



**Chairperson**  
Lisa A. Drago, DO, FAAP  
Pediatric Emergency Medicine Physician

**New Jersey Emergency Medical Services  
for  
Children Advisory Council**

**Emergency Medical Services for Children Advisory Council  
MINUTES of June 17, 2025**

**Members Present:** Dr. Navin Ariyaprakai, Ms. Debra Bell, Ms. Kelly Boyd, Dr. Jeanne Craft, Dr. Angela D'Alessandro, Dr. Lisa Drago, Dr. Neil Miele, Ms. Sonia Rita, Mr. Daniel Sullivan

**Members Absent:** Dr. Maya Baas, Dr. Frank Castello, Ms. Maureen Donnelly, Dr. Louis Difazio, Dr. Ernest Leva, Dr. Mark McCollum, Mr. John Napolitano, Dr. Nilesh Patel, Dr. Anderson Richard, Ms. Denise Serbay, Ms. Marvella Cephas

**Guests/Attendees:** Ms. Emily Blumemstyk, Ms. Alice Condo, Mr. Michael Copeland, Dr. Jagdip Gill, Mr. Alec Glucksman, Lt. John Harbourt, Mr. David Hernandez, Dr. Matthew Harris, Mr. Andy Ibanez, Mr. Michael Riely, Ms. Amy Ondeyka, Ms. Angela Kim, Mr. Les Polk, Mr. Bruce Ruck, Dr. Adam Sivitz

**Dept. of Health:** Ms. Candace Gardner, Mr. Eric Hicken, Ms. Dana Johnson, Ms. Fatima Manzoor, Mr. Timothy Seplaki

The Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Advisory Council convened virtually on June 17, 2025, via Microsoft Teams, with a call to order at 10:00 AM by Dr. Drago

**CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the March 2025 meeting were distributed to the members of the council via email before this meeting and were voted on for approval

*Motion to approve the March 2025 meeting minutes (Mr. Sullivan). Seconded (Dr. Ariyaprakai). Approved (Unanimous)*

## **COMMITTEE/SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Chairperson's Report – Dr. Drago**

- Mobile Intensive Care Advisory Council (MAC) Meeting Updates
  - Trauma gel trial at Cooper completed. The results were deemed not useful
- Pediatric Protocols
  - Protocols are revised regularly. A pediatric protocols subcommittee is being organized
- New Jersey EMS Council Meeting Updates
  - Next meeting scheduled for June 18, 2025, no report available
- Culture of Safety Meeting
  - Due to Mr. Taylor's departure, the committee will be overseen by the Office of EMS
  - The Committee collaborated on EMS safe transport protocols. Materials available on request
- Race, Poverty, and Neglect Subcommittee
  - The Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) Program is being revised with considerations on delivery format and audience
- Disaster Response Collaborative
  - Successful national tabletop exercises involving several New Jersey hospitals. Received positive feedback. Efforts are underway to make this an annual event
- Pediatric Pandemic Network
  - Pediatric Disaster Preparedness Self-Assessment for Children's Hospitals (PDPACH). The deadline to complete this has been extended and New Jersey hospitals are being encouraged to participate

- Pediatric Emergency Department Designations
  - Need to meet with the new Commissioner to start the conversation again regarding this initiative

### **Department of Health – Division of Disaster Preparedness, Resiliency, and Emergency Medical Services (DPREMS)**

- Office of Emergency Medical Services – Ms. Gardner
  - Blood Program has been started with three programs signing up.
  - Nerve Agent waiver was issued for World Cup 2026 and is available on the Departments website
  - One Paramedic Pronouncements is being considered and waiting on the Board of Medical Examiners to have conversation and discussion to ensure there are no conflicts
  - With the departure of the Commissioner, Jeffrey Brown will be Acting Commissioner and Dr. Novneet Sahu has assumed the role of Deputy Commissioner
  - The Privacy Officer will be meeting with the councils to discuss their role and responsibilities
- The 2025 National Conference on EMS and Awards Program – Mr. Seplaki
  - Award program nominations are open
  - Conference Dates: November 19–22, 2025, at Harris Waterfront Conference Center

### **Family Advisory Network (FAN) Report – Ms. Rita**

- Plans underway for a New Jersey EMSC FAN Facebook and Instagram page
- New EMSC Bear logo update in process
- All-FAN virtual meeting with PECARN planned for August 7, 2025
- Discussion on broader NJ EMSC social media presence, but current DOH policy limits to official Department accounts

### **Office of Disaster Resilience (ODR) EMSC – Mr. Hicken**

- EMSC Grant Program
  - Received notice of award for \$190,650 for the remainder of the grant year (through March 2026). All program activities funded under this grant will continue

- National Prehospital Pediatric Readiness Project (PPRP) assessment
  - Data remains unreleased by the University of Utah due to administrative changes. Tentative release expected within the next few months.
- N.J.A.C. 8:43G-12.1 Emergency Department and Trauma Services (Addition and Review of Pediatric Standards)
  - Updates to Emergency Department and Trauma Services regulations submitted and are currently going through an approval process
  - Once published for public comment they will be shared with the council
- Emergency Department Database
  - No update
- Improving Pediatric Acute Care through Simulation (ImPACT) ED/EMS
  - Data collection concluded in NJ and partner states. Results expected in fall 2025
- Always Ready for Children
  - Emergency Department
    - Working on system entry procedures for hospitals to enroll
  - Emergency Medical Services
    - Five EMS teams completed application process; additional agencies are in progress
- Injury Prevention Program – Andy the Ambulance
  - Pause the program for July due to staffing and program reassessment
- Safe Transport of Children Committee (STC)
  - Funding for Phase 2 testing at 95% secured. Expected to begin in Fiscal Year 2026, testing will take about nine to twelve months. This will establish national ambulance child restraint standards

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Pediatric Pandemic Network (PPN) – Dr. Matthew Harris**

- Presentation on the PPN, its history, FEMA Region 2 collaborative model, and upcoming initiatives.
- Goals: Disaster preparedness, behavioral health initiatives, infectious disease outbreak readiness.
- NJ EMS for Children invited to participate in advisory councils, tabletop exercises, and PD-PACH surveys.
- PPN Advisory Council to be formed for Region 2, inviting NJ representation

### **Pediatric Disaster Preparedness Self-Assessment for Children's Hospitals (PDPACH) – Dr. Matthew Harris**

- Hospitals are encouraged to complete. Dr. Drago noted Newark Beth Israel completed theirs.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **By-Laws**

- No updates reported

### **EMSC Appointment Update**

- Ongoing challenges. Ms. Gardner reported a renewed push with DOH leadership during the current administrative transition

### **EMSC Program Strategic Plan**

- Still in development; aiming for fall 2025 finalization

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Mr. Hernandez shared National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) plans to increase pediatric EMS education opportunities at low/no cost
- Ms. Boyd shared information about an upcoming Seizure First Aid training on August 14

- Ms. Rita confirmed Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) funding for EMSC is moving through, with a new competitive application cycle expected late 2025
- Mr. Hicken announced discussions with NJ Highway Traffic Safety on a potential hot car death prevention initiative for April–October

### **MEETING SCHEDULE**

- September 16, 2025, at 10:00 AM via Microsoft TEAMS
- December 16, 2025, at 10:00 AM via Microsoft TEAMS

### **ADJOURNMENT**

*Motion to adjourn the meeting (Mr. Sullivan). Seconded (Ms. Rita). Approved (unanimous)*

This meeting was adjourned at 11:01 AM