOEMS is exploring options for improvement or replacement

New Jersey EMS Task Force – Michael Bascom

- The Task Force continues to aid in moving COVID-19 vaccine supplies as needed around New Jersey, approximately 715,000 doses of vaccine have been moved thus far
- Grant requests to fund assets used in their operations were submitted, and a request has been placed for the Commissioner of NJDOH to provide formal support of those requests
- After-action-reviews for deployments to Riverview Medical Center’s air conditioning failure, NJ forest fires, and the Newark water main break were conducted
- Mobile ambulance bus sustainment project was completed, with 20 buses repaired or upgraded as a bridge to replacement of those assets
- A full-scale NJEMSTF deployment drill is planned for October 22-23, 2022, at Hackensack Meridian Health Raritan Bay Medical Center – Old Bridge

Motion to Approve Committee Reports:

- Motion by: **Andy Lovell**, Seconded: **Stephen Vetrano**
- Discussion: None
- Motion to accept: **Yea: All Nay: 0 Abstain: 0**

Public Comment

- Mark Bober noted that NJAPP is presenting their Leading Edge conference virtually on October 19, 2022, and are adding BLS CEU eligible courses

New Business

- Greg Scott from the Medical Transportation Association of NJ provided comments
 - Noted staffing issues regarding EMT and paramedic shortages, exacerbated by high turnover rates
 - Requested recommendation from NJEMSC to the Governor’s office for funding to aid recruitment and retention campaigns
 - Dr. Stephen Vetrano noted that the EMTTF had a subcommittee for such considerations that has not met in six months or more

- Dr. Mark Merlin suggested that the EMTTF Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee provide such a recommendation to the Governor's office
- Michael Bascom noted that such a committee should involve input from legislature
- Andy Lovell inquired if there was a possibility for both the MAC and NJEMSC to meet on the same day, given the membership overlap between committees
 - Daniel Kazar replied that such a schedule adjustment would require changes to the respective council bylaws, and potentially require legislative changes

Old Business

- Nominating committee for the next Chairperson will be headed by Dr. Stephen Vetrano, with Dr. Barbara Schreibman and Michael Bascom
 - Nominees will be presented and voted upon at the next NJEMSC meeting on December 14, 2022

Next NJEMSC Meeting will be held December 14th, 2022, at the Middlesex County Fire Academy at 10:00 a.m.

Motion to adjourn: 11:54 a.m.

- Motion: **Andy Lovell** Seconded: **Barbara Schreibman**
- Discussion: None
- Motion to accept: **Yea: All Nay: 0 Abstain: 0**