



# Washington Update

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**March 23, 2010**

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**1. WARNING to EMS First Responders: Self-Inflicted Hydrogen Sulfide Suicides on the Rise**

Several apparent suicide deaths related to mixing common household chemicals have been reported by local media in the past year. This alarming news follows on the heels of 517 suicide deaths reported in Japan throughout 2008 attributed to inhaling hydrogen sulfide gas created by mixing household detergents. In 2009, one incident in San Jose, CA resulted in a hazardous materials lockdown of the hospital, diversion of incoming ambulances, and decontamination of nearly 100 persons that included rescuers. Ad hoc internet sites are felt to be responsible for disseminating harmful information related to mixing chemical products for this purpose. While there is no cause for widespread panic, symptoms can mimic carbon monoxide poisoning and EMS responders are encouraged to approach any closed, suspicious vehicle with extreme caution. An excellent and valuable training session for EMS responders is available at [https://www.responsetechnologies.com/SCFD/H2S\\_suicide/player.html](https://www.responsetechnologies.com/SCFD/H2S_suicide/player.html). NASEMSO sincerely thanks the Sarasota County Fire Dept for access to this link. The following information is also available:

**ATSDR (CDC):** [Medical Management Guidelines for Hydrogen Sulfide](#)

**eMedicine:** [Toxicity, Hydrogen Sulfide](#)

**WISER:** [Hydrogen Sulfide](#)

**NIOSH:** [Hydrogen Sulfide](#)

**ERG:** [Guide 117 Hydrogen Sulfide](#)

**2. NASEMSO Congratulates Gainor on National Award**

Dia Gainor, Idaho State EMS Director, and Chair of NASEMSO's Highway Incident & Transportation Systems (HITS) Committee, recently received the James O. Page Award from the Journal of Emergency Medical Services (JEMS) for "exhibiting the drive and tenacious effort necessary to develop improved EMS systems, resolve important EMS issues, and bring about positive EMS system changes throughout her career." Congratulations, Dia! [For more information...](#)

**3. NASEMSO Mourns Loss of Missouri EMSC and Trauma Manager**

NASEMSO mourns the loss of Missouri colleague, Paula Adkison, who passed away on March 6, 2010 at Capital Region Medical Center. Paula was a Health Facilities Nursing Consultant and the Trauma Manager within the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services and also served as Missouri's EMSC Program Coordinator. A memorial contribution has been made by NASEMSO in Paula's memory. Our thoughts and prayers remain with Paula's family and our colleagues in the OEMS during this difficult time.

**4. NASEMSO Council Changes Name to Reflect Expanded Pediatric Focus**

The NASEMSO Executive Committee recently approved a request to change the name of the EMSC Council to the "Pediatric Emergency Care Council." The change is intended to more accurately reflect the scope of state programs which include EMS for Children as well as expanded functions in Injury Prevention, Pediatric Data, Pediatric Education/Training, Disaster Preparedness, Family-Centered Care, and Trauma. Several working groups were recently established to address these focus areas.

In related news, the Data Managers and Medical Directors also reviewed mission and vision statements and took action to align Council titles within the NASEMSO bylaws.

### **5. EMS Performance Measures Project Provides Final Report**

The EMS Performance Measures Project, begun in 2002 and concluded in 2007, gives the Nation's EMS community an additional tool to gauge and report various aspects of an EMS system including the environment in which EMS responds, the performance of emergency medical service (EMS) agencies, and the overall performance of local systems. The EMS Performance Measures Project was coordinated by the National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO) in partnership with the National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP), and supported by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The EMS Performance Measures Project seeks to create a set of 20 to 30 EMS system performance indicators and attributes that can begin to be used to better explain our discipline to the outside world, including those who use and/or fund EMS services. This is simply the beginning of an effort to establish national standards for such measures so that those using them will be able to compare their system's performance with other systems. It is expected that more indicators will be added to this set in the future. To download, go to <http://www.nasemso.org/Projects/PerformanceMeasures/>.

### **6. NASEMSO Supports Funding for CDC Core Programs**

In a recent letter to the Appropriations Committees of the House and Senate, NASEMSO joined several members of the CDC Coalition in supporting at least \$8.8 billion for CDC's FY 2011 core programs. The advocacy letter is available on our web site at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org).

### **7. HHS Post Pre-solicitation Grant Notice on Regionalization Initiatives**

The Emergency Care Coordination Center (ECCC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) was created in response to Homeland Security Presidential Directive 21 in order to: (1) lead an enterprise to promote and fund research in emergency medicine and trauma health care, (2) promote regional partnerships and more effective emergency medical systems in order to enhance appropriate triage, distribution, and care of routine community patients, and (3) promote local, regional, and State emergency medical systems' preparedness for response to public health events. The ECCC is guiding Federal efforts to implement the Institute of Medicine's (The Future of Emergency Care in the United States Health System) 2006 recommendation to develop regionalized, accountable systems of emergency care. The ECCC's next logical step is to fund projects to acquire more detailed information, data and best practices about regionalization of emergency care in four (4) component areas. To view the component areas and to read the presolicitation notice, click [here](#).

### **8. ACF Announces \$42 Million in Competitive Grant Funding for Native American Projects**

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Administration for Native Americans (ANA) announces the availability of \$42 million in competitive grant funding for fiscal year 2010 for community-based projects that promote economic and social self-sufficiency and cultural preservation for American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and other Native American Pacific Islanders from American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The fiscal year 2010 funding includes \$27 million for continuing multi-year projects. ANA grant funding supports social, economic, and governance development; preservation of Native American languages; and environmental regulatory activities. Applicants are encouraged to contact ANA's technical assistance regional providers below who offer project development training and pre-application training free of charge.

