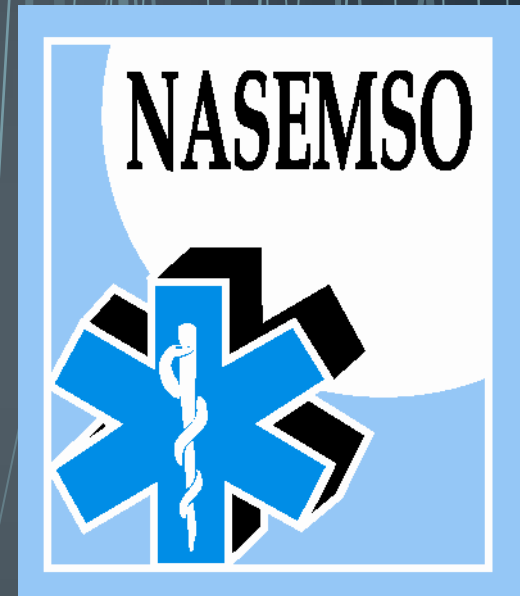


Specialty

Certification in EMS

National Association of State
EMS Officials



A “Vision” for Out-of-Hospital EMS

“EMS of the future will be community-based health management that is fully integrated with the overall health system.”

EMS Agenda for the Future (1996)

EMS Agenda for the Future

- Identify and modify illness and injury risks
- Provide acute illness and injury care and follow-up
- Contribute to treatment of chronic conditions
- Community health monitoring

EMS Agenda for the Future

- Integrated with other health care providers and public health and public safety agencies
- Improve community health
- Result in more appropriate use of acute health care resources

EMS Education Agenda: A Systems Approach

- Core Content
- National EMS Scope of Practice Model
- National EMS Education Standards
- National EMS Program Accreditation
- National EMS Certification

National EMS SOP Model on Specialty Certification

- “Specialty certifications may be used to respond to local needs for flexibility or to recognize continuing education.”
- Recommended considerations: skills, practice environment, knowledge, qualifications, services provided, needs, risk, level of supervisory responsibility, amount of autonomy and/or judgment/critical thinking/decision making.

National Health Policy Forum

Health Professions Education and Professional Obligations, April 30, 2012:

- Accreditation
- Licensure
- Board Certification
- Credentialing

Certification or Licensure?

- Confusion between the terms “certification” and “licensure” arises because many states call their licensure processes “certification,” particularly when they incorporate the standards and requirements of private certifying bodies in their licensing statutes and require that an individual be certified in order to have state authorization to practice.

http://www.nremt.org/nremt/about/Legal_Opinion.asp

Certification or Licensure?

- Regardless of what descriptive title is used by a state agency, **if an occupation has a statutorily or regulatorily defined scope of practice and only individuals authorized by the state can perform those functions and activities**, the authorized individuals are licensed. It does not matter if the authorization is called something other than a license; **the authorization has the legal effect of a license.**

http://www.nremt.org/nremt/about/Legal_Opinion.asp

Emerging EMS Roles

- Community Health
- Tactical EMS
- Critical Care Transport
- Specialty Care Transport
- Wildland Fire
- Occupational Health
- Public Health

Specialty Certification in Health Disciplines

- Not an entry level position
- Voluntary process
- Educational requirements
- Defined practice settings
- Range of experience
- Added skills
- Competence to perform

National EMS SOP Model

- *An “Interdependent Relationship Between Education, Certification, Licensure, and Credentialing”*
- Represents a foundation for states to establish their own scopes of practice
- A few states already exceed the model

National EMS SOP Model

Education

- Cognitive, psychomotor, and affective learning
- Entry-level and continuing professional education
- Formal and informal learning

National EMS SOP Model

Certification

- External verification of the competencies
- Typically involves an examination process
- Designed to verify that an individual has achieved minimum competency to assure safe and effective patient care

National EMS SOP Model

Licensure

- Permission granted to an individual by the State to perform certain restricted activities
- Scope of practice represents the legal limits of the licensed individual's performance

National EMS SOP Model

Credentialing

- Local process by which an individual is permitted by a specific entity (medical director) to practice in a specific setting (EMS agency)

