

NOVEMBER 2023

STAFF UPDATE

MAINE EMS



OVERVIEW

This publication is intended to provide members of the Board and interested parties insight into the work of the Maine Bureau of Emergency Medical Services office in the previous month. This publication is not anticipated to be exhaustive, but instead a high-level overview of the work that has taken place.

It should serve as a jumping point for conversations and questions from the Board regarding the ongoing work that is being performed throughout the state.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

J. SAM HURLEY, MPH, EMPS, NRP

These final days of October have been extremely challenging for EMS clinicians, emergency medical dispatchers, ambulance operators, public safety partners, and the people of Maine. The senseless violence of the mass shooting in Lewiston remains incomprehensible to many, especially in Maine. In addition to the shock of the murders, the uncertainty and fear associated with the ongoing manhunt compounds the added stress. I sincerely wish that each of you in our system and our communities is deliberately taking time to take a moment for yourselves and your families. Hugging and sharing our appreciation for those we love and care for while taking comfort in the knowledge that we will get through this together.

Please note that Maine EMS is here to support the system and will do so to the fullest extent of its capacity. Do not hesitate to reach out to our office if there is anything we can do to support you, your colleagues, and your family during this tragedy. As we have said many times over the past four years, it is okay not to be okay. The feelings that people are feeling -- anger, fear, sadness, anxiety -- are completely normal responses to a wholly abnormal event. Please do not hesitate to ask for support and resources to assist in the healing process for both yourself and those you love.

As I communicated to members of the Board in early October, I'm stepping away from the position of Director of Maine EMS. I have worked collaboratively with the Commissioner to continue supporting the Board and the incredible work of the Maine EMS staff temporarily until my position is filled. In anticipation of my departure, the Department of Public Safety published and advertised the position far and wide. The posting has subsequently closed, and I anticipate Commissioner Sauschuck, if available, depending on the status of the ongoing manhunt, will provide you with additional details of the selection process at the November Board Meeting.

The Maine Blue Ribbon Commission on EMS has reconvened as of October 23, 2023, and Deputy Director Roberts will represent the office. We are excited about the prospect of this Commission potentially addressing the meaning of what it means for EMS to be "essential" and to help introduce greater efficiencies to the existing structure of the EMS system, as was discussed by the Board in 2022.

Lastly, I want to add that it has been an absolute pleasure to serve as the Director of Maine EMS for the past four years. It has truly been one of the best experiences of my life -- thank you all for giving me this incredible opportunity to represent you and the amazing work that you do every day.





SYSTEMS OF CARE

The Statewide Pulse Point AED rollout continues as we are currently working on verifying current AEDs and obtaining marketing and social media information to distribute around the State. Work continues with out-of-hospital cardiac arrest run reports review along with the input of CARES data. The ongoing work continues with Dr. Zimmerman filling the remaining vacancies on the Trauma Advisory Committee and the Maine Stroke Alliance along with the continued work on the Statewide Trauma Plan in hopes that will be finalized in the near future.

EXPLORER PROGRAMMING

Over the next 3 weeks, the Explorer Team will be visiting each initial site to hold in-person Service and Mentor trainings. The goal of these trainings is to provide as many people as possible with the skills they need to be safe and successful in engaging with Explorers. We are working to offer as much support as possible to ensure that everything goes smoothly when students start signing up.

In addition, the JMG Learning Management System (LMS) team has begun creating the training videos for Explorers. We are very excited about these trainings, and look forward to having our first Explorer cohorts work through them!

COMMUNITY PARAMEDICINE

The Community Paramedicine Committee met on October 12, 2023. At the meeting, the committee finished reviewing a draft concept document regarding future CP rules. The committee has motioned to move the document to be reviewed by the rules committee. The committee also began work on two scope of practice documents for the Community Paramedicine Technician and Affiliate levels. These documents will be aligned with the Clinician scope, but have skills more aligned with the EMT and AEMT education levels. They will continue this discussion at their upcoming meeting on November 2, 2023.

The office has completed five contracts for RFA#202306130, the Healthcare Disparities Funding for Community Paramedicine and is in the process of completion with all other conditionally awarded agencies. The office had RFP# 202309204 go live on October 20, 2024. This RFP will support with CP education standards development. The office has also continued its ongoing work with the Cutler Institute. They have provided the office with a draft Key Informant Interview report. They have also continued their ongoing work on the cost avoidance analysis framework. The office continues working collaboratively with OMS towards reimbursement and presented to DHHS leadership on the key updates regarding Community Paramedicine within the past year.



ADULT VR TRAINING PROGRAM UPDATE

The VR Training Program visited Eastern Maine Community College in October to hold a train-the-trainer that brought VR opportunities to 4 different services. In November, we will be teaching similar classes at Mount Desert Island and the Atlantic Partners EMS conference. Those who complete these train-the-trainers will be able to borrow the Maine EMS VR headsets and conduct their own trainings. Reach out to Anna Masefski at MEMS.VR@maine.gov to schedule a training and learn how to use these exciting educational tools!

MEFIRS

Work continues on an education course about the NEMSIS 3.5 transition. We have coordinated with several EMS agencies to provide course feedback. This process has concluded, and the course has been updated and is ready for publication on MEMSEd. We have added some updates to the Maine EMS website for stakeholders interested in learning more about MEFIRS.

