February 2020

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NASEMSO News
EMS Week Planning Kits Now Available

NASEMSO has again partnered with the American College of Emergency Physicians and National Association of EMTs to promote EMS Week, May 17-23, 2020. This year's theme is **EMS Strong: Ready Today, Preparing for Tomorrow**. ACEP began collecting and distributing ideas and information for EMS Week in the early 1980's. Professionally printed and prepared EMS Week Planning kits were developed starting in the late 1980's. Today 25,000 EMS Week Planning Guides are distributed free of charge to EMS services, fire departments, rescue squads, volunteer groups, and emergency departments across the country. The 48-page guide contains ideas for local EMS Week activities and highlights EMS Week programs held by EMS services during the previous year.

To order one copy of the Planning Kit, click here. For bulk orders, please use this form.

EMS ✦ STRONG
READY TODAY. PREPARING FOR TOMORROW.

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For the States

Surprise Medical Bills Focus of New House Bills

House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal, D-Mass., and Ranking Member Kevin Brady, R-Texas, have introduced legislative text of the Consumer Protections Against Surprise Medical Bills Act of 2020, the committee's proposal to address surprise medical bills. The legislation prohibits providers from balance billing patients for emergency services or medical care the patient reasonably could have expected to be in-network, and does not allow patients to be charged more than the in-network cost-sharing amount. The proposal does not rely on a benchmark payment rate to determine out-of-network reimbursement, but instead includes a period for health plans and providers to negotiate reimbursement, to be followed by a mediated dispute resolution process should it be necessary. The proposal also includes several other consumer protection and transparency provisions. The committee was scheduled to mark up the legislation on Wednesday, Feb. 12.

In addition, House Committee on Education and Labor Chairman Robert "Bobby" Scott, D-Va. and Ranking Member Virginia Foxx, R-N.C., also unveiled the Ban Surprise Billing Act. The legislation is similar to the bills passed last year by the House Energy and Commerce Committee and Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee in that it relies on a median in-network rate to resolve out-of-network payments. For amounts paid above $750 (or $25,000 for air ambulance services), the legislation allows for an independent dispute resolution process to determine the final payment. A summary of the legislation is here and legislative text was released late this afternoon. The committee was scheduled to mark up the legislation on Tuesday, Feb. 11.

IL Congressman Introduces Legislation to Combat Ambulance Diversions

U.S. Representative Bobby L. Rush (D-Ill.) recently introduced legislation to study, and ultimately find ways to reduce, the number of ambulance diversions taking place in Chicago and throughout the country. H.R. 5727, the Research Empirical Solutions to End Ambulance Reversals from Closed Hospitals (RESEARCH) Act of 2020, would direct the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the National Academy of Medicine to conduct a broad study on ambulance diversions to determine whether such diversions have increased in the last ten years, whether such diversions negatively impact underserved and minority communities, and what steps the federal government can take to address the issue. The RESEARCH Act would also require hospitals to report such diversions to HHS. Read more here.

Communications

GAO Report Highlights FirstNet Deployment

In March 2017, the Department of Commerce's FirstNet awarded a 25-year, multibillion- dollar contract to AT&T to deploy, operate, and maintain the public safety broadband network. In a new report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), GAO examines the extent to which (1) AT&T is meeting milestones for the network's coverage and adoption and (2) FirstNet is overseeing AT&T in accordance with key practices. GAO maintains that while AT&T is meeting contract milestones, FirstNet has shared little to no information about its contract oversight with state officials and other stakeholders. This has led to speculation about the extent of FirstNet's oversight of AT&T, which could affect network users' and stakeholders' continued support of the program. To access "Network Deployment Is Progressing, but FirstNet Could Strengthen Its Oversight" GAO-20-346: Published Jan 27, 2020, go to https://www.gao.gov/assets/710/704058.pdf.

"State of 911 Webinar Series" to Focus on NG911 Self-Assessment Tool

NHTSA's National 911 Program offers a series of webinars to educate first responders and the public on matters related to the 9-1-1 system. Several of the webinars have featured EMS-related topics, such as CPR Life Links, caller location, and more. The webinar in the series that highlighted the NG911 Self-Assessment tool was held on January 14th, but it was recorded, This

webinar and others are located here . The NG911 Self-Assessment tool was distributed by NHTSA last summer Click here to view the tool.