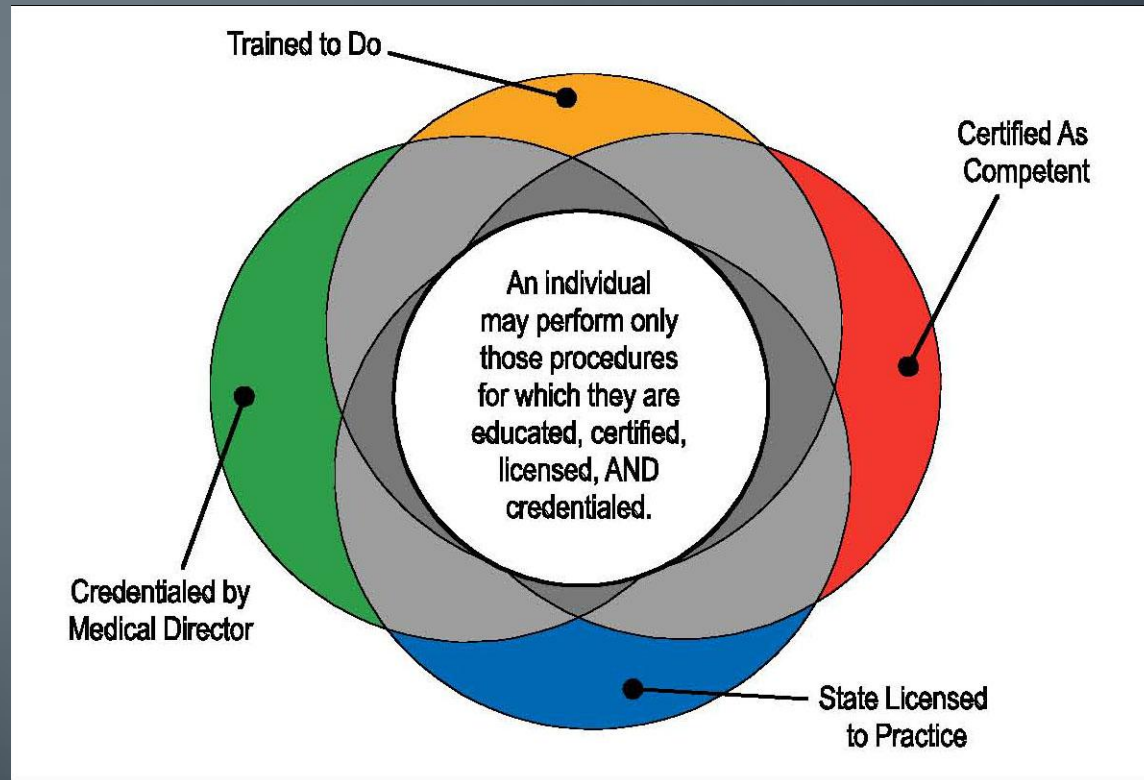
Scope of Practice Considerations

An individual may only perform a skill or role for which that person is:

- educated (has been trained to do the skill or role), AND
- certified (has demonstrated competence in the skill or role), AND
- licensed (has legal authority issued by the State to perform the skill or role), AND
- credentialed (has been authorized by medical director [or other practice authority] to perform the skill or role).

Adapted from National EMS SOP Model

Interdependent Relationship Between Education, Certification, Licensure, and Credentialing



Defining Expanded Scope

- Evidence based standard of care
- Interdisciplinary input
- Community needs
- Practice blueprints
- Medical direction
- Appropriate education
- Supervised preceptorship
- Competency and evaluation

Defining Expanded Scope

- Health, home, and safety assessments
- “Treat and release”
- Immunization and/or prophylaxis clinics
- IV hydration
- Advanced pharmacology
- Limited laboratory analysis
- Referrals

... more?

Critical Decision Making

- To what level can the practitioner classify an individual's condition into categories that allow medical decisions about treatment and prognosis to be made?
- To what level can the practitioner implement medical decisions about treatment without consulting medical direction?
- To what level can the practitioner perform assessments and skills competently?

Defining Advanced Practice

- A 2005 Federation of State Medical Boards report defined scope of practice as the “Definition of the rules, the regulations, and the boundaries within which a fully qualified practitioner with substantial and appropriate training, knowledge, and experience may practice in a field of medicine or surgery, or other specifically defined field. Such practice is also governed by requirements for continuing education and professional accountability.”

True Advanced Practice

- Minimum of graduate-level education
- Expert knowledge base
- Complex decision-making skills
- Clinical competencies for expanded practice
- Characteristics of which would be determined by the context in which s/he is credentialed to practice

ALS Expanded Scope ...or Advanced Practice?

- Heart-lung bypass support, ventricular assist devices, vasopressors, management of arterial lines/pulmonary artery catheters, central venous monitoring, transfusion and volume expansion, extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, fetal monitoring, ventilator management, and high-risk obstetrics...

ALS Expanded Scope ...or Advanced Practice

- Could be either depending on state regulations and the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the practitioner!

State Regulation of Health Professions

Primary purpose of regulation:

Protecting public health and patient safety

State Regulation

EMS Considerations on Specialty Practice

- Capacity of regulatory agency to define/modify practice
- Maintaining the integrity of community 9-1-1 response
- Sustainability

State Regulation

EMS Considerations on Specialty Practice

- What will the state set as minimum experience requirements before specialty certification can be pursued? How will it be measured?
- Maintenance of the specialty certification should not be required to maintain the underlying license
- Where/how will entry level and continuing education standards be developed?

State Regulation

EMS Considerations on Specialty Practice

- Will states have to dictate/constrain practice settings in rules or leave that to employers?
- How will scope of practice be determined?
- How will states handle variables in SOP for EMS personnel that transfer from another state?
- How will initial and on-going competency be assessed, and will the mechanism be reliable, validated, and legally defensible?

Discussion of Possible Strategies



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