



Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Branch Activity Report to the State Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Advisory Council (SEMTAC)

Oct. 8, 2020

This report is submitted as a record of key activities by the Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Branch for the period ending Sept. 30, 2020.

Organizational Effectiveness

In the second quarter of 2020, Vanessa Brazee joined the branch working as a Licensing Specialist in the Operations Section. Vanessa brings nearly twenty years of EMS and related experience to the position, with stints as an Army combat medic, EMT and Critical Care EMT with American Medical Response and AirLife, and most recently as an emergency preparedness and response coordinator with the Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment. Her responsibilities include air ambulance licensing, EMS provider certification/licensing, and Community Integrated Healthcare Services licensing.

During the third quarter of 2020, Jeanne-Marie Bakehouse retired after 25 years of service to the state of Colorado and seven years as the EMTS Branch Chief. To facilitate Jeanne-Marie's transition to retirement, Donnie Woodyard joined the branch as the incoming EMTS Branch Chief in August 2020. Donnie is an experienced state EMS director having served the state of Louisiana before serving as the Chief Operating Officer at the National Registry of EMTs. He is a paramedic and has worked as an EMS Instructor/Paramedic Program Director, EMS chief, and has extensive national and global experience in EMS and trauma systems.

Operations Section

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EMS Provider Certification

At the end of the third quarter of 2020, there were 19,098 certified EMS providers in the state: 13,400 EMTs; 352 AEMTs; 399 Intermediates; and 4,495 Paramedics (of which 422 paramedics have critical care endorsement, 22 have the community paramedic endorsement, and 8 have both P-CC and P-CP endorsements).

EMR Registration

There are 382 voluntarily registered Emergency Medical Responders.

Education

There are 220 recognized education programs in OATH representing education centers (initial training) and education groups (continuing education). Education centers are also recognized as education groups and are counted in both categories.



Emergency Medical Practice Advisory Council (EMPAC)

There are currently 470 active scope of practice waivers, of which 4 are for BLS provider levels, 45 are for both BLS and ALS provider levels, and 421 are for ALS provider levels. The next EMPAC meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 9, 2020, starting at 10 a.m. via Zoom. The next Regional Medical Direction committee meeting will be held the same day immediately prior to the EMPAC meeting, from 8 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.

Air Ambulance

There are 30 licensed air ambulance service agencies in Colorado, of which 20 are full two-year licenses and 10 are recognition licenses.

Funding Section

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Technical Assistance

At the request of local governments and in conjunction with the regional emergency medical and trauma services advisory councils (RETACs), staff members coordinate technical assistance services to local entities. A consultative visit for Bent County is currently in progress. The on-site interviews were completed but the final report was delayed by the global public health crisis. It is expected to be completed this fall. The department has performed 21 local EMTS system assessments since the program began. Copies of the final reports with recommendations are available from the department.

CREATE

The Colorado Rural Health Center continues to administer the Colorado Resource for EMS and Trauma Education (CREATE) grant program. There were no financial waiver requests submitted for review during the quarter. The Expert Review Committee evaluated 11 applications requesting \$60,097 in funding. Eight courses were approved with \$45,221 awarded.

Provider Grants and System Improvement Funding Requests

The legislature authorized approximately \$8.4 million for the funding program in fiscal year 2021. Five hundred thousand dollars was allocated for the CREATE educational grant program, \$330,000 for regional medical direction projects, \$298,327 for supplemental RETAC funding, \$65,000 to provide support for the new trauma registry software, \$350,000 in temporary funding for the peer assistance program and \$150,000 was set-aside for emergency grants. An additional \$1.7 million was held back due to reduced revenue projections. The decline in revenue was attributed to the delay in vehicle registrations caused by the extended closure of motor vehicle offices and emission testing facilities as well as the reduced number of vehicles subject to the fee implemented last year. It is not clear if revenues will recover with the loosening of restrictions affecting the ability to register vehicles. Ninety-six funding applications were submitted for the fiscal year 2021 funding program; ten regional medical direction projects, three system improvement projects and 83 provider grants. For the fiscal year 2021 funding cycle, the department awarded \$3,370,796 in provider grant awards and \$60,700 for system improvement funding for 77 projects. The funding section has fully executed all contracts and more than half of the purchase orders. The department is working to finish statements of work for two purchase orders. All other purchase orders are awaiting signature but the grantees.



Emergency Grants

There were no emergency grant requests received in the last quarter.

