

National Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council Meeting

March 28 - 30, 2012

Executive Summary

Members in Attendance

Aarron Reinert, Chair
Arthur Cooper
Daniel Patterson
Dennis Eisnach
Gary Wingrove
James McPartlon
Jeff Salomone

Joseph Wright
Kenneth Miller
Kyle Gorman
Leaugeay Barnes
Linda Squirrel
Marc Goldstone
Matt Tatum

Ritu Sahni
Robert Oenning
Scott Somers
Terry Mullins
Troy Hagen

Federal Representatives in Attendance

Noah Smith, Acting Designated Federal Official
Office of Emergency Medical Services
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Meeting Proceedings – March 28, 2012

The National Emergency Medical Service Advisory Council (NEMSAC) met on March 28, 2012 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:34 p.m. EDT in Washington, D.C.

The first day of the NEMSAC meeting was dedicated to providing stakeholder input to the council on the *EMS Education Agenda for the Future: A Systems Approach (EMS Education Agenda)*.

NEMSAC Chair Aarron Reinert welcomed the audience and introduced the council. Drew Dawson of NHTSA's Office of EMS was not in attendance due to illness. Gamunu Wijetunge spoke on Mr. Dawson's behalf, telling the council and audience that the day's proceedings would center on the broad *EMS Education Agenda*. Mr. Wijetunge explained that NHTSA hoped for stakeholders to provide suggestions for changes on the education agenda, and that NEMSAC would send its recommendations to NHTSA.

Doctor Arthur Cooper presented the history of the *EMS Education Agenda for the Future: A Systems Approach*. Dr. Cooper's presentation highlighted the influence of the Flexner Report, first published in 1910, on shaping the education agenda, and how it took the medical community 50 years to reach all of Abraham Flexner's recommendations. Dr. Cooper then discussed the National Academies' report *Accidental Death and Disability* of 1966, which had an extensive section on ambulance services. Dr. Cooper also took time to credit Ken Threet, Jeff Michael, Rick Martinez, and Drew Dawson for helping to shape the first education agenda in 1996.

Dan Manz from the Vermont Department of Health's Office of Public Health Protection and EMS gave an overview of the *EMS Education Agenda*, and its influence on EMS training. Mr. Manz described the agenda's training model and explained that one issue with previous training models was that they allowed curricula to drive the scope of practice. Whenever new curricula were developed, the scope of practice would change to reflect new advancements in that area. The EMS education agenda advocated the creation of a set of core EMS standards that must be met, and shaped the scope of practice around them instead.

The next hour featured a series of speakers discussing the current implementation of the education agenda. Kathy Robinson from the National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO), Jon Krohmer of the National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP), Debra Cason of the National Association of EMS Educators (NAEMSE), George Hatch of the Committee on Accreditation of EMS Professions (CoAEMSP), and Bill Brown of the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) spoke on their experiences and the challenges and experiences in implementing the agenda up to this point.

The day's first panel tackled the subject of *EMS Education Agenda* implementation from a community perspective. Terry Devito, Lori Moore, Ed Mund, Maxie Bishop, and LTC Vincent Leto all provided their own personal experiences on implementation of the agenda, and provided lessons they had learned about the process.

After the panel spoke, there was a brief public comment period. Then, Kathy Robinson from NASEMSO discussed data from her organization's national implementation survey, indicating that the 81 percent of states that are currently implementing the scope of practice at the EMT level and the 77 percent incorporating the scope of practice model as a foundation for state licensure are doing so voluntarily, and that states are not being coerced or forced to do anything. Ms. Robinson also discussed the topic of waivers, and said that neither NASEMSO nor any other organization she was familiar with offered waivers.

Brian Norris of the San Antonio Firefighters expressed concerns that the implementation of a national education standard, which requires an increase in EMS's costs across the country, is at odds with the fact that municipalities are facing major budgets cuts. Gene McDaniel of the Professional Firefighters of Arizona also asked the council to consider the financial impact of implementation, in particular for municipal fire departments. Mike Ward from George Washington University thought the programs developed are impressive, but that not enough time is being spent developing proper staff to teach the programs. Connie Meyers of the NAEMT applauded states that are successfully developing a national education standard. Tim Hill, the president of the Professional Firefighters of Arizona echoed the concerns of Mr. McDaniel in regards to costs, and said that for small programs there are issues demographically and geographically.

