



**National Association of State EMS Officials**

201 Park Washington Court • Falls Church, VA 22046-4527 • [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org)  
703-538-1799 • fax 703-241-5603 • [info@nasemso.org](mailto:info@nasemso.org)

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** State EMS Directors

**FROM:** Dan Manz on behalf of the EMS Education Agenda for the Future Implementation Committee

**RE:** Implementation Update

**DATE:** May 12, 2008

As we approach our mid-year meeting, a lot of activity has been underway at local, state and national levels to move towards implementation of the *EMS Education Agenda for the Future: A Systems Approach (Education Agenda)*. We wanted to take an opportunity to update you about some of the efforts we are aware of and some of the implementation initiatives we are planning.

I encourage you to go back and read the actual language of the *Education Agenda*. This document was developed by our Association and is supported by nearly every other major national EMS organization in the country. It was developed in response to our Association's observations and perceptions about how a true national system of EMS education could be built and who would have to take which steps for that to be accomplished. As states continue their preparations to implement the *Education Agenda* we should not lose sight of the origins of this document and how we will only achieve the vision of a national EMS system of education if each of us works collectively at the state level to align our educational systems.

**Overview-** The *Education Agenda* was developed after the release of the 1996 *EMS Agenda for the Future*. The *Education Agenda* is intended to address a number of issues with the existing approach all states have taken with EMS education. The opportunities for improvement identified included:

- There is not an established national EMS education system or master plan;
- The National Standard Curricula were driving the scope of practice for EMS providers (rather than vice versa);
- The National Standard Curricula were highly prescriptive and included detailed declarative material that limited instructor flexibility and the ability to adapt to local needs and resources;

- The quality of EMS education varies widely throughout the nation. Adherence to the National Standard Curriculum is not ensuring quality;
- The appropriate disciplines are not appropriately involved in the EMS education process- Physicians and regulators are making educational decisions, Educators and regulators are making medical decisions, and Physicians and educators are making regulatory decisions;
- The participation of the various stakeholders in the educational process is not clear;
- The names of EMS provider levels vary considerably by state;
- EMS provider licensure standards vary considerably by state;
- EMS educational program standards and the processes for obtaining state approval to conduct EMS education vary considerably;
- EMS education is based on perceived need rather than practical analysis and research;
- The content of the National Standard Curricula are perceived to be determined by a federal contractor. These Curricula are frequently out of date and not in a standard format. The Curricula development process is expensive and tends to fragment the EMS community;
- Most state authored EMS licensure examinations do not follow the accepted methodology for verifying entry level competence; and,
- National EMS certification will be based on up to date practice analysis and will follow accepted psychometric methodology for identifying entry level competency.

The *Education Agenda* includes five basic elements:

- **National EMS Core Content-** This document is complete and was created with primary leadership from EMS physicians.
- **National EMS Scope of Practice Model-** This document is complete and was created with primary leadership from our Association.
- **The National EMS Education Standards-**This document is nearing completion with leadership from the National Association of EMS Educators. **There is still time for input and comment on the current draft.** This document will be completed later this year and submitted to NHTSA. NHTSA will expedite the internal review process and anticipates the final release in January 2009.
- **National EMS Program Accreditation-** The *Education Agenda* calls for a single national EMS accreditation agency. The *Education Agenda* also calls for a graduated phase in plan to be developed. The NASEMSO will need to have further dialogue with accrediting bodies on how this vision can best be accomplished.
- **National EMS Certification-** The *Education Agenda* calls for national EMS certification to be conducted by a single independent national agency under the leadership of a board of directors with multi-disciplinary representation. Graduation from an accredited program will be required for national EMS certification and state licensure.

**The Role of NASEMSO-** States have the primary responsibility for protecting citizens served by EMS personnel and agencies through various mechanisms including licensure. We achieve this role through partnerships and collaboration with other stakeholders at local, state, and national levels. Because of this common and important function, our Association has taken the lead in coordinating implementation of the *Education Agenda for the Future*.

At the fall 2007 NASEMSO annual meeting, this committee provided an update of implementation steps. We conducted a survey of the states to assess where we were as a nation in preparations to implement the *National EMS Scope of Practice Model* as well as other attributes of the *Education Agenda for the Future*. The data from that survey turned out to be of great interest to a number of our partners including CoAEMSP, NREMT, the text publishers and others. As we continue implementation efforts nationally and within our individual states, it is clear that information updates and sharing is one of the critical roles we are best positioned to play.

### **What is new on the implementation calendar?**

1. Between now and our mid-year meeting, this committee will be hosting a webinar for State EMS Directors and other State EMS office staff. The goal will be to bring everyone up to date on the direction our Association is taking with *Education Agenda* implementation activities and resources available to each state.
2. We will be having a presentation at the mid-year NASEMSO meeting about *Education Agenda* implementation. We plan to update the “dot” survey (i.e. 2007 NASEMSO Annual Meeting survey, click [here](#) to view results) of where states are with implementation planning based on up to the minute information from some of our implementation partners.
3. Between the mid-year meeting and the annual meeting of our Association, we are planning a series of webinars and face to face meetings for stakeholders in the states. Our plan is to create opportunities for State EMS offices to bring their constituents together in a single location to hear the steps necessary for *Education Agenda* implementation, ask questions, coordinate at the state level and build momentum for changes that may need to occur within the state.
4. Between the mid-year and the annual NASEMSO meeting, the members of the *Education Agenda* Implementation Committee are available for one on one consultation and visits to stakeholder meetings in states if requested.
5. By September 30, 2008, the National Association of EMS Educators will complete their work on the EMS Education Standards. This will be delivered to NHTSA.
6. Before February 2009, NHTSA will release the final version of the Education Standards.

One date that has been and continues to be unknown is when the publishers are likely to release text and other educational materials keyed to the new EMS Scope of Practice Model and the Educational Standards. Our committee met with the publishers recently at EMS Today to discuss likely timeframes. While none were willing to commit to firm dates, a couple of factors were common to all of them;

- ▶ Each of the publishers identified the early 2010 release of new national guidelines for cardiac care by the AHA as a major driver of their publication schedule. It was clear that none of the publishers intended to release a version of their texts with the new Educational Standards and SOP Model until after the AHA guideline process is completed.
- ▶ Each of the publishers identified an internal timeline of about two years to bring an updated text to publication. While none would commit details about when that timeline actually starts, it sounded like the earliest we might expect new text materials to be available would be in the late 2010 or into 2011 range.

There are many components of implementation in motion. We know that many states are considering the implications of achieving national program accreditation for Paramedic programs. Our Association staff has recently circulated additional information about the accreditation process. We anticipate CoAEMSP participation in our mid-year meeting discussions.

More information about the upcoming webinar and our mid-year meeting will be coming shortly. If you have questions in the interim, please feel free to contact myself or any other member of the committee at any time.

Dan Manz, Chair, VT State EMS Director

[dmanz@vdh.state.vt.us](mailto:dmanz@vdh.state.vt.us)

Fergus Laughridge, NV State EMS Director

[flaughridge@health.nv.gov](mailto:flaughridge@health.nv.gov)

Shawn Rogers, OK State EMS Director

[shawnr@health.ok.gov](mailto:shawnr@health.ok.gov)

David Taylor, AR State EMS Director

[david.taylor@arkansas.gov](mailto:david.taylor@arkansas.gov)

Carol Cunningham, MD, FACEP, State EMS Medical Directors Member

[docmaynard@earthlink.net](mailto:docmaynard@earthlink.net)

Tawni Newton, State EMS Training Coordinator Member

[newtont@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:newtont@dhw.idaho.gov)