



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 September 16, 2025**

Members Present: Dr. Navin Ariyaprakai, Dr. Maya Baas, Ms. Debra Bell, Ms. Kelly Boyd, Dr. Frank Castello, Dr. Angela D'Alessandro, Ms. Maureen Donnelly, Dr. Lisa Drago, Dr. Neil Miele, Ms. Sonia Rita, Ms. Denise Serbay, Mr. Daniel Sullivan

Members Absent: Dr. Jeanne Craft, Dr. Louis Difazio, Dr. Ernest Leva, Dr. Mark McCollum, Mr. John Napolitano, Dr. Nilesh Patel, Dr. Anderson Richard, Ms. Marvella Cephas

Guests/Attendees: Dr. Diane Calello, Mr. Steven Cohen, Mr. Michael Copeland, Dr. Joseph Gallagher, Dr. Alec Glucksman, Mr. Les Polk, Mr. Russell Powel, Dr. Adam Sivitz, Ms. Melissa Walker, Dr. Kei Wong, Dr. Stephen Vetrano

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

The Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Advisory Council convened virtually on September 16, 2025, via Microsoft Teams, with a call to order at 10:00 AM by Dr. Drago

CORRESPONDENCE

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the June 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 June 2025 meeting minutes (Dr. Drago). Seconded (Mr. Sullivan). Approved (Unanimous)

INTRODUCTIONS

New attendees introduced themselves

Ms. Rachel Hammond, Ethics Officer for the New Jersey Department of Health, provided a presentation on ethics requirements for members of boards, councils, and commissions, including EMSC.

COMMITTEE/SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairperson's Report – Dr. Drago

- Mobile Intensive Care Advisory Council (MAC) Meeting Updates
 - Attended the MAC meeting last week on September 8, 2025
 - Discussion included EMS pediatric protocols; several suggestions were received prior to and during the meeting. These will be circulated to members for review
- New Jersey EMS Council Meeting Updates
 - Next meeting scheduled for September 17, 2025, no report available
- Race, Poverty, and Neglect Subcommittee
 - Met multiple times over the summer and made significant progress
 - Education, liability, and reporting workgroups also met; outcomes were voted on earlier this month
 - Recommendations will advance to the NJ Child Abuse Committee later this month
 - The group is exploring a shift from “mandated reporting” toward “supportive reporting,” with an emphasis on providing resources for families struggling with poverty or related issues
 - Dr. Drago will request permission to share materials with EMSC members for review

- TEN-4 Day
 - TEN-4 stands for Torso, Ears, Neck (TEN) in children under 4 years old, and relates to identifying suspicious bruising as potential child abuse
 - A proclamation for TEN-4 Day was submitted for recognition in New Jersey
 - An educational lecture is scheduled for October 23rd at 10:00 AM. Further details will be distributed
- Pediatric Pandemic Network (PPN)
 - Region 2 site visit took place over the summer
 - Region 2 includes NY, NJ, United States Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Virginia
 - This was New Jersey's first time participating in person, and discussions were productive
 - The PPN Prehospital Committee meeting is scheduled for later today; relevant updates will be shared with the Council afterwards

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

- Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Update – Ms. Gardner
 - Progress continues on the MIH program. Final approvals are pending from the Attorney General's Office and the Governor's Office before the program can officially launch
 - Under the current statute, MIH regulations may move forward without public comment, expediting the process
 - The program framework is intentionally flexible. Each approved agency will determine its own program focus (e.g., cardiac rehab, harm reduction, pediatrics, disaster response) based on community needs
 - Pediatric-focused MIH programs may be developed at the discretion of individual hospitals or agencies

- Ms. Gardner thanked stakeholders who participated in meetings and provided written feedback
- Michael Estwan has joined the OEMS team as the first full-time staff member dedicated to MIH oversight. He attended the recent MAC meeting and will be present at the NJ EMS Council meeting tomorrow
- Paramedic Pronouncement Waiver – Ms Gardner
 - The Board of Medical Examiners met on August 13th and did not object to single paramedic pronouncements
 - The Department will issue a waiver authorizing singular provider pronouncements in the field
- Hepatitis B Inoculation Fund – Ms. Gardner
 - Funding is available through the Division of Epidemiology, Environmental, and Occupational Health to reimburse costs for Hepatitis B vaccinations
 - Eligible groups include EMTs, firefighters, and police officers
 - Priority will be given in the following order
 - Municipalities with volunteer EMTs, paramedics, or firefighters
 - Municipalities with fewer than 100 EMTs/firefighters/officers
 - Municipalities with more than 100 service workers
- The 2025 National Conference on EMS and Awards Program – Mr. Seplaki
 - Registration is now open; Early Bird registration available through September 30th
 - This year marks the 20th anniversary of the conference, with several new offerings
 - ALS Paramedic Refresher: 16 CEUs, scheduled for Tuesday, October 18th, and Wednesday, October 19th
 - Pre-Conference Summit: Includes First Overdose Response Summit training on Wednesday, October 19th