Trauma Section

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Trauma Reviews/Designations

During the third quarter of 2020, the Trauma Section completed a virtual focused review for Arkansas Valley Regional Medical Center and was able to successfully close the plan of correction. On-site reviews continue to be on hold due to COVID-19. The Department, through a waiver process, granted all trauma facilities scheduled for a triennial designation review between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2023 a one-year extension to their designation expiration date. All remaining facilities in the current review cycle and those seeking a new facility designation will be reviewed as soon as possible. There are currently 84 designated trauma centers.

Trauma Consultations and Outreach Visits

Staff members provided technical assistance and/or monitoring to several facilities during the last quarter. Trauma staff continues to provide technical assistance to all facilities in updating their profile in OATH. Trauma staff initiated web conferences for trauma system orientation and is making those presentations available online. Trauma staff is also updating scoring tools and applications to be compliant with the most recent set of rule revisions.

Designation Review Committee (DRC)

The DRC meeting for July was held virtually. The department appointed three new members including Nancy Bartkowiak representing a Trauma Nurse Coordinator, Kent Collins representing Prehospital/EMS Provider/General Public, and Jason Aminshirifi representing a General Surgeon from a Level III to the committee and introduced committee bylaws for review and recommendations for revisions. Centennial Medical Plaza, from the cancelled April meeting, was presented and received an automatic designation recommendation.

Statewide Trauma Advisory Committee (STAC)

The STAC meeting for July was held virtually. The department appointed one new member, Sherry Johnson, representing injury prevention on the committee and provided updates on the new trauma rules were promulgated on June 14, 2020. STAC committee bylaws were also introduced for review and recommendations for revision.

Stroke Advisory Board

House Bill 20-1397 passed the state legislature and was signed by the governor in late June. This bill removed the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment administrative support. This transition was completed by the end of August and the board continues its work to make recommendations on how to improve the stroke system of care in Colorado. A department representative will continue to sit on the board. More information can be found on the [Stroke Advisory Board webpage](#).

Other Trauma Section Activities

- Continued to provide technical assistance to stakeholders requesting registry assistance.



- The Trauma Section was able to publish a contact list as there was 100% compliance in completing the trauma facility profile.
- Invoices were sent to all 84 facilities seeking trauma designation. The annual billing cycle began July 1, 2020.

Data Section

Amber Viitanen, EMTS Data Section Manager, amber.viitanen@state.co.us

The data team continues to make progress enhancing data quality from licensed air and ground ambulance agencies across the state using Version 3.4.0. Over 200 agencies have transitioned to NEMSIS Version 3 data reporting. As a result, the department has shifted focus to quality improvement and enhanced data reporting. Most notably, the quarterly compliance reports that are sent to regional coordinators were expanded to include 13 total reports ranging from basic summary information to specific benchmark measures allowing coordinators to compare performance. In addition, the team has built several benchmark dashboards that will allow ambulance agencies to retrieve their own patient care data and compare their performance to their region and the state overall.

Utilizing the department's new partnership with Biospatial, Inc, a tool that uses emergency medical services and health-related data sources to provide timely, national-scale syndromic detection, monitor real-time trends, and alert to syndromic anomalies critical to the nation's health and safety, the data team has built regional sub-organizations to share vital data across the state. Additionally, the team has begun sharing state level reports examining changes in time sensitive syndromes treated by EMS as well as other topics of interest. Such topics include disease surveillance, motor vehicle crashes, overdoses, and general performance measures.

With over a million records in the Colorado Trauma Registry, the branch continues to refine its trauma data. In early 2019, the implementation of a new software, ImageTrend's Patient Registry was completed. It now serves as the data repository and direct entry system for the Colorado Trauma Registry. Approximately 60,000 records have been entered or imported into the system from all 85 facilities. The team has begun building new summary reports for facilities to access and will continue to refine this system to meet the needs of the trauma facilities and the department.

The EMTS branch also rolled out its new profile system in November 2019 and now has more than 200 organizations in the system. The ImageTrend Profiles replaced the previous homegrown CEMSIS Profiles system, but continues to maintain the same data that was collected in the old system and is the entry point for grant submission. Additionally, ImageTrend Profiles provides additional capabilities including: linking to ePCR data, medical directors, scope of practice waivers, and air ambulance licensing, increasing data quality and improved contact lists with verified accounts, and providing entry point to new EMS data dashboards.

