

Interfacility Transport of a Patient with a Special Pathogen Infection Executive Summary for Capabilities Assessment

The National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO) received funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) to conduct and document an assessment of capabilities for the interfacility transport of patients with a suspect or confirmed infection with a special pathogen. The target population for the assessment is EMS Directors from states, U.S. territories, and the three cities directly funded by ASPR for Emergency Support Function #8 Health and Medical Services preparedness activities.

Methodology:

NASEMSO conducted a literature review to better understand the work that had already been done in regards to EMS transport of special pathogen patients and review the findings from previous surveys related to this topic. Next, an Expert Panel comprised of representatives from 12 stakeholder agencies and ASPR was consulted to identify critical metrics for inclusion in the assessment. Finally, NASEMSO assembled a five member Work Group of stakeholders to develop the actual assessment tool and report of findings.

Results:

A 44 question assessment was developed, with many of the questions being multi-part. Questions were organized into six categories: Introduction; Scope of Plan; Concept of Operations; Direction, Control, and Coordination; Communications; and Finance and Administration. The content of the questions largely mirrors the content contained in the *Special Pathogen Patient Interfacility Transport Plan Template* that is being developed as part of the larger project funded by ASPR.

A pilot of the assessment was conducted with a small group of state EMS Directors and the assessment tool modified to reflect feedback received.

In an effort to provide EMS Directors with time to research the answers to assessment questions, a PDF version of the assessment was e-mailed to Directors in late July 2017. Two weeks later, a link to the assessment survey in the web-based survey tool, SurveyMonkey, was e-mailed to the Directors. Directors who did not complete the assessment within the initial three week period were sent follow-up e-mails and given an additional week to complete it. Individual calls were made to those Directors who had still not finished the assessment after four weeks and the deadline was extended one more week. At the official close of the assessment survey, 50 of the 59 (85%) EMS Directors for states, territories, and directly funded cities had completed it.

The analysis of assessment results and documentation of findings is currently underway. The official report is expected to be released in February of 2018.