- Eastern Region: <http://www.anaeastern.org>

- Western Region: <http://www.anawestern.org>
- Alaska Region: <http://www.anaalaska.org>
- Pacific Region: <http://www.anapacificbasin.org>

The Funding Opportunity Announcements can be downloaded and submitted at <http://www.grants.gov>.

### **9. National Broadband Plan Highlights ITS Solutions**

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recently released its National Broadband Plan, calling the lack of broadband capacity “the great infrastructure challenge of the early 21st century.” While the number of Americans with broadband at home has increased significantly, there are still about 100 million Americans without access to broadband capacity. As a result, Congress directed the FCC to develop a plan that provides recommendations for eliminating barriers and creating policies and incentives towards the universal availability of broadband. A section of the plan is devoted to “smart transportation”, which focuses on broadband and related ITS technologies that will help make the transportation system safer, cleaner, and more efficient. Solutions such as vehicle-to-vehicle collision avoidance systems, traffic signal optimization, in-vehicle telematics, smart transit technologies, route optimization, and future policies such as congestion pricing all contribute to the need for increased broadband capacity. According to the plan, information and communications technologies can eliminate as much as 440 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, while advanced communications systems have the potential to help reduce the nation’s tens of thousands of automobile fatalities each year. [For more information...](#)

### **10. PSHSB Launches New Web Site**

The Federal Communications Commission's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau launched a new web page: Broadband and Public Safety and Homeland Security to better ensure that the public safety community, the general public, government agencies and communications providers have access to the latest news and information on the FCC's efforts to implement the National Broadband Plan for public safety. The implementation of the plan will include initiatives to bring interoperable communications to America's first responders through the creation of a nationwide wireless broadband network and new cyber security reporting and monitoring programs; as well as Next Generation 9-1-1 services; emergency alerts and warnings through a variety of outlets (including via television and radio broadcasts (Emergency Alert System), wireless hand-held devices, such as cell phones and the Internet) and much more. The web page includes access to the latest press releases, public notices, field hearings, and presentations. To access these pages, please visit: <http://www.fcc.gov/pshs/broadband.html>.

### **11. HHS Announces Additional Investment to Advance Widespread Meaningful Use of Health IT**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius recently announced awards to help states facilitate health information exchange and advance health information technology (health IT). Funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the awards are part of the \$2 billion effort to achieve widespread meaningful use of health IT and provide use of an electronic health record by every citizen by the year 2014. Every state and eligible territory has now been awarded funds under this program. The health information exchange HIE awards announced today provide approximately \$162 million to 16 states and qualified state designated entities (SDEs) to facilitate non-proprietary health information exchange that adheres to national standards. Health information exchange is critical to enabling care coordination and improving the quality and efficiency of health care. [For more information...](#)

### **12. New GAO Report Addresses DHS Emergency Communications**

In a new letter report to Congress, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) reports on (1) actions taken by the Department of Homeland Security’s Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) to establish the Emergency

Communications Preparedness Center (ECPC) and (2) challenges OEC and ECPC officials reported that could affect interagency coordination through ECPC. OEC and ECPC officials interviewed reported that ECPC faces interagency coordination challenges in obtaining agreement among ECPC members on group decisions, gaining the acceptance of its stakeholders when promoting a strategy to achieve interoperable communications, providing and demonstrating value to its members, maturing as an interagency body, and working to define its relationships with other organizations with similar goals and objectives. *Emergency Communications: Establishment of the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center and Related Interagency Coordination Challenges*. GAO-10-463R, is available at <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-10-463R>.

### 13. Proposed Rule for the Establishment of Certification Programs for Health IT

The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently released a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) outlining the proposed approach for establishing a certification program to test and certify electronic health records (EHRs). The HITECH Act mandates the development of a certification program which will give purchasers and users of EHR technology assurances that the technology and products have the necessary functionality and security to help meet meaningful use criteria. While we are making significant strides toward modernizing our health care system, these efforts will only succeed if providers and patients are confident that their health information systems are safe and functional. Additional information and how you can comment can be found at the <http://HealthIT.HHS.Gov> website.

### 14. TEP Steering Committee Seeks Comment on Draft Standards

The Practitioner Steering Group (PSG) sponsored by the DHS Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC), of which the NASEMSO is a member, is currently seeking comments on the "Tracking of Emergency Patients" (TEP) standard; the latest in the Emergency Data Exchange Language (EDXL) family of standards used in emergency communications. Assuming you have previously reviewed the PID, the steering committee requests your review focus on the specification with data dictionary, and the outstanding issues list which are now posted on the TEP website: <http://www.evotecinc.com/TEP/>

- TEP Requirements and Draft Messaging Specification:  
**EDXL-TEP-Rqmts&draftMessagingSpecV2.0\_02-26-2010.doc**
- Outstanding issues:  
**TEP-Stakeholder-IssuesRev10\_02-24-2010.pdf**
- TEP Data Dictionary: Though included in the document, this excel file provides mappings to other efforts such as NEMESIS and NIEM which may be helpful in your review.  
**TEPdictionaryv18.xls**

Questions and comments should be provided via email to [edxlswg@evotecinc.com](mailto:edxlswg@evotecinc.com).

### 15. DOJ and FBI Announce Formal Conclusion of Investigation into 2001 Anthrax Attacks

The Justice Department, FBI and U.S. Postal Inspection Service recently announced that the investigation into the 2001 anthrax attacks, which killed five individuals and sickened 17 others, has formally concluded. Representatives of the FBI and Justice Department provided a 92-page investigative summary along with attachments to victims of the attacks, relatives of the victims and appropriate committees of Congress. This document sets forth a summary of the evidence developed in the "Amerithrax" investigation, the largest investigation into a bio-weapons attack in U.S. history. As disclosed previously, the Amerithrax investigation found that the late Dr. Bruce Ivins acted alone in planning and executing these attacks. The investigative summary and the attachments are now accessible to the public and have been posted to the Justice Department Web site at [www.usdoj.gov/amerithrax](http://www.usdoj.gov/amerithrax) under the Freedom of Information Act. In addition, roughly 2,700 pages of FBI

documents related to the Amerithrax case are now accessible to the public and have been posted to the FBI website at <http://foia.fbi.gov/foiaindex/amerithrax.htm> under the Freedom of Information Act.