The second panel discussed where the EMS community wanted to be in terms of whether the education agenda should be revised, and if so, what revisions should be made. Walt Stoy, Carol Cunningham, Dave Becker, Manuel Chavez, and Sue Prentiss sat on this panel.

There was a brief public comment period after the panel's discussion. Bill Brown of the NREMT said that the organization was looking to negate the need for refresher courses. Bruce Walls, professor and chair of emergency health services at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, urged the council to consider supporting research in the area of education delivery. Brian Norris of the San Antonio Firefighters said that as an EMS professional, he has provided quality care and stayed knowledgeable on the latest happenings in EMS, all without accreditation, the National Registry, a bachelor's degree, or secondary degrees. Mr. Norris said that he was frustrated that he and others like him are not considered professionals without these. He also felt that trying to solve the problems localities face with a single document was futile, as the only people who know the problems and solutions for a locality are the locality itself. Scott Bourne from the NAEMSE said that there is evidence that supports the conclusion that accreditation and instructor credentialing improved rates of student success. Ms. Cason said that there needs to be a major consensus on issues that affect the community clinically. Mr. McDaniel said that no one is against education, but felt the discussion needed to be considered through the lens of professional workforce development. Mr. Hatch said that accreditation works because it is peer-based.

The final panel discussion of the day involved next steps for the EMS education agenda. Rob Brown, Mike Touchstone, Dave Page, and Ed Racht sat on this panel, and discussed the potential impact EMS education could have on patient outcomes and the EMS profession.

As with the previous panels, there was a brief public comment period afterwards. Walt Stoy suggested that the timeline and dates that were originally included in the draft version of the education agenda be reintroduced.

The NEMSAC concluded the day by deliberating on the information of the day. NEMSAC Chair Aaron Reinert directed the Education & Workforce Committee to compile the input heard at the roundtable and start to frame the questions that the NEMSAC could discuss over the next year. Mr. Reinert said that all of the committees would be involved in the deliberations of this topic, but that the Education and Workforce Committee would begin to frame the conversation.

Meeting Proceedings – March 29, 2012

The second day of the NEMSAC meeting took place from 10:04 a.m. to 5:22 p.m. EDT. After introductions, the minutes from the December 2011 NEMSAC meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved with no changes.

Mr. Wijetunge then provided the update from the NHTSA Office of EMS. Mr. Wijetunge explained that the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) made a recommendation to FICEMS to develop helicopter EMS (HEMS) utilization guidelines, which the committee has done under the leadership of Dr. Rick Hunt of the CDC. Cathy Gotschall from NHTSA discussed the process of the creation of the HEMS evidence-based guidelines which is being undertaken by Children's National Medical Center and funded by NHTSA. Dave Bryson of NHTSA discussed studies on electric vehicles and their impact on EMS, and finally Susan McHenry of EMS discussed the current status of the National EMS Information System.

The federal partner update was provided by Tasmeen Weik, the Director of Research at HRSA's EMS for Children Program (EMSC). Dr. Weik explained the EMSC's activities, as well as the Pediatric Emergency Care Applied Research Network (PECARN). EMSC is primarily a grant making program and provides either state partnership grants, or targeted issue grants, which address EMSC program priorities and can cross state borders. PECARN conducts high-priority, multi-institutional research on the prevention and management of acute illnesses and injuries in children. Dr. Weik also shared with NEMSAC the data that EMSC has collected from its state grantees from its National Pediatric Readiness Survey.

Next, Mr. Wijetunge introduced Robert Bass, Executive Director of the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems and a member of FICEMS. Dr. Bass explained the history of the Model Uniform Core Criteria for MCI Triage (MUCC), and asked NEMSAC to provide FICEMS with input on what FICEMS's role in MUCC's implementation should be. The NEMSAC moved to have the topic discussed within the Systems Committee, with advice being discussed in May.

