

MEETING MINUTES 2/3/06

Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC)

Friday, February 3, 2006, 1:05p.m. – 4:15p.m.

Call to Order: Chair Edward M. Racht MD called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Members present included: Edward M. Racht MD; Marti VanRavenswaay; Vance L. Riley; Gary D. Cheek, RN, EMT; Mike Click, RN; Ronny Stewart, MD; F.E. Shaheen III, EMT-P; Joan Shook MD, Professor; Hector G. Longoria; Frederick N. Hagedorn MD; Shirley Scholz, RN, CCRN, EMT-P, CMTE and Pete Wolf, Vice Chair. Members absent: Kris J. Gillespie, Maxie Bishop, Jr. and Mario Segura, RN.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Marti VanRavenswaay, and seconded by Vance Riley, to approve meeting minutes from November 20, 2005. All council members were in favor; the motion passed.

Chair Report: Dr. Racht welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reported that the National Scope of Practice is being finalized with a few minor changes and will be available to the public soon. The Council will then begin a “next steps” dialogue with the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Two important items were included in the final draft: the standards outlined are a ‘floor’ upon which states can build, rather than a ‘ceiling’; and the inclusion of EMT-I as a certification level.

Dr. Racht stated that the GETAC Stroke committee that was established by Senate Bill 330 of the 79th Regular Legislature, chaired by J. Neal Rutledge, MD, was given its charge and will begin its work in May 2006. Dr. Racht reported that there was one change in the committee membership because of one person resigning.

Dr. Racht announced the new committee members appointed to the Education Committee, EMS Committee, Trauma Systems Committee, Injury Prevention Committee, Medical Directors Committee, Air Medical Committee, and Pediatric Committee. The new members will have three-year terms.

Dr. Racht discussed changes to the GETAC procedural rules, including “clean-up” language to reflect the addition of Air Medical and Stroke committees. He also announced the resignation of GETAC member Kris Gillespie and thanked her for her service.

Dr. Racht appointed Kelly Curry to take the lead on forming a task force to look over the operation of GETAC, GETAC procedural rules, structure, and size. Mr. Curry is to report back to GETAC at the May meetings.

Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Staff Reports: Richard Bays, Assistant Commissioner for the Division for Regulatory Services, reported that DSHS received a grant to purchase 77 automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) to distribute to state buildings and has sent a letter to state agencies inviting them to submit applications.

Mr. Bays reminded the audience that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) considers itself to be the last resort for hospitals and EMS providers seeking reimbursement for hurricane-related expenses because patient transports between facilities are subject to provisions provided by Medicaid, Medicare or other sources of insurance to prevent duplication of reimbursed benefits. This does not apply to patients treated in field hospitals and shelters. He also reported that the DSHS Regulatory Services Division recently conducted an internal survey to review which post-reorganization functions are working and what areas need improvement. DSHS Commissioner of Health Eduardo Sanchez MD will ultimately decide whether or not functional changes will be made within the Regulatory Services Division.

Mr. Bays also reported that DSHS has begun preparations for the next Legislative session by reviewing potential legislative changes and funding for the department that could be requested.

criminal background checks on 100 percent of all Medicare providers because of fraud issues; the Texas EMS Magazine's article in the next issue regarding deferred adjudication;

Kathryn Perkins, director for Health Care Quality Section (HCQS), reported that the Legislative requests from HCQS next year will include exceptional items, a review of performance measures, five percent budget cuts, and a review of Health and Safety Code (HSC) 773 for any updates that need to be done. Ms. Perkins reported that there would be criminal background checks on 100 percent of all Medicare providers because of fraud issues, and that the EMS Enforcement Review Committee would be conducting two review sessions per month to assist with case backlog. Texas EMS Magazine will publish an article in the next issue regarding deferred adjudication.

Steve Janda, director of the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems Coordination (OEMS/TS), gave an update of EMS and Trauma Systems funding programs and reported that 246 Texas hospitals had currently achieved trauma designation status: Level I-13; Level II-10; Level III-42; Level IV-181. He also reminded the Council that National EMS Week is May 14-20, and that Texas EMS Conference 2006 will be in Dallas.

Linda Jones, program manager of the Environmental Epidemiology and Injury Surveillance Group, reported on activities related to the EMS/Trauma Registry, including the availability of the Public Use Data File for 2003 hospital data. She described a new policy for making requests for data from the registry (available on the website at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/injury/registry>) and new criteria for accepting patient records into the registry.

Standing Committee/Task Force Reports:

Medical Directors Committee – In the absence of Chair Steve Ellerbe, DO, Dr. Fred Hagedorn reported that the committee discussed topics including follow-up information about patients to EMS providers by hospitals; Do-Not-Resuscitate (DNR) and the issue of EMS personnel able to honor only Texas DNRs; and the position paper, “What is a Patient?” Dr. Hagedorn commended the Pediatric Committee for its work on pediatric equipment list, but stated that the Medical Directors Committee recommended that the document be disseminated as a GETAC position paper rather than promulgated in rule so that local medical directors had the discretion to modify the list to fit local needs.

EMS Committee – Chair Pete Wolf discussed the first committee meeting where the pros and cons of creating an EMS Commission was the sole agenda item and stated that the committee recommends a task force be formed to further review the issue. Mr. Wolf reported that at the second committee meeting there was discussion about: EMS subscription services; personal protection standards for EMS personnel; developing a task force to review data quality in the Texas EMS/Trauma Registry; support for the Medical Directors Committee to develop a position paper for the pediatric equipment list; and the possibility that the EMS/Medical Director/Pediatric Committees could meet jointly. Mr. Wolf also reported that officials in Ohio are looking into using the *Elected Officials’ Guide* that the EMS Committee developed as a template for that state, adding that the guidebook is scheduled to be updated every two years.