**16. GAO Reports Testimony on Security Protection at Federal Facilities**

Recent events including last month’s attack on Internal Revenue Service offices in Texas, and the January 2010 shooting in the lobby of the Nevada federal courthouse demonstrate the continued vulnerability of federal facilities and the safety of the federal employees who occupy them. These events also highlight the continued challenges involved in protecting federal real property and reiterate the importance of protecting the over 1 million government employees, as well as members of the public, who work in and visit the nearly 9,000 federal facilities. The GAO indicates a final report will be forthcoming to Congress later this year. *Homeland Security: Ongoing Challenges Impact the Federal Protective Service's Ability to Protect Federal Facilities*. GAO-10-506T, <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-10-506T> Highlights - <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d10506thigh.pdf>

**17. IOM Medical Surge Capacity Workshop Summary Now Available**

The IOM’s Forum on Medical and Public Health Preparedness for Catastrophic Events held a workshop June 10-11, 2009, to assess the capability of and tools available to federal, state, and local governments to respond to a medical surge. In addition, participants discussed strategies for the public and private sectors to improve preparedness for such a surge. The workshop brought together leaders in the medical and public health preparedness fields, including policy makers from federal agencies and state and local public health departments; providers from the health care community; and health care and hospital administrators. A new document summarizes the workshop. [For more information...](#)

**18. Pennsylvania Legal Preparedness Toolkit Released**

The University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health Center for Public Health Preparedness has developed a “Legal Toolkit for Pennsylvania Local Health Departments.” The toolkit contains model public health orders and related documents that local health departments and municipal solicitors may use as templates when drafting documents seeking judicial support for local health regulation enforcement. The toolkit is available at <http://www.prepare.pitt.edu/law/ltk/Default.aspx>.

**19. Oregon Isolation and Quarantine Bench Book Available**

The Oregon Department of Justice and the Oregon Department of Human Services Public Health Division have developed the Oregon Isolation and Quarantine Bench Book. The book is intended to serve as a guide through the isolation and quarantine processes that can be utilized during a public health emergency, or in more routine public health cases, and provides important information about public health law, communicable disease, and infection control. To view the book, please visit: [http://www2a.cdc.gov/php/docs/Public%20Health%20Bench%20Book%20Final\\_Oregon.pdf](http://www2a.cdc.gov/php/docs/Public%20Health%20Bench%20Book%20Final_Oregon.pdf).

**20. OSHA Publishes Overview of Medical Screening and Surveillance Requirements**

OSHA updated the [Screening and Surveillance: A Guide to OSHA Standards](#)\* pocket guide that provides occupational health professionals with an overview of OSHA requirements on medical screening and surveillance. It describes what physical examinations and tests, such as chest x-rays, lung function tests and blood tests, are required to measure worker exposure to chemicals such as hexavalent chromium and benzene, and other workplace hazards such as noise and bloodborne pathogens. This quick-reference tool also points to the appropriate standards for more specifics. Copies can be ordered online from OSHA's [publications Web page](#). Of particular interest to EMS:

- 1910.1030(f) Bloodborne Pathogens requirements are listed on page 12.
- 1910.120(f) (Hazardous Waste) requirements appear on page 23.
- 1910.134(e) (Respiratory Protection) requirements are listed on page 30.

### **21. Safety Coalition Urges Congress to Help Cut Highway Deaths**

The State Highway Safety Alliance and NASEMSO have joined forces to call for an aggressive plan to prevent hundreds of thousands of highway fatalities over the next twenty years through the upcoming surface transportation authorization bill. In a letter sent to key House and Senate committees, the coalition - which is made up of organizations from the areas of highway construction and safety, public health, and law enforcement - called for greater funding of state highway safety programs, long-term strategic planning, and research. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, an estimated 33,963 people were killed on U.S. highways in 2009; the lowest number of deaths since 1954. The coalition has set a goal of pushing the number of annual traffic deaths to below 20,000 by the year 2030. Steve Blessing, president of the National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Officials said, "We urge Congress to reauthorize federal highway safety programs that motivate states to significantly reduce highway deaths and injuries through innovative and effective highway safety strategies." The Alliance represents state agencies with roles in improving highway safety through infrastructure, driver behavior, licensing, incident response, and enforcement approaches. See the group's letter to Congress and its authorization principles at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org) under the Advocacy tab.

### **22. Clarus Initiative Provides Promising Tool for Highway Safety**

Clarus (which is Latin for "clear") is an initiative to develop and demonstrate an integrated surface transportation weather observing, forecasting and data management system, and to establish a partnership to create a Nationwide Surface Transportation Weather Observing and Forecasting System. The objective of Clarus is to provide information to all transportation managers and users to alleviate the effects of adverse weather (e.g., fatalities, injuries and delays). Launched in 2004, Clarus provides near real-time atmospheric and pavement observations from more than 2,000 environmental sensor stations and 45,000 road sensors deployed by state departments of transportation. The result is a comprehensive picture of the weather along the nation's roads that is available to any user, at anytime, anywhere in the U.S. The FHWA Road Weather Management Program, in partnership with TRB and ITS America, sponsored a workshop on Advancing Road Weather Management using Clarus Data during the TRB Annual Meeting in Washington, DC in January 2010. The presentations can be found [here](#). Read an article on Clarus in the new edition of Thinking Highways [here](#).