Health & Medical Preparedness

CDC Interim Guidance for EMS Systems and 911 PSAPs for 2019-nCoV in the US

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has published Interim Guidance for EMS Systems and 911 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) for 2019 Novel Coronavirus in the United States (Interim Guidance). The Interim Guidance can be accessed at CDC - Coronavirus. The Federal Interagency Committee on EMS (FICEMS) encourages all EMS and 911 stakeholders to review the Interim Guidance.

JHU Offers Real-Time Worldwide Map of Coronavirus 2019-n-CoV

The Johns Hopkins University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering has created a dashboard that collects data from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Chinese website DXY, which aggregates data from China's National Health Commission and the CCDC. The results populate a worldwide view of coronavirus cases in real time. For more information. Click here.

TFAH Releases Annual Report on Public Health Preparedness

Ready or Not: Protecting the Public's Health from Diseases, Disasters and Bioterrorism is an annual report measuring states' level of preparedness to protect the public's health during an emergency from the Trust for America's Health. Based on 10 performance indicators and by tracking public health funding, the report ranks states' level of preparedness into three performance tiers: high, middle and low. This 2020 edition placed 25 states and the District of Columbia in the high preparedness performance tier, up from 17 last year. Twelve states, down from 20 states and the District of Columbia last year, placed in the middle performance tier and 13 states placed in the low tier, the same number as last year. The report can be Read here.

New Report on Medical Waste and Emerging Infectious Diseases

The Maryland Department of Health Environmental Health Bureau—a NIOSH-funded state surveillance program—recently released a report from a 2017 workshop on Managing Highly Pathogenic Medical Waste: Finding a Way Forward. This document highlights challenges and opportunities for Maryland in addressing Category A infectious waste. It is particularly relevant for anyone interested in preparing for the possibility of highly pathogenic emerging infectious diseases in the hospital or community setting.

FEMA Releases 2020 Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) Doctrine

On February 5, 2020, FEMA released the revised 2020 HSEEP Doctrine. This update incorporates feedback and input from exercise planners and practitioners across the country and ensures that HSEEP doctrine, the training course, and corresponding documents continue to best meet the needs of the whole community. HSEEP is flexible, scalable, adaptable, and is for use by stakeholders across the whole community and nation-wide use of HSEEP directly supports the National Preparedness System by providing a consistent approach to exercises and measuring progress toward building, sustaining, and delivering core capabilities. The 2020 HSEEP doctrine continues to make HSEEP a practical and yet effective tool for exercise planners and practitioners across the whole community. Along with the new 2020 HSEEP doctrine, there is also an Information Sheet and Frequently Asked Question sheet that are all available here. The HSEEP templates and the HSEEP course are currently being

updated and will be released sometime in late spring/early summer. Continue to monitor the HSEEP webpage for release date information.

ISAT Enhances Public Safety Information Sharing Capabilities

When it comes to information sharing it can be difficult to answer the question 'How do you know what you don't know' when different jurisdictions have different tools and resources available? The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate's (S&T) Information Sharing Assessment Tool (ISAT) is intended to help public safety partners assess their own information sharing capabilities and gaps within their agency, when sharing information across agencies in their jurisdiction, and when working with multiple jurisdictions and across public safety disciplines. It is intended to be a facilitator of collaboration and strategic planning to improve information sharing at the tribal, local, state, and federal levels of government and across public safety disciplines. Newly updated with optional scenarios and expanded question sets, the ISAT is a web-based self-assessment tool that helps public safety agencies understand their current information sharing capabilities and gaps. The ISAT is voluntary, free, and easy to use. For more information, Click here.

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Data
FICEMS/ONC Hosts National Pre-Hospital and Hospital Data Integration Summit

The vision set forth in EMS Agenda 2050 calls for a people-centered approach to EMS that includes a more seamless, less siloed system. The Federal Interagency Committee on EMS (FICEMS) and the HHS Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) partnered to host an invitation-only listening session to gain insights from State and local authorities, professional societies, health systems, hospitals, health information exchanges, and private sector companies on the exchange of health data and information. Background materials and powerpoint presentations from the Summit, held January 28, 2020 in Washington, DC are now available at here.