Data Section staff members continue to:

- Provide NEMSIS Version 3 training and CQI, including new processes, rules, and updates



- Troubleshoot problems that arise with a completed schematron, ImageTrend ePCR, data entry, reporting, or other data issues
- Provide ongoing technical assistance to transport agencies, trauma centers and their software vendors
- Assist hospitals with accessing Hospital Hub Dashboard and Elite Field to enhance communication between medical staff and EMS providers
- Develop ad-hoc EMS and trauma reports to accommodate data requests and other data driven requirements including benchmarking and quality improvement
- Analyze data and prepare reports and/or presentations for stakeholders
- Assist EMS agencies using third party vendor software to establish an administrative web access and process for submitting XML data to the ImageTrend database
- Assist in implementation of the new Trauma Registry system in Colorado, including building data entry forms, validation rules, data dictionaries, scheduled reports, etc.
- Develop and implement new ways to use EMS and trauma data such as benchmark reports, dashboards, and presentations to enhance care for patients across Colorado

EMTS Investigations

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During the second quarter of 2020, there were two disciplinary actions against EMS providers' certifications that resulted in a final disposition. There were four ongoing cases filed with the Office of Administrative Courts, in which the Department is represented by the Attorney General's Office, one of which has been resolved during this quarter. Finally, 22 complaints were investigated, eight of which have been closed by the investigations unit, leaving 14 complaints still under investigation. For the purposes of this report, complaints regarding the same provider/agency/subject matter are considered one complaint.

Regional Emergency Medical and Trauma Advisory Councils (RETACs)

Matthew Paswaters, Coordinator, matthew.paswaters@state.co.us

Fourth quarter activity reports and FY20 financial statements, signed annual financial statements with budget variance report, and accountability and planned use of savings/investments/reserves report were submitted by all 11 RETACs. The most recent quarterly RETAC forum was held in September in Pueblo. SEMTAC members are encouraged to attend future RETAC forum meetings. The December forum will be held in Loveland.

Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC)

Contact: Stacey Quesada, Program Manager stacey.quesada@cuanschutz.edu

EMS for Children is a federal partnership grant funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. To address the grant deliverables most effectively, the program is housed at University of Colorado School of Medicine, which employs the EMSC Program Manager and manages most EMS for Children activities. A close relationship is maintained with the EMTS Branch. The Pediatric Emergency Care Committee (PECC) serves as the advisory committee for the program. The program continues to implement a [strategic plan](#). Activities this quarter included:



- Conducted the quarterly Pediatric Emergency Care Committee meeting
- Facilitated three Colorado Pediatric Preparedness for the ER (COPPER) steering committee meetings
- Developed and administered COPPER steering committee survey on ED Pediatric Emergency Care Coordinators' responsibilities
- Helped the Children's Hospital Colorado (CHCO) EMS Outreach and Education team record, host, and edit virtual lectures
- Created EMSC YouTube channel to house online pediatric education content
- Developed online evaluations/certificates for CHCO's online students
- Connected with the department's Office of Suicide Prevention to begin discussions around collaborating and sharing resources
- Made several enhancements to the EMSC website
- Attended the June RETAC forum (via phone)

Additional information is available at the [EMS for Children](#) website.

Communications

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Public access in the emergency medical services setting is defined as the ability of an individual to secure prompt and appropriate emergency medical care. All counties in the state have E911 telephone services. The existing Colorado digital trunked radio system provides statewide, two-way interoperable communications to state, local, tribal and a limited number of federal government agencies over a shared communication platform. The digital trunked radio system in Colorado consists of 247 remote tower sites, more than 1,000 agencies and more than 100,000 subscriber units (individual radios) spread across five zones. The system carried more than 110 million calls in fiscal year 2019. Local agencies provide additional funding to add infrastructure to the overall digital trunked radio system. Several new digital trunked radio tower sites are being constructed currently, with others scheduled to be completed in the near future. The Emergency Medical and Trauma Services grants program continues to help improve and expand communication infrastructure throughout the state. Funding has provided equipment to agencies so they can use the digital trunked radio system and keep other legacy communication systems operational.

The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) is an independent authority within the U.S. Department of Commerce. Chartered in 2012, its mission is to ensure the building, deployment and operation of the nationwide, broadband network that equips first responders to save lives and protect U.S. communities. Public safety spent years advocating for a nationwide broadband network for first responders following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Major public safety organizations continue to voice their strong support for the FirstNet network today. FirstNet Colorado leads the state's efforts to plan, develop and deploy the National Public Safety Broadband Network.

House Bill 18-1325 provided an appropriation of \$2 million dollars in FY18-19 and \$2 million dollars in FY19-20 for the Office of Information Technology, Public Safety Communications Network to work in partnership with local and regional government entities to add additional



Digital Trunked Radio System (DTRS) sites in areas experiencing critical coverage gaps for public safety radio communications.