In related news, stressing the need to provide timely, high-quality road weather information to the American public, Research and Innovative Technology Administrator (RITA) Peter Appel recently announced that the U.S. Department of Transportation will sponsor up to seven innovative ideas for using the Clarus weather information system to improve roadway safety during severe weather. The Department intends to provide up to \$80,000 per award in an open competition. Proposals will be accepted until April 14, 2010. Additional information on how to submit a proposal can be found at [www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov), Solicitation number DTFH61-10-R-00015.

### **23. Traffic Fatalities for 2009 Reach Record Low**

The U.S. Department of Transportation recently announced that the number of overall traffic fatalities reported at the end of 2009 reached the lowest level since 1954, declining for the 15th consecutive quarter. According to early projections, the fatality rate, which takes into account the number of miles traveled, reached the lowest level ever recorded. The projected fatality data for 2009 places the highway death count at 33,963, a drop of 8.9 percent as compared to the 37,261 deaths reported in 2008. The fatality rate for 2009 declined to the lowest on record, to

1.16 fatalities per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) down from 1.25 fatalities per 100 million VMT in 2008. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration attributes the decline in 2009 to a combination of factors that include, high visibility campaigns like Click It or Ticket to increase seat belt use, and Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest which helps with the enforcement of state laws to prevent drunk driving and distracted driving. In addition, the decline is also the result of safer roads, safer vehicles and motorists driving less. NHTSA annually collects crash statistics from the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico to produce annual reports on traffic fatality trends. The agency intends to update 2009 estimates regularly as more data becomes available. The final counts for 2009 will be made available in the summer of 2010. To view the [preliminary fatality statistics...](#)

**24. Wyoming Becomes the 20th State to Ban Texting While Driving**

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood recently applauded Wyoming for becoming the 20th state to enact a statewide ban prohibiting drivers from texting while behind-the-wheel. The new ban will allow law enforcement officials to ticket anyone caught texting while driving in Wyoming. According to research by the National Highway Traffic Administration (NHTSA), nearly 6,000 people died in 2008 in crashes involving a distracted or inattentive driver, and more than half a million were injured. In 2009, more than 200 distracted driving bills were considered by state legislatures and legislative activity is expected to remain strong in 2010. The department recently launched a federal website, [distraction.gov](#), as a forum and information clearinghouse.

**25. Fatigue Endangers Transportation Workers and Passengers Across All Modes**

The National Transportation and Safety Board (NTSB) Chairman Deborah A.P. Hersman encouraged the sleep research and healthcare community to continue their efforts to educate transportation policy makers of the dangers of fatigue in all modes of transportation. Speaking before the annual conference of the National Sleep Foundation in Washington, D.C., Chairman Hersman remarked that fatigue has been a concern for the Board since the creation of the agency in 1967 and it has been an issue on the Board's Most Wanted List of Transportation Safety Improvements since the list was established in 1990. Hersman remarked that while there are still no definitive tools to conclusively identify the degree to which a person is fatigued, the major challenge is to ensure that all those in transportation report to work rested and fit for duty - for their own safety and for the safety of those they are transporting. The complete text of Chairman Hersman's speech may be obtained on the Board's website at: <http://www.nts.gov/speeches/hersman/daph100305.html>.

**26. EMS Safety Foundation November Webinar Recording and Handout Links Now Available**

An archive of the EMS Safety Foundation November 2009 Webinar - "Key Lessons from the Workshop and the Summit, and EMS Safety Foundation Developments for 2009-2010" is now available. Given the importance of the information in this Webinar to the broader EMS community, there is now public access to this recording and handout from the [www.ObjectiveSafety.net](http://www.ObjectiveSafety.net) (TRB 2009 link) and the [www.EMSAgencyFoundation.org](http://www.EMSAgencyFoundation.org) websites.

**27. EMSC Releases Targeted Issues Grant Guidance**

HRSA/MCHB EMSC Program announces release of FY10 Targeted Issues new competition. Targeted Issue Demonstration Grants are intended to meet HRSA/MCHB priorities of improving the health infrastructure and systems of care as well as assuring quality of care. Applications should address specific needs in the field of pediatric emergency care that transcend state boundaries. Typically the projects result in a new product or resource or the demonstration of the effectiveness of a model system component or service of value to the nation. Objectives must meet a demonstrable need, and methodologies and strategies for achieving the objectives must be realistic, appropriate, and scientifically sound. Each application must contain an evaluation plan that contains measurable outcomes and clearly defined time frames for conducting the evaluation. The program anticipates

making 5 awards at \$300,000 a year for 3 years with a project start date of 9/1/10. Applications are due in grants.gov on April 23, 2010. Applicants should carefully review the project focus areas on pages 1 - 2 of the application guidance. [Link to the announcement...](#)

**28. State Children's Health Legislation Report Available**

The American Academy of Pediatrics has published *The 2009 State Legislation Report*, which outlines activity on 10 issues related to children's health and well-being. To access the report, visit <http://aap.org/advocacy/stateleg rpt.pdf>.

**29. FDA Issues Final Rule on Access/Marketing of Tobacco Products to Youth**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a final rule containing a broad set of federal requirements designed to significantly curb access to and the appeal of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products to children and adolescents in the United States. Published March 19, 2010, the new rule becomes effective June 22, 2010, and has the force and effect of law. Titled Regulations Restricting the Sale and Distribution of Cigarettes and Smokeless Tobacco to Protect Children and Adolescents, the new rule restricts the sale, distribution, and promotion of these products to make them less accessible and less attractive to kids. Among other things, the rule prohibits the sale of cigarettes or smokeless tobacco to people younger than 18, prohibits the sale of cigarette packages with less than 20 cigarettes, prohibits distribution of free samples of cigarettes, restricts distribution of free samples of smokeless tobacco, and prohibits tobacco brand name sponsorship of any athletic, musical or other social or cultural events. The entire rule can be found at [www.fda.gov/protectingkidsfromtobacco](http://www.fda.gov/protectingkidsfromtobacco).