Education Committee – Chair Jodie Harbert III reported that the Committee discussed and approved §157.43 Course Coordinator Certification; §157.44 EMS Instructor Certification; and §157.49 EMS Operator\Operator Instructor Training and Certification with minor changes. Committee members also discussed the HIPAA education requirements for EMS students doing clinical rotations in hospitals and the draft National Scope of Practice model. A letter was developed by the Committee regarding the EMS training level now required by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP) for basic structural firefighter certification. Mr. Harbert and Committee member Scott Mitchell signed it for the Committee, which then requested GETAC to submit the letter to the TCFP requesting a minimum educational requirement for firefighters to be completion of an ECA course and that certification should be maintained throughout the firefighter certification.

Trauma Systems Committee –Chair Ronny Stewart, MD, reported that the committee discussed: how to present standardized outcomes for trauma centers; Dr. Craig Daniel’s work group on physician reimbursement; single-system critical neuro patients being admitted to Level IV trauma facilities; and transfers-out of critical pediatric patients by Level I and II trauma facilities; and minimal trauma care capabilities for all licensed Texas hospitals.

Injury Prevention (IP) Committee –In the absence of chair Mario Segura, Committee member Gilbert Torres reported that the combined meeting of the Data, Informatics and Research Task Force (DIRT) and the Committee heard reports from Bob Folden PhD about the way EMS/trauma registries are funded in other states; and that the committee will hold a meeting to develop a strategic plan for the future.

Pediatric Committee –In the absence of Chair Joan Shook, MD, Muriel Lanford reported that the committee discussed the pending legal opinion from HHSC regarding pediatric facility designation and the link to dispro funds; the RAC pediatric objectives guidelines; and how to improve pediatric special needs during disasters.

Air Medical Committee – Chair Shirley Scholz reported that the committee recommends a task force be formed to further review the pros and cons of forming an EMS Commission; reviewed draft language regarding CAMTS accreditation or an alternate survey process for licensure and the adoption of CAMTS standards as state standards; drafting a letter to CAMTS seeking permission to use its accreditation standards as a condition for licensure; and the collection of data for the past three years on number of flights, number of patients, number of hours flown, and scene vs. inter-facility transports. The committee requested to have a joint meeting with EMS Committee at the May meetings to discuss subscription plans and other issues of mutual interest.

Stroke Committee –Chair Neal Rutledge, MD, reported that Dr. Racht presented the committee with its charge and that the committee subsequently discussed various deadlines to produce outcomes as directed in Senate Bill 330. He stated that the committee plans to have delineation of the issues and a rough draft of timelines for completion of various components of developing a state stroke system plan at its next meeting.

Comprehensive Clinical Management Program Task Force – Leigh Anne Bedrich, co-chair, reported ongoing progress toward implementation of the CCMP pilot project. The first scheduled survey will be in Arlington.

Other Reports/Public Comment on Action Items:

DSHS Preparedness Coordination Council – GETAC Liaison Leon Charpentier reported on a five point charge from the December meeting.

Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council – Todd Maxson, MD, reported that the council discussed strategic plans to overlap advocacy and that accurate data is needed to develop the plan.

DSHS Hospital Licensing Rules Review Workgroup – In absence of GETAC Liaison Jim Parisi, Kathy Perkins reported that rules package is going to the DSHS council meeting in March.

American Heart Association – Suzanna Summerlin reported on stroke patients and CPR. The AHA has approved the CPR Anytime training kit, a 22-minute CPR course developed for the lay person.

Texas Foundation For EMS\Trauma Care - Jorie Klein, RN, reported that the Foundation is moving forward with its bylaws and achieving non-profit status.

General Public Comment: Public comment was heard on a number of issues, including the concept of forming an EMS Commission; funding of the Designated Trauma Facility and EMS Account (Driver Responsibility Program); and the critical role of the Texas emergency healthcare/trauma systems during hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Action Items:

A motion was made by Vance Riley and seconded by Dr. Ronny Stewart with an amendment by Pete Wolf, to send a letter of support to encourage the Texas Fire Commission to require ECA certification in order to maintain firefighter certification from this point forward. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Pete Wolf and seconded by Gary Cheek to form a task force to examine and review the current state structure supporting the EMS/Trauma Systems to develop recommendations for improvement of the current structure or other alternatives that will better meet the needs of the EMS in Texas into the future. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Dr. Ronny Stewart and seconded by Shirley Scholtz to approve draft rules §157.43 Course Coordinator Certification; §157.44 EMS Instructor Certification; and §157.49 EMS Operator\Operator Instructor Training and Certification with minor changes recommended by the Education Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Gary Cheek and seconded by Pete Wolf to send a letter to US senators Kay Bailey Hutchison and John Cornyn, Governor Rick Perry, President George W. Bush and FEMA Secretary Michael Chertoff regarding the dangers of not reimbursing small providers and hospitals for hurricane expenses and how that will affect future responses to requests for help during disasters. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Vance Riley and seconded by Gary Cheek to approve the draft changes to the GETAC procedural rules. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Dr. Ronny Stewart and seconded by Gary Cheek to form a disaster and emergency preparedness task force. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Dates for 2006: May 17th-19th; August 9th-11th; and November 18th-20th, in conjunction with the 2006 EMS Conference in Dallas.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:16 p.m.