

MINUTES

NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Health Service Regulation
Office of Emergency Medical Services

Virtual Meeting

November 8, 2022
11:00 A.M.

Members Present

Dr. Kim Askew, Chairman
Mr. John Grindstaff
Dr. Jeff Williams
Dr. Douglas Swanson
Mr. Jim Albright
Dr. L. Lee Isley
Mr. Robert Poe
Ms. Gail K. Shue
Mr. Barry Britt
Mr. Kevin Staley
Dr. Roberto Portela
Mr. Robert Bednar

Mr. Todd Baker
Ms. Sarah Rivenbark
Mr. Andrew Baird
Ms. Viola Harris
Mr. David Garrison
Dr. Bill Atkinson
Dr. Darrell Nelson
Dr. Pascal Udekwo
Dr. Jay Wyatt

Members Absent

Dr. Kimberly McDonald
Mr. Jim Gusler
Mr. Chuck Elledge

Staff Members Present

Mr. Tom Mitchell
Ms. Susan Rogers
Dr. James "Tripp" Winslow
Ms. Melynda Swindells
Ms. Heather Majernik
Mr. David Ezzell
Mr. James Hood
Mr. Allen Johnson

Mr. Wally Ainsworth
Mr. Todd Messer
Ms. McKenzie Beamer
Ms. Toshiba Oates
Mr. Dale Sutphin
Mr. Anthony Davis
Mr. Chuck Lewis

Others Present

Brad Baker
West Barefoot
Candace Clark
Joe Bowman
Jen Burelson
Kara Clark
Jennifer Clurman
Gabriel Code
Kevin Collopy
Tyler Constantine
David Cowan
Adam Culbertson
M.B. DeLuca
Travis Donaldson
Tom Dorn
Todd Doster
Georgina Durst
Chad Eason
Mark Edison
Joel Faircloth
Shelby Ferry
D.C. Francisco
Elizabeth Freeman
Dustin Gardner
Craig Garner
David T. Garrison
Andrew Godfrey, MD
Dale Hill
Grant Hunsucker

Maia Johnson
Pamela Lowther
Vikki Lyman
Susan M. Macklin
Angela Magill
Robby Melton
Wayne Meredith, MD
Kim Messer
AJ Meyer
Jonathan Murphy
Jonathon Nixon
Kim Parsley
K. Richards
Deborah Rogers
Paul Seamann
Stacie Shatzer
Terence Sheehy
Troy Stauter
Haven Stiles
Richard Suggs
William Tutwiler
Kelly Urban
K. Vaught
Robert Whistler
Ira Whitford
Dwayne Williford
Scott Wilson
John Wooten
Joseph Zalkin

(1) Purpose of the Meeting: The North Carolina EMS Advisory Council met virtually to hear reports/updates on Trauma Center Designations, Compliance and Education, HealthCare Preparedness Program, Medical Director update and agency activity report. Also, the Council was presented with the Trauma Systems Plan update and a rules update.

(2) Actions of the Council:

Dr. Kim Askew, Co-Chairman of the Council, called the meeting to order at 11:12 a.m.

a) Motion was made by Dr. L. Lee Isley, seconded by Dr. Douglas Swanson, and unanimously approved that:

RESOLVED: The EMS Advisory Council minutes from the May 10, 2022 meeting be approved as submitted

b) Motion was made by Dr. Douglas Swanson, and seconded by Dr. Roberto Portelo and was unanimously approved, with two abstentions, Dr. Jay Wyatt and Mr. Jim Albright, that:

RESOLVED: Moses Cone Memorial Hospital Trauma Center designation be renewed.

Explanation: Moses Cone Memorial Hospital in Greensboro was visited on July 20 & 21, by ACS survey team and NCOEMS staff for the consideration of state re-designation as a Level II Trauma center and re-verification by the ACS as an Adult Level II Trauma Center. Many strengths were found and there were no deficiencies.