**30. North Carolina EMSC Releases Emergency Care Guidelines for Schools**

The North Carolina EMSC program has released [North Carolina Emergency Care Guidelines for Schools](#), a comprehensive resource for school staff and school nurses on what to do when a student has a medical emergency. Developed in partnership with the North Carolina Division of Public Health, this resource provides guidance on more than 50 medical conditions, and includes a section on school safety planning and emergency preparedness. Copies of the resource are being distributed to 2,800 schools in the state.

**31. Childhood Asthma Treatment: One-Size-Does-NOT- Fit-All**

A new study has found the addition of long-acting beta-agonist therapy to be the most effective of three step-up, or supplemental, treatments for children whose asthma is not well controlled on low doses of inhaled corticosteroids alone. The study was designed to provide needed evidence for selecting step-up care for such children and was supported by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), part of the National Institutes of Health. Researchers also identified patient characteristics, such as race, that can help predict which step-up therapy is more likely to be the most effective for a child with persistent asthma. The study found that almost all of its participants had a different response to the three different treatments. Although adding the long acting beta-agonist step-up was one and one-half times more likely to be the best treatment for most of the study group, many children responded best to other two treatments instead. The results were presented March 2 at the American Academy of Asthma, Allergy and Immunology 2010 Annual Meeting in New Orleans and are published online in the New England Journal of Medicine. [For more information...](#)

**32. Warning Issued on Using Sling Carriers for Babies Under 4 Months of Age**

The US Consumers Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has issued a warning when using sling carriers for infants younger than 4 months of age. In researching incident reports from the past 20 years, CPSC identified and is investigating at least 14 deaths associated with sling-style infant carriers, including three in 2009. Twelve of the

deaths involved babies younger than four months of age. The CPSC says the slings pose a suffocation hazard to young infants who cannot yet control their head and neck movements, especially those who are frail or have breathing problems. If parents choose to use a carrier sling, they should make sure their child's face is visible at all times, according to the CPSC. The group's [press release](#) includes diagrams showing the right and wrong ways to use the slings. CPSC is interested in receiving incident or injury reports that are directly related to infant slings. You can do this by visiting [www.cpsc.gov/cgi-bin/incident.aspx](http://www.cpsc.gov/cgi-bin/incident.aspx) or call CPSC's Hotline at (800) 638-2772.

### 33. New WISQARS Fatal Injury Mapping Module Available

CDC's Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) is a leading source of injury statistics in the United States. WISQARS provides data on injury deaths, violent deaths, and nonfatal injuries, and now a new WISQARS fatal injury mapping module allows users to produce customized, color-coded maps of injury death rates, by intent (e.g., unintentional, homicide, or suicide) and mechanism of injury (e.g., motor vehicle-traffic, fall, fire/burn, poisoning, or cut/pierce). These maps show the distribution of injury death rates nationally, regionally, and for individual states and counties. In addition, annualized estimates of total lifetime medical and work loss costs resulting from injury-related deaths are provided for counties within individual states. The new module can help public health professionals compare injury rates across geographic areas and monitor fatal injuries and their associated burden in the United States. The new fatal injury mapping module is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars>.

### 34. GAO Reports Findings on Group Purchasing

In recent correspondence from the Government Accounting Office to Congress, the GAO reveals limited research is available to evaluate the efficacy of group purchasing organizations (GPO) in negotiating lower prices from manufacturers, distributors, and other suppliers of various medical products. Challenged with the question to review research on the impact of GPOs on pricing for hospitals and other health care providers, the GAO identified one article that concluded that alliances between hospitals and GPOs can contain rising health care costs by reducing product prices, reducing transaction costs through commonly negotiated contracts, and increasing hospital revenues via rebates and dividends. Read *Group Purchasing Organizations: Research on Their Pricing Impact on Health Care Providers*. GAO-10-323R, at <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-10-323R>.

### 35. HHS Advisory Group Proposes Safety Data Base

The Health IT Policy Committee's adoption and certification work group recently proposed creating a national database into which clinicians could report patient data errors and unsafe conditions they encountered in their use of electronic health records. Clinicians could use the system to report instances – noticeably inaccurate patient data or an EHR technical glitch, for instance – that they believed might compromise patient safety. The group also suggested establishing an organization that could oversee a nationwide EHR safety system and provide other methods for reporting, analyzing and disseminating incident reports. The working document and an mp3 audio of the discussion is available on the work group's [web site](#). (See March 12.)

### 36. IOM Hosts Regional Meetings on H1N1 Vaccination Strategies

The Institute of Medicine's Forum on Medical and Public Health Preparedness will host a series of regional workshops this spring to examine the H1N1 vaccination campaigns. These public workshops will provide an opportunity for participants to discuss efforts to distribute and administer H1N1 vaccine, communicate with the public and providers about the vaccine, and collect and use data. Participants will also identify and discuss strategies to improve future emergency vaccination programs and other medical countermeasure dispensing campaigns. Click on the following links to view information:

- [Raleigh, NC – April 15](#)
- [Austin, TX – April 27](#)
- [Seattle, WA – May 11](#)

### 37. New Issue Brief from CDC: Unintentional Drug Poisoning in the United States

The CDC's Injury Center is highlighting the growing issue of unintentional drug poisoning in the United States. More than 26,000 deaths from unintentional drug poisoning occurred in the United States in 2006. Opioid pain medications (such as oxycodone and methadone) were involved in more than half of these deaths. Overall, the unintentional drug poisoning death rate has been rising in recent years and more than doubled between 1999 and 2006. In response to this increase, CDC's National Center for Injury Center has developed an issue brief titled [Unintentional Drug Poisoning in the United States](#). The brief summarizes the most recent information about deaths and emergency department visits resulting from drug overdoses. The following information is included:

- Overdose trends
- Drugs most commonly involved
- Geographic regions and populations most severely affected
- Recommendations for health care providers, private insurance providers, and state and federal agencies to consider to prevent unintentional drug overdoses, and
- Recommendations for state laws relevant to prescription drug monitoring and reimbursement.

