

EMS Best Practices

SEPTEMBER 2014



EMS MODERNIZATION STUDY IS COMPLETE!!

—By Pat Frost, Director, Contra Costa County, Emergency Medical Services Agency

In December 2012 the Contra Costa Board of Supervisor's directed the Contra Costa EMS Agency to complete a countywide EMS Modernization Study. The study took 12 months to complete and involved over 130 stakeholders. The purpose of EMS System Study was to provide policy makers and EMS System stakeholders with a third party review of our current capabilities and explore how they might be used to support building a "Next Generation EMS System". All aspects of the EMS System were reviewed in a comprehensive report conducted by Fitch and Associates LLC. The final report was submitted to the Board on May 28, 2014 and is available at <http://cchealth.org/ems/pdf/2014-EMS-System-Modernization-Study.pdf>. The report identifies both short and long term opportunities to enhance the EMS

System to meet future demands for patient centered EMS care, increased performance reporting, accountability, efficiency and innovation. I hope each of you will take the time to review the report and discuss it with your colleagues and leadership.

Next Steps: In August the EMS Agency presented our preliminary recommendations or the upcoming Emergency Ambulance Procurement Process. The timeline, documents and process for the emergency ambulance request for proposal is available at <http://cchealth.org/ems/system-review.php#simpleContained8>. Contra Costa EMS invites your recommendations on what should be included in the next ambulance request for proposal by visiting <http://cchealth.org/ems/system-review.php#simpleContained6>. We welcome your participation in this process.



Saving
Lives
Everyday!

One Person
At a Time!



ASK EMS

Do you have questions for EMS? Not quite sure who to ask? This column will help address those questions. As space permits, we will answer questions you submit. As always, for immediate response please contact EMS.



WHAT IS “PARAMEDIC ACCREDITATION”?



The purpose behind Paramedic “accreditation is to allow the paramedic the time and structure to become oriented to the uniqueness and differences in each county system. It is meant to be a one-time process with updates annually.

The local EMS Agency (LEMSA) issues paramedic accreditation.

After acquiring a current California paramedic license the applicant must submit an application with the LEMSA. Requirements include: Employment as a paramedic with a designated ALS service provider; Attending a Contra Costa EMS Orientation approved by the EMS Agency or provided by the EMS Agency. (This orientation includes county policy and procedures, treatment protocols, radio communications, hospital/facility destination policy); Completing the Contra Costa County EMS Optional Scope Skills Session; Submitting a [Paramedic Accreditation Application](#), (PDF) form, available online, at the EMS agency or at the provider agency and by paying the established [accreditation application fee](#) (PDF).

For more information, click on the link below to Contra Costa County Paramedic Accreditation requirements: <http://cchealth.org/ems/paramedic-accreditation.php>

Quality IMPROVEMENT FUNDAMENTALS



—By Craig Stroup, EMS Quality Manager

When all is said and done, the concepts of continuous quality improvement (CQI) are mostly about motivating groups of people with common interests to do their best. Not exactly a “new” concept.

In fact, sports teams have been doing this for many years. It’s an accepted conclusion that some will do very well and others not so well. But what is not so accepted is when a very talented team underachieves, or when a team with a clear lack of talent overachieves. These are the opportunities where the concepts of continuous quality improvement (CQI) come into the picture.

In much the same way that coaches and players have for years collected and evaluated information by films, and statistics, CQI collects information in the form of data and in the same tradition tries to motivate the team to perform better by looking at themselves and setting goals for improvement. The rest is just about using new tools or “tricks” to get the teams more aware of what they are doing and how they have performed.

In the coming months, our local EMS agency will be placing “quality improvement” on the front burner with a new approach and push for innovation and efficiency. All providers will be submitting new or revised CQI plans and a comprehensive “all on the same page” training process will be implemented. This all comes as the state and other customer oriented organizations look to us for leadership in moving forward and embracing quality as the cornerstone of our service.

Taking on change is difficult especially for EMS because we get real set in our ways when it comes to our job. But like many athletes and teams, we have to take on change and work hard to get better each day. This is the “essence” of quality improvement and we owe it to our patients to achieve a higher standard.

Please send questions for future
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