(3) Other Actions of the Council:

(a) Ms. Heather Majernik reported the following trauma update:

Moses Cone Memorial Hospital

- Moses Cone Memorial Hospital in Greensboro was visited on July 20 & 21, by ACS survey team and NCOEMS staff for the consideration of state re-designation as a Level II Trauma center and re-verification by the ACS as an Adult Level II Trauma Center. Many strengths were noted which included:
 - ✓ A Trauma Response Nurse program which has improved trauma patient evaluation and disposition
 - ✓ A strong trauma leadership team including Dr. Burke Thompson and Linda Fonshill
 - ✓ A robust EMS PI program
- No deficiencies were identified. OEMS Staff recommendations are consistent with those of the ACS Verification and Review Committee that Moses Cone be granted a designation renewal as a Level II Trauma Center for a period of three years, expiring on September 30, 2025

WakeMed Raleigh

- WakeMed Raleigh Hospital was visited on June 9 and 10, 2021 by the ACS survey team and the NCOEMS staff for the consideration of state re-designation as a Level I Trauma Center and re-verification by the ACS as an Adult Level I Trauma Center. The report was brought before the Council at the November 2021 meeting and at that time, due to a deficiency, it was decided to award a designation renewal for a period of one year through July 31, 2022. Once WakeMed Raleigh provided documentation that the deficiency for Universal Screening for alcohol use be corrected, the designation would be extended to July 31, 2024. The documentation was successfully submitted to NC OEMS and the ACS in June 2022. Full designation and verification was then awarded which extended the designation as a Level I Trauma Center through July 31, 2024

Novant Health New Hanover Regional Medical Center

- Novant Health New Hanover Medical center was visited on October 14 & 15, 2021 by an ACS survey team and NCOEMS staff for the consideration of state re-designation as a Level II trauma center and re-verification by the ACS as an Adult Level II Trauma Center.
- The report was brought to this council in February of this year and that time received approval to award re-designation for a period of one year through October 31, 2022 with the designation extended to October 31, 2024, once New Hanover provided documentation that the deficiencies for Universal screening for alcohol use be performed and documented for 80% of injured patients and that all Trauma surgeons attend at least 50% of the multidisciplinary trauma peer review committee meetings. Documentation has been successfully submitted to the ACS and NCOEMS in September 2022 and per

the guidance of this counsel NCOEMS has extended the designation as a Level II Trauma Center through October 31, 2024.

- Wake Forrest Baptist was reviewed on November 1-2, 2022 in a joint ACS/OEMS Level I designation renewal visit and Duke University Hospital was reviewed on November 2-3, 2022 in a joint ACS / NCOEMS Level I designation renewal site visit. We are waiting for the report from ACS.
- CaroMont Regional Medical Center in Gastonia is scheduled for a Level III designation renewal by the OEMS on November 16, 2022. Womack Army Medical Center is scheduled to have a joint ACS/NCOEMS Level III designation renewal site visit in January 2023
- The American College of Surgeons has released their updated 2022 Standards which will go into effect in February 2023 for consult visits and September 2023 for site visits. We are updating all relevant state documents including the Request for Proposal form and appendices which is part of the application process for state only designated trauma centers.

(b) Dr. Wayne Meredith gave an update on the Trauma System Plan Development

- Meetings have been held via ZOOM since early summer where there have been discussions on how to redesign the North Carolina Trauma Systems State rules.
- A gap analysis of what is ideal relative to what is known and to several other state system rule set that have been successful. There were nine committees formed:
 - ✓ Administrative Committee
 - ✓ Injury Prevention Committee
 - ✓ Pre-hospital Committee
 - ✓ Non-trauma Center Hospital Committee
 - ✓ RAC Committee
 - ✓ Trauma Center Care Committee
 - ✓ Rehabilitation Committee
 - ✓ Performance Improvement & Data Quality Committee
 - ✓ Emergency Management & Disaster Preparedness Committee
- A template was created for each Committee of issues that are thought to be needed to discuss and to identify stakeholders thought to be needed to be involved in the decision-making process.
- Presently, requesting volunteers that would be best to lead each of the Committees and they will be offered a redesign text of tasks
- Each Committee head will meet with a steering committee to assure, for example, the Prevention Committee is not planning on having data that the Data Committee is not planning on collecting.

It may take another year to get all of this done; Stakeholders work and the actual document and refining of the document, then taking it back out to the rest of the Stakeholders to complete. The Committee has been working very hard and has gotten a lot done; it is thought this will be successful provided there is enough time given. Plan is to have the Committees formed within the next two weeks. There will then be a ZOOM meeting of the Committee Chairs and an in person kick-off meeting after the Holidays; allowing for the Chairs to pull together their Stakeholders and Committee members. Each will have an executive team of about 4 or 5 personnel that are writing, therefore, the next update meeting should be ready sometime in February.