CDC invites you to use this brief to learn more about this issue and to incorporate promising strategies into your state's poisoning prevention work.

### 38. Latest Report on Nation's Health Shows Growing Medical Technology Use

The use of medical technology in the United States increased dramatically between 1996 and 2006, according to "Health, United States, 2009," the federal government's 33rd annual report to the President and Congress on the health of all Americans. The report was prepared by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics from data gathered by state and federal health agencies and through ongoing national surveys. The full report is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus.htm>.

### 39. Nipro Huber Needle Products Recalled

FDA is alerting healthcare professionals about safety precautions to be used with Huber needles, and about a recall of one company's products. Huber needles are used to access ports implanted in chronically ill patients to withdraw blood and infuse medication and other solutions. Huber needles should be designed to penetrate a port without cutting or dislodging any silicone slivers or cores from the port. Coring could damage a port and cause leakage. In addition, if a silicone core enters a patient's vasculature, it could lead to serious adverse events. FDA inspections of one Huber needle manufacturer, Nipro Medical Corporation, found that this company's needles produced cores in 60 - 72 percent of tests. Because of this, Huber needle products manufactured by Nipro Medical Corporation for Exel International Corporation have been recalled. More information is available [here](#)...

### 40. AFG Grant Workshops Now Available

The Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) workshop schedule is now available. The list is searchable by the locations of workshop as well as times and dates. These free workshops will be held around the country to provide information about the submission of competitive applications under the 2010 Assistance to Firefighters Grants program. The workshop lasts about two hours. Interested representatives from fire departments as well as representatives from non-affiliated EMS organizations are invited to attend the workshops. Information will be presented on program changes, program priorities, eligibility requirements, and the application process. General

assistance in writing a competitive narrative for a department's grant application will also be covered. Registration is not necessary. [For more information...](#)

#### 41. Several New Cybersecurity Resources Available from DHS

The Department of Homeland Security has updated its web site to introduce several new references intended to help users prevent attacks to computers and networks:

- [Securing your computer](#) (US-CERT)
- [Recovering from an attack](#) (US-CERT)
- [General internet security](#) (US-CERT)
- [Distributable materials](#) (US-CERT)
- [Monthly and quarterly reports](#) (US-CERT)

#### 42. Monroe Named CDC Deputy Director

ASTHO Immediate Past President Judith Monroe, MD (IN) has been named Deputy Director of CDC and Director, Office of State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support. Dr. Monroe will serve as a Deputy Director of CDC and Director, Office of State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support (OSTLTS) beginning March 22, 2010 and comes to CDC after a successful tenure as the Indiana State Health Commissioner. For more information, visit [www.astho.org](http://www.astho.org).

#### 43. NAED Releases New “Accelerator Stuck” Protocol

Due to recent cases of uncontrollable acceleration in certain vehicle makes and models, and the ability of car occupants to call 911, 999, 000, 112, etc., for help, the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch (NAED) has rapidly but carefully developed a protocol to assist the Emergency Dispatcher if confronted with the caller so involved – whether the caller is the driver or a passenger. Obviously for the communication center to be involved and help the caller in these instances, such an event requires the coming together of several factors: having a phone to call with, the ability to call, have the time to call, a linear roadway space ahead, presence of traffic congestion, and vehicle speed. Any emergency communication center, whether an MPDS user or not, can use the printed protocol card under a special limited use license contained within them. However, they cannot be incorporated into any 3rd party products or CADs, modified in any way, or re-distributed for any other uses. [For more information...](#)

In related news, NAED has provided several updates to Protocol 36 related to Influenza Pandemic since its release in 2009. These materials have also been made available under a special limited use license. The protocol and related update materials can be found at <http://www.emergencydispatch.org/flu.php>.

#### 44. 2010 is the International Year of the Nurse

The 2010 International Year of the Nurse (IYNurse) is the centennial year of the death of the founder of modern nursing — Florence Nightingale (1820-1910). To celebrate this historic milestone, the 2010 IYNurse was established to actively involve the world’s nurses — estimated to be more than 15 million — in a celebration of commitment to bring health to their communities, locally and worldwide. Based on three years of planning, 2006-2009, a worldwide network of nursing “focal points” was developed and related strategies have been identified, including a 2010 IYNurse Web site. Allied international, regional and local events and projects - both large and small — are planned and encouraged to span 2010. All of these combined efforts will provide a sustained platform for millions of nurses to call for renewed commitment — globally, nationally, regionally and locally — to establish and implement a worldwide mandate toward achieving a healthy world. [For more information...](#)

**45. James Page Collection Launches at UCLA Library**

The James O. Page Charitable Foundation and the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) have announced the launch of a special collection dedicated to the archives of Jim Page, including original articles, correspondence, speeches, audio tapes and even a video of the last lecture he gave. Page is credited as the father of modern EMS and was founding publisher of JEMS, the Journal of Emergency Medical Services. An attorney and fire chief, he was known for his insightful writing, speeches and love of EMS history. He died from sudden cardiac arrest in 2004. The Collection is physically housed at the Louise M. Darling Biomedical Library at UCLA and can be accessed by the public by making an appointment. The Collection’s website can be accessed at <http://www.jamesopage.org>. The website makes dozens of articles and various multi-media materials available as well as information about the library’s location, hours and contact points. The Collection was endowed by the James O. Page Charitable Foundation through a grant from the Physio-Control Corporation, and through the contributions of individuals and organizations. The James O. Page Collection is produced in collaboration with the James O. Page Charitable Foundation. [For more information...](#)

