



JANET T. MILLS
 GOVERNOR

MICHAEL SAUSCHUCK
 COMMISSIONER

J. SAM HURLEY
 DIRECTOR

WHITE PAPER			
White Paper#	Title		Date Issued
#2021-06-04-03	2021 MEMS Protocols and the 2019 National EMS Scope of Practice		June 4, 2021
Superseded	Released By:	Source(s):	Page(s)
N/A	Maine EMS	MDPB	2
Approved By:	Matthew Sholl, MD, MPH Maine EMS Medical Director		

The *National EMS Scope of Practice* represents one component of the federal government’s investment in the Nation’s EMS system. Born from the 1996 document, *EMS Agenda for the Future*¹, the *National EMS Scope of Practice*² helps the goal of establishing capabilities for EMS clinicians across the country. Similar to other professions in health care such as physicians, nurses, etc., the *National EMS Scope of Practice* sets the expectation that an individual trained to a specific EMS scope of practice in one part of the country has a similar foundation of knowledge and skill set to an individual trained to the same scope of practice in a different part of the country. Consistency across the country is essential in the development of a nationally competent EMS system. The National EMS Scope of Practice supports the goal of consistency by defining the foundational knowledge and skills that every EMS clinician at a given scope of practice is taught and credentialed in.

The National EMS Scope of Practice also describes the four levels of EMS licensure: Emergency Medical Responder (EMR), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT), and Paramedic. In combination with the *National EMS Education Standards*³, the *National EMS Scope of Practice* establishes the educational curriculum used across the country and sets the standard for National Registry certification.

Prior to the 2019 update, the *National EMS Scope of Practice* was most recently revised in 2007. In 2016, the National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO) contracted with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to convene a panel of Subject Matter Experts to revise and update the National EMS Scope of Practice. The panel was comprised of organizational representatives from the EMS and Fire communities, state EMS directors, state EMS medical directors, EMS educators, EMS

¹ EMS Agenda for the Future can be found at: <https://one.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/ems/agenda/emsman.html>

² The 2019 National EMS Scope of Practice can be found at:
https://www.ems.gov/pdf/National_EMS_Scope_of_Practice_Model_2019.pdf

³ The National EMS Education Standards can be found at: <https://www.ems.gov/pdf/National-EMS-Education-Standards-FINAL-Jan-2009.pdf>

● **Excellence** ● **Support** ● **Collaboration** ● **Integrity** ●

PHONE: (207) 626-3860

TTY: (207) 287-3659

FAX: (207) 287-6251

With offices located at the Central Maine Commerce Center, 45 Commerce Drive, Suite 1, Augusta, ME 04330

clinicians, and EMS researchers. The group used evidence-based approaches to identify gaps between the 2007 scope of practice and the current EMS practice, developing science, and community needs. For more information, please visit (<https://nasems.org/projects/ems-scope-of-practice/>).

In drafting the 2021 Maine EMS Protocols, the MDPB has embraced the *National EMS Scope of Practice* deliberately in an effort to maximize the skills and therapies at every level of EMS clinician in the state. The MDPB recognizes the vulnerabilities in the EMS work force locally and nationally and believes that one strategy to address the impact of work force shortages on the public's health is to maximize the potential capabilities at every individual scope of practice. In drafting the 2021 Maine EMS Protocols, the MDPB attempted to balance the goal of embracing the 2019 *National EMS Scope of Practice* and resultant benefits to the EMS system in Maine against the difficulty of disseminating or implementing a protocol change that is excessive. In that balance, the MDPB realized that the most substantive changes in the *National EMS Scope of Practice* occur at the EMT scope of practice. Maine EMS Clinicians will recognize that some of the changes in the 2019 National EMS Scope of Practice had previously been implemented in the Maine EMS Protocols (tourniquets at the EMR scope of practice, ondansetron or ETCO2 at the AEMT scope of practice). **The largest scope of practice changes in the 2021 Maine EMS Protocols occur at the EMT scope of practice and include the following:**

- 1) Administration of albuterol and ipratropium via nebulizer in patients with bronchospasm**
- 2) Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) for dyspneic patients**
- 3) Over the counter analgesics for patients suffering pain**

While seemingly small, these three changes are significant to the EMT scope of practice and will have substantive educational and logistical requirements/impacts on Maine's EMS system.

The MDPB is excited to work with the Education Committee, Maine EMS Staff, EMS Clinicians and others to implement these changes and others reflected in the 2021 Maine EMS Protocols. While these changes are exciting and scope of practice evolution of our collective EMS system is one small piece of the response to local and national work force shortages, the MDPB recognizes these changes require significant dedication and work. The MDPB is grateful to all who contribute to the improvement in our collective EMS system.