We are hosting weekly MEFIRS Open Forums to assist EMS agency leaders in transitioning to NEMSIS 3.5. The Open Forums will occur every week on Tuesday, until Nov 28, 2023, at 1400. Scan this QR code to add the meeting series to your calendar:



We have posted the recordings of our previous open forums on the Maine EMS YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/maineems>

E-LICENSING

Service Renewal applications opened on October 2. Influenza and COVID-19 Reporting workflow is built into the service renewal application. We have also added a component to learn more about EMS agencies' bariatric patient handling capabilities. As of October 20, 2023, 136 EMS agencies have begun the renewal process, and 44 of those EMS agencies have completed the process and renewed their EMS licenses. We are working with Image Trend on mapping our current CEH hours in the eLicensing system to NCCP topic hours, where we can determine the most appropriate mapping of the topics from the current Maine EMS topic hours to NCCP topic hours. We will need to take the portion of the public portal for education items down during the last week of November to perform the update. The site will be back up and running on November 1, 2023.



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Quality Improvement Newsletter
EMS Transport Safety
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SUD TEAM UPDATE

Megan Salois, the SUD Program Manager will be transitioning out of her role effective November 12, 2023. She looks forward to continued collaboration with the Maine EMS in the future as well as a continued advocate for substance use treatment and de-stigmatization in the state of Maine. The SUD team has a tremendous amount of knowledge, skill and passion and will continue on their work under Deputy Director Roberts.

SUD PROGRAMMING

Effective August 31, 2023 the first pilot phase of the Ambassador program was concluded, resulting in over 100 unique EMS clinicians across 25 EMS agencies participating in educational discussions with our Ambassadors. Educational discussions primarily focused on the overview of SUD programming, stigma and the Naloxone Leave Behind programming. With the outreach work of the Ambassadors, the Naloxone Leave Behind training and program showed an increase in adoption and further inquiries to connect with our SUD team about upcoming initiatives. The SUD team is working closely with the CDC team who oversees the Prevention of Drug Overdoses Grant (PDO Grant) to assist in the next round of Ambassador programming launch; this next launch would be expanding the role of Ambassadors to incorporate more education about addiction, the OPTIONS program and the MOUD program with a goal of initiation in Spring 2024.

The Naloxone Leave Behind Program continues to grow, and has shown a much greater increase in agency adoption since the launch of the SUD Care Ambassadors this July. Prior to the Ambassador programming, only 24% of Maine EMS agencies were enrolled in the Leave Behind Program; since that time, over 30 more agencies have enrolled bringing us to 35%. While this growth is encouraging for the timeframe, it continues to be imperative that EMS agencies work towards onboarding their clinicians and services prior to the Naloxone Leave Behind Standard of Care Protocol going into effect on December 1, 2023. This date fast approaches so our SUD team will continue outreach efforts to provide education and support to EMS agencies and clinicians. Additional operational bulletins will be launched over the next several weeks to offer a reminder as well addressing frequently asked questions to provide continued support. Our team is available for in-person or virtual meetings with agencies to provide support as well during this time. The Leave Behind Initiative has continued to demonstrate its efficacy, with a rate of less than 1% mortality of a subsequent overdose when Naloxone is left behind.

The SUD team celebrates our first Maine EMS direct referral to OPTIONS within our pilot phase. While this program has had a slow but steady beginning, our team has spent a great deal of time communicating with EMS agencies and other stakeholders about the value of direct referral and bridging the connection between our EMS clinicians and behavioral health resources in Maine. The SUD team is continuing the pilot phase with the OPTIONS referral at this time with agencies around the state, to collect as much data as possible to guide the expansion of this referral pathway while working with the OPTIONS program expansion. The OPTIONS program is increasing their staffing around the state to respond to the high volume of needs related to SUD and other social service needs, and remain an active partner in this referral pathway.

SUD PROGRAMMING CONTINUED

Due to a lower response than anticipated in the first RFP round, the SUD team has re-posted the RFP for Medical Direction Support which will close in November. The MOUD program serves as the apical and most complex plane of SUD programming for Maine EMS, and the Medical Direction Support will be an integral partner in this program development. The goal will be to launch this pilot program next year in late spring or early summer 2024.

EMS FOR CHILDREN

The Maine EMS for Children Advisory Committee will hold its quarterly meeting on October 27, 2023 at 0900. This is a change from the original September date.

We continue work on the national aims for EMSC and how to incorporate into Maine EMS efforts. Marc continues as Chair as the National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO) Pediatric Emergency Care Council and national efforts around safe pediatric transport, and a variety of national goals and work projects. Marc was also recruited and asked to co-chair the Maine State Perinatal Quality Collaborative, which aims to optimize perinatal health outcomes and experiences for all Maine families through collaboration, education, and continuous quality improvement. Efforts are aimed primarily at pregnant people and newborns.

Marc attended the NASEMSO Eastern US regional meeting in Syracuse, NY and met with Eastern states and EMSC managers to collaborative and share ideas and efforts. He was also invited to present at the NEW York State EMS Conference on pediatric assessment.

We have reviewed a number of trauma cases involving pregnancy and are beginning efforts with stakeholders to improve usage of seatbelts in pregnant people. We are also reviewing a recent state report on pediatric restraint in private vehicles and hope to release a summary soon.

We are working on finalizing work with MCD Global on developing a multipart education series (for MEMSEd) on responding to, assessing, and transporting pediatric patients with behavioral health emergencies and underlying conditions. This program will offer education from clinicians, family members, and various subject matter experts and will include CEH hours upon completion. We are assisting the Department of Education on proposed rules for CPR instruction in schools, bus accidents, and other school emergencies. We are also meeting with the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety, examining data on seatbelt usage in pregnant mothers and injuries from lack of use. We aim to provide statewide education to reduce injuries and deaths from lack of seatbelt use during pregnancy.

The EMSC program continues work with the Maine State Perinatal Committee, the Maine AAP regarding hospital pediatric readiness, and a variety of other pediatric topics.