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Highway Incident & Transportation Systems
House Releases "Moving Forward" Infrastructure Framework

Several US House of Representatives Committees have come together to publish a framework to invest $760 billion over five years in the nation's roads, bridges, transit systems, railways, airports, ports, inland waterways, wastewater and drinking water systems, brownfields, and broadband. This framework is an opportunity to get existing infrastructure working again and fund new transformative projects that will create an estimated 10 million jobs, while reducing carbon pollution, dramatically improving safety, and spurring economic activity. Read more at Transportation/House.

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Medical Directors
Deadline Looms on PMA Applications for AEDs

In 2015, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a Final Order to require the filing of premarket approval applications (PMA) for automated external defibrillator (AED) systems, which consist of an AED and those AED accessories necessary for the AED to detect and interpret an electrocardiogram and deliver an electrical shock (e.g., pad electrodes, batteries, adapters, and hardware keys for pediatric use) by February 3, 2020. In September 2019, the FDA reminded stakeholders of the implementation deadline and recommended the following steps to ensure compliance:

1. Check the list of FDA-approved AEDs on the Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) webpage on FDA.gov to see if your AED is FDA-approved.
2. If your AED is not listed, you should plan to transition to an FDA-approved AED system. Contact the manufacturer of your current AED to discuss your transition plans.
3. Ensure that you have compatible AED accessories to meet your needs until you transition to an FDA-approved AED. This is particularly important because AED accessories may require frequent replacement.

The FDA warned consumers that if a PMA is not filed by February 3, 2020, the manufacturer must cease marketing their accessories by February 3, 2021. The availability of approved devices on the FDA website is available here.

FDA Authorizes Marketing of First Cardiac Ultrasound Software That Uses Artificial Intelligence to Guide User

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized marketing of software to assist medical professionals in the acquisition of cardiac ultrasound, or echocardiography images. The software, called Caption Guidance, is an accessory to compatible diagnostic ultrasound systems and uses artificial intelligence to help the user capture images of a patient's heart that are of acceptable diagnostic quality. The Caption Guidance software is indicated for use in ultrasound examination of the heart, known as two-dimensional transthoracic echocardiography (2D-TTE), for adult patients, specifically in the acquisition of standard views of the heart from different angles. These views are typically used in the diagnosis of various cardiac conditions. Read more here.

AHRQ Evaluates NIPPV Use in Homes

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) through its Evidence Based Practice Center has published a new report on the use of noninvasive positive pressure device use in homes. This systematic review addresses initiation and continuation of home NIPPV including the effectiveness, equipment settings, and related respiratory services for patients with chronic respiratory failure. The systematic review also highlights areas of controversy and identifies needs for future research. Devices evaluated were home mechanical ventilators (HMV), bi-level positive airway pressure (BPAP) devices, and continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) devices. For kore information, Click here.

Specialty Systems of Care

NEMSAC Hears Concerns Regarding Stroke Protocols

"Stroke costs the country $34 billion each year," noted Dr. Donald Frei, who is past president of the Society for Neurointerventional Surgery (SNIS) at a recent meeting of the National EMS Advisory Council (NEMSAC). "Most strokes (87%) are ischemic strokes; of those, the most dangerous are severe ischemic strokes with emergent large vessel occlusion (ELVO), with 150,000 to 200,000 such strokes occurring each year," he said. Dr. Frei advocated for a consistent application of EMS stroke severity scales and destination protocols that advocate for the highest level of stroke care when several hospital options exist within similar travel times. Read more at here.

Federal Partners

NHTSA Survey Finds Strong Support for EMS Among the Public

In a survey of people across the United States, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that 99% of the respondents had confidence in the abilities of EMS clinicians who would respond if 911 had to be called. That finding and others are discussed in a recently published NHTSA Traffic Tech brief, "The 2016 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey: Emergency Medical Services." Other findings of the survey, which included responses from more than 5,000 people, include:

- Among respondents who had ever placed an emergency call, 54% reported their most recent call had been to request an ambulance, rescue squad or EMS.
- Over 90% of respondents considered EMS to be an essential government service.
- 72% of all respondents reported they were willing to pay $5 or more in fees or taxes to fund improved EMS equipment and training.