- Blood Drive CEUs: Participants can earn 0.75 CEUs through donation on Thursday, November 20th
- Wills for Heroes Program: On-site advanced directives and free will preparation on Friday, November 21st and Saturday, November 22nd
- Awards Program: Celebrating the 25th anniversary
 - 142 nominations received, including three pediatric awards
 - Nominees will receive pins; public voting for the Community Service Award will open until October 7th via the conference website
- SIM Competition
 - Eight ALS agencies and nine BLS agencies registered.
 - Two ALS and one BLS spots remain available.

Family Advisory Network (FAN) Report – Ms. Rita

- No update

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

- EMSC Grant Program
 - Initial funding earlier this year covered 48% of the grant; full funding of \$190,650 has now been received
 - An additional \$8,000 was awarded, exceeding the original request
 - Funds will support the replacement of Andy the Ambulance, a remotely controlled vehicle used for injury prevention and public education, and support program staff through the end of the grant period in March 2026

- National Prehospital Pediatric Readiness Project (PPRP) assessment
 - Data from 2000 through early 2024 was recently provided by the University of Utah
 - Access to data requires a special request to the University; individual hospitals/EMS agencies can request their own data reports to compare with national averages
 - New Jersey performed well overall
- N.J.A.C. 8:43G-12.1 Emergency Department and Trauma Services (Addition and Review of Pediatric Standards)
 - Regulations updated and adopted without change to maintain validity. Further modifications will be implemented as approved
 - 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
 - Collaborative program with Yale Children's Hospital and other hospitals
 - Initial rollout completed; data being finalized
 - Program aims to evaluate pediatric prehospital care across low-, medium-, and high-volume agencies. Preliminary results indicate that agencies with higher pediatric patient volume perform better and more confidently
- Always Ready for Children
 - Emergency Department
 - Working on system entry procedures for hospitals to enroll
 - The Emergency Department component has been delayed due to staffing and administrative changes, but is expected to launch by early next year

- Emergency Medical Services
 - The EMS side of “Always Ready for Children” has been federally recognized
 - Five agencies have completed all requirements; site visits are now required for performance measure validation
- Injury Prevention Program – Andy the Ambulance
 - Events were canceled temporarily due to “Andy the Ambulance” vehicle damage, but bookings are already scheduled through next summer, including the NJEA conference for fall 2026
 - Program was active throughout the summer with exposure to over 40,000 people at school events, fairs, National Night Out, bicycle rodeos, and car seat inspections
 - New Hot Car Injury and Death Prevention Program deployed, demonstrating extreme vehicle interior temperatures (e.g., 165°F within one hour at 85°F exterior)
 - Education materials, pamphlets, and car stickers were distributed to raise awareness
 - Partnership with NJ Highway Traffic Safety Administration provided approximately \$15k in funding and expressed interest in expanding the program in 2026
- Safe Transport of Children Committee (STC)
 - Phase two is in progress; federal collaboration is ongoing, with funding gaps to complete later phases. Expected completion: 3–5 years

NEW BUSINESS

Nothing reported

OLD BUSINESS

By-Laws

- No updates reported

EMSC Appointment Update

- No updates reported

EMSC Program Strategic Plan

- Work is underway to develop a strategic plan for EMSC
- A call for volunteers was circulated via email; a few members expressed interest
- A subcommittee meeting is expected to be scheduled in October
- Dates for the October meeting will be coordinated; additional interested members may email Dr. Drago to be included
- Ms. Manzoor will assist in coordinating participants and scheduling

Prehospital Pediatric Protocol Review

- Dr. Drago sent previously collected MAC meeting suggestions and comments; an additional 7-page document was received this morning
- Floor opened for discussion of protocol changes; initial review indicates no major changes
- Members were invited to provide comments, raise concerns, or discuss specific items from the documents
- A detailed discussion took place between the attendees and the council member

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Mr. Cohen is working on the Always Ready for Children application; he identified a gap in the disaster preparedness plan for children
 - Ms. Boyd suggested contacting Family Assistance Center representatives for guidance
 - Ms. Bell suggested checking prior pediatric disaster planning and providing materials

MEETING SCHEDULE

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

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting (Dr. Drago). Seconded (Mr. Sullivan). Approved (unanimous)

This meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM