



July 2020

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NASEMSO's Information Hub on the global pandemic is available [here](#). We encourage our readers to visit the web site often to obtain the most up-to-date guidance and policy recommendations available. Due to the frequency of updates, COVID-19 information is not being included in Washington Update.

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NASEMSO News

NASEMSO Partners with Amazon Business for New Member Benefit

NASEMSO has selected Amazon Business as a partner for supply purchasing. Amazon Business is a marketplace that offers access to hundreds of millions of products in a shopping experience tailored for businesses and they have prioritized COVID-19 and PPE related supplies for use by EMS responders. There are no fees to join NASEMSO's Prime Business Account. NASEMSO members that did not receive additional information or an invitation from Amazon Business via email and wish to enroll in this new member benefit should contact NASEMSO Program Manager, [Kathy Robinson](#) for details.

NASEMSO Member Recognized for Accomplishments with National Award

NASEMSO congratulates Cynthia-Wright Johnson, RN, MSN, EMSC Director at Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical

Services Systems, as the 2020 recipient of the Emergency Nurses Association's Pediatric Readiness Improvement Award. This award recognizes a nurse who has demonstrated outstanding efforts to improve readiness in caring for children in the emergency care setting. Cyndy's commitment to excellence in pediatric care is well known by anyone who knows her! She has served as a colleague and mentor to NASEMSO's Pediatric Emergency Care Council for many years, working on countless national committees that include AAP, ACEP, ENA, Maryland State Firemen's Association, NHTSA, NFAP, Safe Kids, and Risk Watch. Way to go, Cyndy!!!

NASEMSO National EMS Assessment Highlighted

The revised National EMS Assessment created as a collaboration of NASEMSO members was recently highlighted in EMS One-Stop, a podcast of EMS1. We thank the author and EMS1 for their efforts in this regard! Listen now at [EMS One-Stop](#).

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For The States

FEMA Announces Grant Options for Civil Unrest Expenses

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Grant Programs Directorate (GPD) offers guidance on eligible costs under certain grant programs during periods of civil unrest. FEMA's programs operate under varied statutory provisions that have different allowability and eligibility requirements; however, the potential to reprogram funds for limited purposes may exist under the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) and the Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG). For questions related to HSGP or EMPG funding and availability, contact your FEMA Regional or HQ Program Analyst. Read more [here](#).

Health Affairs Focuses on Racial Health Inequalities

A genuine approach to addressing black-white health disparities that includes confronting hard truths about systemic ills and injustice; honoring black Americans as a diverse group of people; and meaningfully engaging black citizens, communities, and experts will help deepen our understanding of this complex problem and lead us to better solutions. Respected authors at *Health Affairs* provide a thoughtful discussion in a new blog "Beyond Lip Service: Taking A Genuine Approach To Tackling COVID-19 (And All) Black-White Health Disparities In The United States." Read more [here](#).

In related news, the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), explains why inequalities exist and what strategies can be deployed to improve the lack of resources in "Stolen Breaths," a poignant observation on the topic on racial health inequalities [here](#).

NQP™ Action Team to Prevent Healthcare Workplace Violence

Workplace violence, as defined by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), is "any physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse directed towards persons at work or on duty."² In healthcare, this violence can stem from encounters between staff and patients and/or their families; aggression or harassment from co-workers; or the intrusion of community violence, such as domestic violence, into the workplace. Workplace violence comes at a high cost for healthcare workers, healthcare organizations, and patients. The National Quality Partners (NQP) Action Team established a goal to identify and coalesce around action-oriented strategies that support a shared vision to prevent, report, and root out healthcare workplace violence. An Issue Brief on the topic of workplace violence in healthcare is now available [here](#).

NQF Offers New Report on Health Outcomes

Drawing on the collective expertise of nearly 100 diverse stakeholders from across the healthcare ecosystem, the National Quality Task Force has put forth a roadmap to ensure every person consistently and predictably receives high quality care and better health outcomes. The report highlights the stories of real people and specifies recommendations that underscore the importance of a seamless system of comprehensive, accessible care that is designed to keep people healthy and well. "The

Care We Need" outlines five strategic objectives supported by 10 high-impact, actionable opportunities to align the healthcare industry to one common roadmap. The recommendations address longstanding, critical challenges in the nation's quest for quality and seek to scale efforts that have demonstrated the ability to improve quality, value, and safety for people in every community. Read more [here](#).