NHTSA Survey Finds Gap Between Public Expectations and 911 System Capabilities

A survey conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that more than 90% of respondents expected to receive pre-arrival instructions from 911 operators while waiting for an ambulance. Other findings of the survey, which included responses from more than 5,000 people across the country, include:

- More than half of respondents did not know if a 911 call center could identify a caller's location without being explicitly told by the caller.
- More than 90% of respondents expected to receive pre-arrival instructions from 911 operators while waiting for an ambulance.
- Nearly 70% of respondents indicated they would be willing to pay more for expanded 911 services.

A discussion of survey results can be found in the recently released NHTSA Traffic Tech brief, "The 2016 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey: 911 Systems."

NIOSH Studies Ambulance Ventilation

The protection of emergency medical service (EMS) workers from airborne disease transmission is important during routine transport of patients with infectious respiratory illnesses and would be critical during a pandemic of a disease such as influenza. However, few studies have examined the effectiveness of ambulance ventilation systems at reducing EMS worker exposure to airborne particles (aerosols). Addressing this issue, NIOSH investigators recently measured the concentration of airborne germs in various locations within an ambulance's patient treatment compartment. Placing a mechanical device that simulates a coughing patient on a cot, they tested the air with the ventilation system set at three different settings, or air changes per hour, with the cot set at three different angles. For each test, the investigators measured the concentration of germs in the air for 15 minutes. Findings indicate that the ambulance ventilation system reduced but did not eliminate worker exposure to infectious aerosol particles. Aerosol exposures were not significantly different at different locations within the compartment, including locations behind and beside the patient. Improved ventilation system designs with smoother and more unidirectional airflows could provide better worker protection. Read more here.

CDC Expands Vaccine Resources for Health Care Providers

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has updated and expanded resources on immunization schedules, vaccine administration, storage and handling, ACIP recommendations, including vaccine guidelines and recommendations for emergency situations. Links to a free app with CDC Vaccine Schedules are also available. For more information, go here.

Applications Now Accepted for Rural Emergency Medical Services Training Grant

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, is accepting applications for fiscal year (FY) 2020 Rural Emergency Medical Services Training grants (Short Title: EMS Training). The purpose of this program is to recruit and train emergency medical services (EMS) personnel in rural areas. SAMHSA recognizes the great need for emergency services in rural areas and the critical role EMS personnel serve across the country. Eligible applicants are rural emergency medical service agencies operated by a local or tribal government (fire-based and non-

fire based) and non-profit emergency medical service agencies. Agencies awarded the grant will be required to train personnel on mental and substance use disorders, and how to care of patients with these disorders, as well as how to administer naloxone. The funds can also be used for general recruitment and training, including volunteer recruitment, and the purchase of personal protective equipment. The deadline for applications is March 30, 2020. For more information, go to here.

New State Law Prevents CBP Access to Records

Effective immediately, residents of the State of New York will no longer be eligible to apply for or renew membership in U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Trusted Traveler Programs due to state legislation that restricts CBP's access to certain criminal history information maintained by the New York Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). CBP will cancel all pending Trusted Traveler Program applications submitted by residents of New York. Refunds will be processed automatically. New York residents who are currently enrolled in Trusted Travel Programs will retain their benefits until their memberships expire. For more information, Click here.

CMS Provides Fact Sheets on HIPAA Administrative Simplification Transactions

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Division of National Standards (DNS) announces the release of a series of fact sheets explaining the basics of HIPAA Administrative Simplification transactions and code sets. The fact sheets are designed to help the health care industry understand the purpose of HIPAA adopted transactions and to explain which standards and operating rules govern each transaction. For more information, go here.

In related news, the Agency's Administrative Simplification Enforcement and Testing Tool (ASETT) allows users to test HIPAA transactions for compliance, syntax and business rules, test trading partners transactions, file complaints, and track complaint status. This tool can also validate code values against 60-plus clinical and non-clinical code sets, including ICD-9 and ICD 10 diagnosis and procedure code sets. For more information, go to ASETT.