**46. Comparison of Dopamine and Norepinephrine in the Treatment of Shock**

*De Backer D et al. Comparison of dopamine and norepinephrine in the treatment of shock. N Engl J Med 2010 Mar 4; 362:779.* Both dopamine and norepinephrine are recommended as first-line vasopressor agents in the treatment of shock. There is a continuing controversy about whether one agent is superior to the other. *Methods:* In this multicenter, randomized trial, (authors) assigned patients with shock to receive either dopamine or norepinephrine as first-line vasopressor therapy to restore and maintain blood pressure. When blood pressure could not be maintained with a dose of 20 µg per kilogram of body weight per minute for dopamine or a dose of 0.19 µg per kilogram per minute for norepinephrine, open-label norepinephrine, epinephrine, or vasopressin could be added. The primary outcome was the rate of death at 28 days after randomization; secondary end points included the number of days without need for organ support and the occurrence of adverse events. *Conclusions:* Although there was no significant difference in the rate of death between patients with shock who were treated with dopamine as the first-line vasopressor agent and those who were treated with norepinephrine, the use of dopamine was associated with a greater number of adverse events. (ClinicalTrials.gov number, NCT00314704 [ClinicalTrials.gov] .) The authors "strongly challenge" the current American College of Cardiology–American Heart Association guidelines that recommend dopamine as a first-line agent for cardiogenic shock. Abstract [here](#). Subscription required for full article.

**47. Glucocorticoids for the Treatment of Anaphylaxis**

Steroids (glucocorticoids) are often recommended for use in the management of people experiencing anaphylaxis. However, the evidence base in support of the use of steroids is unclear. Authors therefore conducted a systematic review of the literature, searching key databases for high quality published and unpublished material on the use of steroids for the emergency treatment of anaphylaxis while contacting experts in this health area and the relevant pharmaceutical companies. Authors were unable to find any randomized controlled trials on this subject and conclude that there is no evidence from high quality studies for the use of steroids in the emergency management of anaphylaxis. The abstract can neither support nor refute the use of these drugs for this purpose. [For more info...](#)

**48. Low Yield Seen for Elective Coronary Angiography**

Coronary angiography has a low diagnostic yield in patients with suspected coronary artery disease undergoing elective catheterization, according to a study in the New England Journal of Medicine.

Using a large U.S. registry, researchers examined postcatheterization diagnoses in some 400,000 patients undergoing elective procedures: only 38% had significant obstructive disease, and 39% had no coronary disease. Patients who had a positive result on noninvasive testing before catheterization (such as an electrocardiogram or stress testing) were moderately more likely to have obstructive disease than those who did not undergo such testing (41% vs. 35%). The authors conclude that current criteria for use of catheterization "need to be improved substantially." [NEJM article](#) (Free abstract; full text requires subscription) [NEJM editorial](#) (Subscription required)

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### **\*\*\*STATEWIDE EMS CONFERENCES\*\*\***

\*TN EMSC: 2nd Annual EMS Star of Life Awards Dinner & Ceremony. May 11, 2010, 6 to 9 pm. Sheraton Nashville Downtown Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee Sponsor the Star of Life! – Nominations are due April 9, 2010. For sponsorship packets & more info go to: [www.tnems.org](http://www.tnems.org)

\*Symposium by the Sea 2010. Sponsored by EMLRC and FCEP. July 29 - August 1, 2010 Boca Raton, FL The Boca Raton Resort & Club. Go to <http://www.emlrc.org/sbs2010.htm> for more information.

Pennsylvania State EMS Conference. September 16-18 (with preconference sessions on September 14-15), 2010 at the Lancaster County Convention Center in Lancaster, PA. More information can be found at [www.pehsc.org](http://www.pehsc.org).

\* TN 9th Annual Update in Acute & Emergency Care Pediatrics Conference. October 1-2, 2010. Wilderness At the Smokies Resort, Sevierville, Tennessee For more info go to: [www.tnems.org](http://www.tnems.org)

PULSE CHECK 2010, the 55th Annual Educational Conference & Trade Show of the NYS Volunteer Ambulance & Rescue Association, will be held Thursday evening September 30, 2010 to Sunday morning October 3, 2010 at the Holiday Inn Albany on Wolf Road. Information is posted on the Association's web site at [www.nysvara.org](http://www.nysvara.org).

New Jersey Statewide Conference on EMS, Atlantic City November 11th - 13th 2010. For more information visit: [www.njemsconference.com](http://www.njemsconference.com)

New Jersey METI Games. November 11th - 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010. For more information visit [www.njemsconference.com](http://www.njemsconference.com).

#### **\*\*\*National Conferences and Special Meetings\*\*\***

\*HRSA/MCHB's Emergency Medical Services for Children Program will be hosting a webcast entitled: **State of All Hazards Preparedness for Children: Partnerships & Models for Merging Emergency Department & Disaster Preparedness Efforts Nationwide** on Wednesday, March 24, 2010; 1:00-2:30pm Eastern  
Please go to the following link to register and to download agenda and handouts related to this webcast.  
<http://www.mchcom.com/liveWebcastDetail.asp?leid=414>

EMS Education Implementation Webinar. March 24, 2010 3 pm. "How to Use the Gap Analysis Template to Identify a State SOP and Other Materials" More info including registration link at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org) as speakers and topics are confirmed.