(c) Ms. Melynda Swindells reported the following compliance update:

Credentialing

- timeframe of 8-1-22 through 10-31-22, the Credentialing unit issued 1382 credentials with the following:
 - 338 EMD
 - 30 EMR
 - 779 EMT
 - 68 AEMT
 - 167 Paramedic (12% of credentials issued)

Turn-around times

- Data shows wait time credentials (waiting on applicant to submit the fingerprint packet) accounts for the lag in issuing. Staff is processing paperwork the same day it is received and able to be processed.

Possible causes: Law enforcement appointment availability for non-criminal applicant printing, USPS delivery delays and mail service center delays and limited delivery days.

Legal Recognition

- 24 days for those that require a federal fingerprint check
- 2 day turnaround for those that don't require a federal check

Testing

- 23 days for those that require a federal fingerprint check
- Same day for those that don't require a federal check

Military

- Averaging same day turnaround time

SBI

- 3 days
- Next Disciplinary Committee meeting is Tuesday, 11/29
 - Top reason for reviews between Aug – Oct 2022, DWI (27%) and Violent offenses (26%). Patient care made up 2% of what was reviewed by Disciplinary Committee.
- We are heading into our busy season with testing. We are starting to see testing registrations not seen since May 2022 (end of spring semester). If past is present, these volumes should remain heavy until mid January.
- Legal recognition applications have been extremely heavy for the past three months. In addition, most individuals are not reading the instructions and submitting incomplete applications which is slowing down the process. So that everyone can be processed in a timely manner, please remind prospective employees to ensure they have a valid NR or other state's card and NC driver's license or letter of affiliation IN HAND prior to applying.

(d) Mr. Todd Messer reported the following education update:

- There are 28 fully accredited institutions for AEMT and Paramedic courses. There are 19 institutions under letter of review and an additional 5 are waiting for virtual site visits and there are +/- 5 that are undecided.

- Non-accredited programs offering AEMT may continue to offer AEMT until CAAHEP institutes the AEMT accreditation. Programs will then have 6 months from the go live date to provide verification of application for AEMT accreditation
- There have been eight Program Coordinator workshops held with 191 attendees. These workshops are an annual requirement for all institution Program Coordinators. Out of 160 institutions, there are 156 compliant with this rule.
- Workshops to be held:
 - EMS Administrators Winter Symposium, Wilmington, NC: (submitted)
 - Tuesday, March 7th (35 seats)
 - Wednesday, March 8th (35 seats)
 - NC EMS Expo, Greensboro, NC:
 - Friday, April 28th (35 seats)
 - Saturday, April 29th (35 seats)
 - EMS Administrators Summer Symposium, Asheville, NC: (tentative)
 - Tuesday, August 1st (35 seats)
 - Wednesday, August 2nd (35 seats)
- Instructor applications are now in a digital format; it is live and on our website. We will be adding the Institution application soon
- 2023 Instructor workshops will remain virtual; dates have been published in Continuum
- Scantron Assessment solutions is now MeazureLearning. OEMS is working on the scope of work for the next five year testing contract
- Exams administered through 10/31/22:

Level	Number
EMR	356
EMT	3395
AEMT	345
Paramedic	654

- Current courses ending through 12/31/22:

Level	Number
EMR	35
EMT	146
AEMT	21
Paramedic	38

(e) Mr. David Ezzell reported the following HPP Program update:

- Coalition engagement visits: over the last year, staff met with the coalitions for a week doing business throughout the region. Coalitions gave very positive feedback; they felt it was very beneficial. The plan is to continue these visit beginning in February 2023
- Plan/train/exercise cycle: large staff exercise was done last May that went very well and we received positive feedback from staff. They requested more training so we will work these on a quarterly cycle, for example, the first month will be review of plan, the next training and the last we will have an exercise.
- Ebola Webinar is planned for Thursday, November 10 at 1:00 pm. We will be reviewing how the Ebola plan will work with regards to notifications for frontline hospitals, EMS agencies, etc.