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Industry News
NREMT Launches EMS-ID

In a recent press release, the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) announced the creation of a national "EMS-ID," a unique 12-digit identification number issued for free to all EMS professionals and students seeking to enter the profession. This identifier will be different from a candidate's National Registry number. The EMS-ID number will be issued once and does not change or expire. The EMS-ID number is like a master account number, individual certification numbers will each be linked to the EMS-ID. In the future, the EMS-ID will make it easier for licensing authorities to search, discover, research and share discipline actions for EMS personnel, including actions recorded in federal databases such as the HHS-OIG exclusion list, the sex-offender registry, and the Social Security Administration's death records information. For more information, Click here.

Check out the new *EMS On The Hill Day* Welcome Guide here for information on participating in this upcoming collaborative event on March 25, 2020! The deadline for registering is March 1, 2020.

A new resource from The Pew Charitable Trusts: The Stateline 2020 calendar includes each state's legislative schedule as well as maps of the political landscape. Keep it handy to help you track legislative action in all 50 states. For more information, Click here.

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Interesting Abstracts

In health care, does 'hotspotting' make patients better?

The new health care practice of "hotspotting" -- in which providers identify very high-cost patients and attempt to reduce their medical spending while improving care -- has virtually no impact on patient outcomes, according to a new study led by MIT economists. Read more here.

Electrical versus pharmacological cardioversion for emergency department patients with acute atrial fibrillation (RAFF2): a partial factorial randomised trial.

Stiell et al (2020) in Lancet. "Our primary aim was to compare conversion to sinus rhythm between pharmacological cardioversion followed by electrical cardioversion (drug–shock), and electrical cardioversion alone (shock-only). Our secondary aim was to compare the effectiveness of two pad positions for electrical cardioversion."

Study enrolled is located here.
Results here.

UPCOMING Events

MARCH 2020
EMS Today (March 4-6, Tampa, FL)
ACS Committee on Trauma Annual Meeting (March 12 - 13, Dallas, TX)
EMS Transformation Summit (March 24, Arlington VA)
EMS on the Hill Day (March 24-25, Arlington, VA)
Preparedness Summit (March 31 - April 2, Dallas, TX)

APRIL 2020
Society of Trauma Nurses Annual Meeting (April 1-3, Atlanta, GA)
National EMS Safety Summit (April 14-17, Denver, CO)
FDIC International (April 19-25, Indianapolis, IN)
American Academy of Emergency Medicine Annual Meeting (April 19-23, Phoenix, AZ)
Critical Care Transport Medicine Conference (April 20-22, Albuquerque, NM)

MAY 2020
Society for Academic Emergency Medicine Annual Meeting (May 12-15, Denver, CO)
EMS Week (May 17-23)
EMSC Day (May 20)
Accreditcon (May 27-31, Louisville, KY)

JUNE 2020
American Trauma Society Annual Meeting (June 2-4, Winston-Salem, NC)
NFPA Annual Conference (June 15-18, Orlando, FL)
NASEMSO Annual Meeting (June 15-18, 2020 in Reno, NV)

JULY 2020
Pinnacle (July 27-31, Phoenix)

AUGUST 2020
National Association of EMS Educators Annual Meeting (August 3-8, Pittsburgh, PA)
Fire Rescue Med -- IAFC EMS Section Annual Meeting (August 17-18, Phoenix, AZ)

IAFC Fire-Rescue International (August 19-22, Phoenix, AZ)

SEPTEMBER 2020
Emergency Nurses Association Annual Meeting (September 8-11, Las Vegas, NV)
EMS World Expo (September 14-18, Las Vegas, NV)

OCTOBER 2020
American College of Surgeons Clinical Congress (October 4-8, Chicago, IL)
American College of Emergency Physicians Annual Meeting (October 26 - 29, Dallas, TX)

NOVEMBER 2020
Air Medical Transport Conference. (November 2-4, Nashville, TN)
American Ambulance Association Annual Meeting (November 2-4, Las Vegas, NV)
IAEM EMEX 2020 (November 13-18, Long Beach, CA)

Please use these links to access monthly course schedules and registration info related to:

- NAEMSE Instructor Course Level 1
- NAEMSE Instructor Course Level 2
- CAAHEP Accreditation Update & Evaluating Student Competency Workshops
- NAEMSE/NREMT Regional Scenario Development Workshops

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and can be sent directly to our Editor:

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