EMSC Town Hall Conference Call. April 14, 2010 from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm (eastern). The local number is (202) 476-6338 or call toll-free dial (877) 355-6338 and enter EMSC (3672) for the meeting ID#.

EMS Education Implementation Webinar. April 21, 2010 @ 3 pm. **“Depth and Breadth: What Does It Mean to EMS Education?”** More info including registration link at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org) as speakers and topics are confirmed.

IAFC’s Fire Rescue Med Conference. May 1-5, 2010. Orleans Hotel, Las Vegas, NV. For more information, go to <http://www.iafc.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=6>.

EMS ON THE HILL DAY, May 3-4, 2010, Washington, D.C. Updates and more information on the event will be posted on the NAEMT web site, [www.naemt.org](http://www.naemt.org).

ITS America Annual Meeting and Exposition. May 3-5, 2010. Houston, TX. For more information go to <http://www.itsa.org/annualmeeting.html>.

2010 Integrated Medical, Public Health, Preparedness and Response Training Summit. May 12-16, 2010. Opryland Hotel, Nashville, TN. For more information—go to <http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?i=3d37b6ef-7182-487c-a0d9-87287aaa50ef>.

EMS Education Implementation Webinar. May 19, 2010 @ 3 pm. **“Who Should Teach: Identifying Instructor Qualifications for Using the New Education Standards”** More info including registration link at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org) as speakers and topics are confirmed.

National EMS Week 2010. May 16 thru May 22 with May 19 set aside as Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Day. [Order Your 2010 EMS Week Planner \(Kit\) Here.](#)

ACEP 2010 Leadership and Advocacy Conference. May 16-19, 2010. Washington, DC. Go to [www.acep.org](http://www.acep.org) for more information.

Joint NASEMSO Mid-Year/EMSC Grantee Meeting. May 25-27, 2010. Doubletree Hotel, Bethesda, MD. More info at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org).

Institute of Medicine Forum on Medical and Public Health Preparedness for Catastrophic Events. June 9-10, 2010. Washington, DC. See <http://www.iom.edu/en/Activities/PublicHealth/MedPrep.aspx> for more information.

EMS Education Implementation Webinar. June 23, 2010 @ 3 pm. **“Developing Standards Based Instruction”** More info including registration link at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org) as speakers and topics are confirmed.

EMSC Town Hall Conference Calls 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm (eastern) July 14, 2010. The local number is (202) 476-6338 or call toll-free dial (877) 355-6338 and enter EMSC (3672) for the meeting ID#.

EMS Education Implementation Webinar. July 21, 2010 @ 3 pm. **“How Does Program Accreditation Improve the Quality of EMS Education?”** More info including registration link at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org) as speakers and topics are confirmed.

Pinnacle 2010. July 26-30, 2010. Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina. San Diego, CA For more information, go to [www.pinnacle-ems.com](http://www.pinnacle-ems.com).

6<sup>th</sup> International Roundtable on Community Paramedicine. August 9-13, 2010, Vail CO. For more information, go to <http://www.ircp.info/>.

EMS Education Implementation Webinar. August 25, 2010 @ 3 pm. **“Identifying Methods to Measure Cognitive, Psychomotor, and Affective Competency”** More info including registration link at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org) as speakers and topics are confirmed.

15<sup>th</sup> Annual NAEMSE Symposium. September 7-12, 2010. Renaissance Hotel & Convention Center in Schaumburg, IL. For more information, go to <http://www.naemse.org/symposium>.

EMS Education Implementation Webinar. September 15, 2010 @ 3 pm. **“Progression/Regression Strategies: Models of Success.”** More info including registration link at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org) as speakers and topics are confirmed.

ENA Annual Meeting. San Antonio Convention Center, San Antonio, TX. General Assembly September 22-34, Scientific Assembly September 23-25, 2010. Go to [www.ena.org](http://www.ena.org) for more information.

NAEMT Annual Meeting at EMS EXPO 2010 - Sept. 27 – Oct. 1, 2010. Dallas Convention Center, Dallas, TX. For more information, go to <http://www.firehouseevents.com/>.

ACEP Scientific Assembly 2010. September 28 - October 1, 2010. Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas, NV. For more information, go to [www.acep.org](http://www.acep.org).

Institute of Medicine Forum on Medical and Public Health Preparedness for Catastrophic Events. October 6-7, 2010. Washington, DC. See <http://www.iom.edu/en/Activities/PublicHealth/MedPrep.aspx> for more information.

NASEMSO Annual Meeting. October 10-15, 2010, Norfolk Marriott Waterside/Waterside Convention Center Norfolk, Virginia. More info available at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org). Sponsorship and exhibitor information [now available](#).

2010 Air Medical Transport Conference October 11-13, 2010. Ft. Lauderdale, FL. For more information, go to [www.aams.org](http://www.aams.org).

EMS Education Implementation Webinar. October 20, 2010 @ 3 pm. **“System Update: 2010 NASEMSO Survey Results.”** More info including registration link at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org) as speakers and topics are confirmed.

EMS Education Implementation Webinar. November 22, 2010 @ 3 pm. **“The Role of National Certification in Implementing the EMS Education Agenda.”** More info including registration link at [www.nasemso.org](http://www.nasemso.org) as speakers and topics are confirmed.

ECCU 2010. Emergency Cardiac Care Update, December 8-11, 2010. San Diego, CA. Sponsored by the Citizen CPR Foundation. For more information, go to <http://eccu2010.com/>.

See more EMS Events on NASEMSO’s web site at <http://www.nasemso.org/Resources/Calendar/index.asp>

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The Washington Update is supported by a cooperative agreement between NASEMSO and NHTSA OEMS, with funds also provided by HRSA/EMSC. Feel free to share this publication with your colleagues. To subscribe to receive the *Washington Update* bi-weekly by e-mail, please click [here](#).