- Hurricane Ian: we did activate at the State EOC; however, we were very fortunate in that we did not have the impact that some of our neighboring states did.
- Website: the website has been updated and many changes have been made, the link to the site is <https://hpp.nc.gov>
- Response updates:
 - there are two new COVID variants on the rise for which some therapeutics are not effective against
 - the Ebola Sudan virus strain has been identified; presently, there are 46 persons being monitored, but none are being investigated. The difference is that the persons being monitored have been to Uganda but showing no signs of infection, very low risk, vs persons investigated which would be those showing symptoms
 - There has been an early flu season surge, with 15% of all flu hospitalizations ending up in the ICU.
 - There has been a decrease in Monkey Pox, as well as a decrease in vaccine demand. 70% of people who had taken the first dose, also took the second.
 - There has been a surge of RSV in seniors and pediatrics. A statewide patient coordination team has been activated.
- Surge capacity concerns:
 - There has been record ED volumes of increased influenza like illness (ILI) and Covid like illness (CLI) visit
 - Increased ICU usage – pediatric at 95% occupied capacity and adult ICU bed usage is at 85% occupied capacity
 - EMS concerns with staff outages, consider encouraging staff to take the flu vaccines; also, there will be extended turnaround times due to staff outages.

(f) Dr. Tripp Winslow gave the following OEMS Medical Director Update:

- Grants implementing EMS Medication assisted therapy bridge have gone out to several Counties.
- Dr. Nelson has recently released a few protocol updates.
- Per Dr. Nelson, a significant number of minor changes were made to the bulk of the protocols. The only ones not changed were Adult Cardiac and Pediatric Cardiac as they were updated last year. Going forward, the plan is to get these updates back to a yearly update in order to ease some of the administrative burden on the EMS System. We will be moving to make yearly updates in October; standard release will likely be 10/15 of each year.

(g) Mr. Wally Ainsworth gave the following rules update:

- Rules are being looked at in order to “clean up” and clarify some areas. Areas impacted include definitions, specialty care, medical oversight, EMS personnel credentials and Education institutions, as well as Trauma Centers and the enforcement of rules. There are approximately 20-25 rules, depending on the changes to be made. More details will follow soon

(h) Mr. Tom Mitchell gave the following Agency update:

- There was \$2.8 million allocated to EMS Agencies by the General Assembly to expand EMS medication-assisted treatment programs across the state. These funds are being administered by the Division of Mental Health. Staff was involved in the review of the applications. Agencies that were approved by DMH to receive funding were notified on September 2nd, 2022. Agencies that were approved for funding each received \$350,000 to implement their program. Agencies that received funding were;

- Cumberland County EMS/Cape Fear MIH
- Gaston County EMS
- Halifax County EMS
- Lincoln County EMS
- Davie County EMS
- Durham County EMS
- Rockingham County EMS
- Surry County EMS

We will be working to ensure that feedback on these programs is provided to the General Assembly with the hope of more money being allocated to the program in the future.

- Each year, a Basic Life Support Competition is held in conjunction with the NC Association of Rescue and EMS Convention, which was held in Beaufort, NC in September. This competition gives our younger EMS personnel an opportunity to compete against each other; this is done for both senior and junior teams. The agencies that participated and won in this recent competition were from Columbus County and Northampton County.
- Waiver of NC General Statute 131E-158 has remained in effect to allow for EMS agency staff challenges. This waiver was schedule to end with the Governor's State of Emergency, however, we were able to get General Statute changed to allow for flexibility with a SOE being in place. The change to the Statute allowed language to be inserted as follows:

...In the event of a declaration of a public health emergency by the Secretary of the US DHHS, or a determination by the NC Office of EMS of the existence of an emergency that poses a risk to the health or safety of patient, NC Office of EMS may temporarily waive the requirements of this section and allow ambulances to transport patients with a minimum of the following:

This was granted by the Attorney General's office at the request of OEMS to coincide with the Federal Public Health Emergency, which has now been extended to January 11, 2023. The current use of this waiver, while not widespread, is being used by some and is critical to maintaining their operations in the current staffing crisis. EMS agencies may contact staff at OEMS with any questions and/or assistance.

- EMS Expo '23 is scheduled to be held on April 28th through May 3rd, 2023. There is a great lineup of National and Local Speakers. Requests for nominations for the Dr. George Johnson Award, Graham Pervier Award and Kent Spitler Award will go out soon. This upcoming Expo will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Office of EMS; the office was created by the General Assembly in 1973.
- Rule changes will be distributed to the Council for review prior to our next meeting in order to proceed to the Medical Care Commission to enter into the rulemaking process. Upon receipt, please take a moment to review them and let our office know of any concerns prior to our next meeting. The Advisory Council approval is needed in order to proceed to the Medical Care Commission, which will start the approximately 18 month process for approval.
- If you have not done so, please complete the electronic survey with regards to future Advisory Council meetings format.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:02 pm.

Minutes submitted by Susan Rogers