Alternate Care Sites Focus of ASPR Toolkit

The US Department of Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) just released the Third Edition of the Federal Healthcare Resilience Task Force Alternate Care Site (ACS) Toolkit, providing augmented guidance based on feedback and experience, including:

- Updated directions for using the Toolkit
- Funding sources for ACS
- Guidance on providing patients dialysis support
- A new temperature screening protocol and an updated glossary of terms Information on retaining ACS as a "warm site" (including related funding strategies)
- Updated supply lists.

This resource and many more (including the [Funding Sources for the Establishment and Operationalization of Alternate Care Sites Webinar](#), [ACS Funding Summary Tip Sheet](#), and [COVID-19 Alternate Care Strategies webinar](#)) can be found in the ASPR TRACIE [COVID-19 Alternate Care Site Resource Collection](#).

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Air Medical

TX Supreme Court Rules in Favor of State in ADA Preemption Challenge

The State Supreme Court of Texas has issued a final ruling in a case involving whether the State's law to require that private insurance companies reimburse the fair and reasonable medical expenses of injured workers triggers a federal preemption under the Airline Deregulation Act (ADA) and, if so, whether federal law requires Texas to mandate reimbursement of more than a fair and reasonable amount for air ambulance services. In a 29 page brief describing their decision, the Court states that "the ADA does not preempt Texas's general standard of fair and reasonable reimbursement as applied to air ambulance services, nor does it require that Texas compel private insurers to reimburse the full charges billed for those services. "We therefore reverse the judgment of the court of appeals and reinstate the trial court's judgment declaring that Texas law is not preempted." Download the ruling at [here](#). Case detail in this matter is also available [here](#).

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Communications

FCC Increases Funding to Rural Health Programs

The Federal Communications Commission's Wireline Competition Bureau has directed the Universal Service Administrative Company, which administers the FCC's Rural Health Care Program, to carry forward up to \$197.98 million in unused funds from prior funding years to the extent necessary to satisfy funding year 2020 demand for the Program. Interest in the Rural Health Care Program has grown in recent years and funding requests from health care providers for high-speed broadband had outpaced the funding cap, placing a strain on the Program's ability to increase access to broadband for health care providers, particularly in rural areas, and foster the deployment of broadband health care networks. For more information on the Rural Health Care Program and funding program, go [here](#).

FCC Releases Agenda And Draft Proposals For July Open Commission Meeting

The Federal Communications Commission has announced the agenda for its July 16, 2020 Open Commission Meeting, and

released the following draft documents that are in circulation among the Commissioners of particular interest:

- Designating 988 for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
The Commission will consider a [Report and Order](#) that would designate 988 as the 3-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline to aid rapid access to suicide prevention and mental health support services. (WC Docket No. 18-336)
- Call Blocking Rules
The Commission will consider a [Third Report and Order, Order on Reconsideration, and Fourth Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) that would continue the Commission's work to combat unwanted and illegal calls and implement portions of the TRACED Act. (CG Docket No. 17-59)
- Wireless E911 Location Accuracy Requirements
The Commission will consider a [Sixth Report and Order and Order on Reconsideration](#) that would further its effort to improve vertical (or Z-Axis) location accuracy for wireless 911 calls, which will help first responders quickly locate people calling for help from multi-story buildings. (PS Docket No. 07-114)
- Modernizing Priority Services Rules
The Commission will consider a [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) that would streamline and update its rules to ensure that priority service programs operate effectively for emergency workers as technology evolves. (PS Docket No. 20-187).

The [meeting](#) will be live streamed starting at 10:30 am EDT. The full agenda is available [here](#).

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Data

NEMSIS Boot Camp Announced

The NEMSIS team invites State Data Managers and state officials who are responsible for the collection, maintenance, and distribution of EMS data at the state level to attend the online NEMSIS Boot Camp August 25, 2020 from 9 am – 12 pm (MDT)! We will be providing hands-on instruction, covering topics such as:

- The Power of the StateDataSet
- Added Value of the EMS Service Area Builder
- Ins and Outs of the NEMSIS V3 Cube
- Assessing Data Quality Using Tableau Dashboards
- Best Practices for Answering Data-Related Questions
- Ins and Outs of the NEMSIS Data Dictionary

Limited space is available, and registration is required!

Register online at the following [link](#).

For technical assistance, please contact: [Chris Hoffman](#).