Sabina Braithwaite from the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) then discussed the current status of the draft EMS Culture of Safety Strategy, which is being funded by NHTSA. Dr. Braithwaite also discussed concerns over the NCSEMS model, and concerns of the use of "Just Culture." Draft three of the Culture of Safety Strategy will be released May 11, 2012. There will be a national review meeting in Washington, D.C. on June 19, 2012. Draft four will go before NEMSAC later in 2012, and the final draft to NHTSA will be sent May 15, 2013.

Mr. Reinert then asked for updates from NEMSAC committees. Kyle Gorman, chair of the Systems Committee asked Robert Oenning to present the committee's draft advisory on reducing the barriers to interstate credentialing and licensure for EMTs. The council adopted a motion to move the advisory from draft to interim, with minor changes made.

Matt Tatum, chair of the Education & Workforce Committee, then presented his committee's draft advisory on leadership and succession planning in EMS. After much discussion, Mr. Tatum agreed to make suggested changes to the advisory and present the advisory again the next day.

Mr. Gorman then had Scott Somers, a fellow member of the Systems Committee, present the committee's next draft advisory, on EMS as a public good. It was proposed that this topic should be considered as a potential white paper for the Emerging Issues project, which would be discussed the next day.

The public comment period began with Connie Meyer, the president of the NAEMT. Ms. Meyer discussed results from NAEMT's Near Miss program, which was just recently initiated. In less than a month there have been 24 patient safety reports, 38 percent of those being equipment related reports, 21 percent were medication errors, and 17 percent were procedural errors. Ms. Meyer said that individuals are becoming interested in reporting, and that the process should continue to be anonymous so EMS practitioners feel it is safe to report. Next, the council took a moment to read a written comment from Lou Lombardo. Mr. Lombardo's letter requested NHTSA, NEMSAC and FICEMS to consider several steps to increase motorist safety.

Ritu Sahni of the Medical Oversight and Research Committee presented the committee's draft advisory on next steps for pre-hospital clinical evidence-based guidelines. The council adopted a motion to move the draft advisory to final.

Daniel Patterson of the Safety Committee presented the committee's advisory on fatigue in EMS. Dr. Patterson asked for feedback on the document in hopes that it would be made interim at the next meeting. The committee applauded the draft advisory. Dr. Patterson thanked the council for its feedback and said he planned to have it discussed again at the next NEMSAC meeting.

Mr. Gorman discussed the Systems Committee advisory on evidence-based guidelines for EMS systems design. Mr. Gorman explained that revisions were being made on the document, and that the committee would have it ready for a vote the next day.

Meeting Proceedings – March 30, 2012

The third day of the NEMSAC meeting took place from 8:00 a.m. to 11:40 a.m. EDT. Troy Hagen of the Finance Committee presented the committee's draft advisory on an EMS system performance-based funding and reimbursement model. After much debate, the council adopted a motion to move the draft from draft status to interim status and requested that a white paper be developed on the topic. The motion was approved.

Kyle Gorman and Matt Tatum reintroduced both of the draft advisories they introduced during the previous day. The council approved both advisories to be moved from draft to interim.

Dr. Sahni discussed the EMS community's growing concern on the national drug shortage, and its effects on EMS. Dr. Cooper moved that the following position be adopted by the NEMSAC:

It is the position of the National Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration should work with the Federal Interagency Committee on EMS to inform the U.S. Government as widely as possible of the critical shortage of lifesaving emergency drugs necessary for the provision of EMS care.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Gorman and approved unanimously by the council.

Finally, the NEMSAC discussed potential topics for the Emerging Issues project. The council arrived at five topics it believed would be vital: EMS as an essential service, a comprehensive list of EMS functions and activities, fatigue, improving the EMS components of existing pediatric research networks, and community paramedicine.

Mr. Reinert requested a motion for the meeting to be adjourned. Motion was made, adopted and the meeting was adjourned. The next NEMSAC meeting will be held May 30-31, 2012 in Washington D.C.