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Health & Medical Preparedness

GAO Looks at ID Modeling in New Report

Outbreaks of infectious diseases—such as novel coronavirus and pandemic flu—have raised concerns about how federal agencies use modeling to predict a disease's course. Models can help decision makers set disease control policies and allocate resources. If models are unsound, they may not produce the reliable predictions needed to make good decisions. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) examined how U.S. Health and Human Services, which includes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, uses and assesses models. The agency recommended that HHS improve coordination of modeling across agencies and ensure models are reproducible, which helps build confidence in their results. Read more [here](#).

ATS Calls for Moratorium on the Use of Tear Gas

The American Thoracic Society is urging restraint on the use of chemical respiratory agents deployed by law enforcement such as 2-chlorobenzalmalononitrile (CS), and the highly concentrated pepper oil used in exploding shells and grenades. The industry manufacturing tear gas systems have developed advanced launching technologies allowing deployment of much higher amounts of tear gas over longer distances. Much of what we currently know about the health effects of exposure to tear gas and other chemical agents is based on military research conducted in the 50s, 60s, and 70s using young healthy male research participants. These studies do not address the potential health effects for vulnerable populations who are exposed, including children, older adults, and people with underlying health conditions. Tear gas is also a concern to medical personnel

exposed when treating protestors, since the agents can contaminate clothing and medical equipment. Read more [here](#).

GAO Highlights NDMS in New Report

The National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) is the main program through which HHS enrolls responders to assist with the federal medical and public health response to public health emergencies. HHS deploys NDMS responders to provide, among other things, patient care and movement. During the 2017 hurricanes, NDMS had a shortage of responders that resulted in HHS relying on other departments, such as the Department of Defense, to provide medical care. As of December 2019, HHS had 3,667 NDMS responders. The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act of 2019 included a provision for GAO to review HHS's responder surge capacity. This report examines (1) the workforce planning for NDMS responders to assist with public health emergencies, and (2) training provided to these responders. To conduct this work, GAO reviewed agency NDMS planning documentation, including NDMS staffing decisions, team structures, and training materials; compared HHS actions to key workforce planning practices; and interviewed HHS officials. Read more about "Public Health Preparedness: HHS Should Take Actions to Ensure It Has an Adequate Number of Effectively Trained Emergency Responders" [here](#).

NIST Studies Efficacy of Face Coverings: Layered Cotton Appears Superior

Researchers at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) have completed a new study of how well a variety of natural and synthetic fabrics filter particles of a similar size to the virus that causes COVID-19. Of the 32 cloth materials tested, three of the five most effective at blocking particles were 100% cotton and had a visible raised fiber or nap, such as found on flannels. Four of the five lowest performers were synthetic materials. The testing also showed that multiple fabric layers could improve cotton's effectiveness even further. None of the materials came close to the efficiency of N95 masks. Read more [here](#).

FEMA Seeks Public Comment on New NIMS Guide

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announces the "NIMS Guideline for Resource Management Preparedness" supplements the NIMS Resource Management component by providing additional details on resource management preparedness processes, best practices, authorities, and tools. The audience for this guide is any Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) that is responsible for acquiring, inventorying, storing, or sharing resources. Whether building a new resource management program or working to improve an existing one, AHJs can use this guide to find information about resource management preparedness and best practices. FEMA's National Integration Center is seeking public feedback on the draft "NIMS Guideline for Resource Management Preparedness" document. This National Engagement Period will conclude at 5 p.m. EDT on July 23, 2020. Read more at [Read more here](#).

No National Test in 2020 for FEMA's IPAWS

Due to the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) public health emergency response, FEMA will not conduct a national test of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) this year. FEMA is moving the next national test of the system to 2021 out of consideration for the unusual circumstances and working conditions for those in the broadcast and cable industry. Although systems remain in place for rapid automatic transmission of the test message by broadcast and cable operators, the follow-on reporting activities associated with a national test place additional burdens on technical staff that are already quite busy maintaining as close to normal operation as possible. Read more [here](#).

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Highway Incidents & Transportation Systems Senate Committee Offers Overview of Traffic Safety and NHTSA Grant Programs

U.S. Sen. Deb Fischer, R-Neb., chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation and Safety, convened a hearing titled, "Safety on Our Roads: Overview of Traffic Safety and NHTSA Grant Programs," on June 30, 2020. The hearing examined the implementation of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) highway safety grant programs, as well as key highway traffic safety issues. A webcast of the event is available [here](#).

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Pediatric Emergency Care

NCPS Board Seeks Qualified Candidates

The National Child Passenger Safety Board is seeking applications for the Fire/EMS seat: Please go [here](#). Candidate must be actively working in the fire/EMS field and engaged in current events and issues relating to child passenger safety. The deadline for applications is July 31, 2020.

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Trauma

GAO Studies Prevalence of TBI in DV Victims

Brain injuries may be common in domestic violence victims, and such injuries may be under-diagnosed and under-treated. There is little federal data on the prevalence of this public health problem, so it's uncertain whether federal resources are addressing it efficiently. In a new report, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) recommends that the Department of Health and Human Services improve data collection. The agency also looked at nonfederal initiatives that focus on domestic-violence-related brain injury, including federal grants that support them. All of the initiatives and efforts provided education or training on the issue, while some provided screening and treatment. Read more [here](#).

In related news, the National Domestic Violence Hotline has numerous resources for helping victims of domestic violence without saying a word. For more information go [here](#). Users of the site can quickly leave this website by clicking on the "X" icon in the bottom right or by pressing the Escape key twice.

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Federal Partners

NIOSH Science Blog: Tips to Improve Your Sleep When Times Are Tough

Getting enough good quality sleep significantly improves our health and safety, as well as our ability to perform on the job. As a result, promoting sleep health and an alert workforce is in the interest of managers, workers, and the consumers of the organization's goods and services. Adequate high-quality sleep is especially important during stressful times. To help you adapt to quickly evolving demands and changes in your personal and work life during the COVID-19 outbreak, NIOSH offers several evidence-based suggestions can help improve your sleep. Read more [here](#).

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Industry News

DC Court Rejects Lawsuit for OSHA Emergency Standard on Infectious Disease

With the declaration of a global pandemic, a large labor federation recently asked the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) to implement an emergency temporary standard on infectious disease that would include:

- an acknowledgement that a range of workers were at an elevated risk of exposure
- the need to incorporate engineering controls among workers

- recommend NIOSH-certified N-95 masks or higher for protection of healthcare workers
- a risk-based model based on tasks and potential exposures

This action would convert existing voluntary guidance on infectious disease to mandatory requirements for employers. A recent lawsuit to compel the agency to act has been rejected by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, supporting OSHA's claim that existing standards sufficiently protect workers against the current outbreak. Read more [here](#). OSHA's current regulatory agenda can be found [here](#).

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Interesting Abstracts

Reuters Special Report: COVID deepens the other opioid crisis - a shortage of hospital painkillers [here](#).

NEJM Catalyst: Managing Multiple Irons in the Fire: Continuing to Address the Opioid Crisis and Improve Pain Management during a Public Health Emergency [here](#).

Journal of Emergency Medicine: Retrospective Cohort Study of Rates of Return Emergency Department

Visits Among Patients Transported Home by Ambulance [here](#).

Pediatrics: Pediatric Outcomes After Regulatory Mandates for Sepsis Care [here](#).

University of Buffalo: Nationwide EMS calls have dropped 26% since the start of the pandemic while also noting that EMS attended deaths have doubled [here](#).

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UPCOMING Events

AUGUST 2020

[Fire Rescue Med](#) -- (August 17 - 18, Phoenix, AZ) Visit the website for more information on the Virtual Meeting

[IAFC Fire-Rescue International](#) - (August 19 - 22, Phoenix, AZ) Visit the website for more information on the Virtual Meeting

SEPTEMBER 2020

[Emergency Nurses Association Annual Meeting](#) (September 8-11, Las Vegas, NV) Visit the website for more information on the Virtual Meeting.

[EMS World Expo](#) -(September 14-18, Las Vegas, NV) Visit website for information on the Virtual meeting

OCTOBER 2020

[American College of Surgeons Clinical Congress](#) - (October 4-8, Chicago, IL) Visit the website for more information on the Virtual Meeting

[American College of Emergency Physicians Annual Meeting](#) - (October 26 - 29, Dallas, TX) Visit the website for information on the Virtual Meeting

NOVEMBER 2020

[Air Medical Transport Conference](#). (November 2-4, Nashville, TN)

[American Ambulance Association Annual Meeting](#) (November 2-4, Las Vegas, NV) This meeting has been cancelled. Visit the website for updated information.

[IAEM EMEX 2020](#) (November 13-18, Long Beach, CA)

If you are interested in other calendar listings, please consult the host/sponsor for

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](#)

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**Your input to Washington Update is welcome
and can be sent directly to our Editor:**

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