



State of New Jersey  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Commissioner

**Emergency Medical Services for Children Advisory Council  
MINUTES of September 17, 2024**

**Members Present:** Ms. Kelly Boyd (video), Dr. Frank Castello (video), Ms. Marvella Cephas (video), Dr. Angela D'Alessandro (video), Ms. Maureen Donnelly (video), Dr. Lisa Drago (video), Dr. Ernest Leva (video), Dr. Neil Miele (video), Ms. Sonia Rita (video), Mr. Daniel Sullivan (video)

**Members Absent:** Dr. Navin Ariyaprakai, Dr. Maya Baas, Ms. Debra Bell, Dr. Jeanne Craft, Dr. Mark McCollum, Mr. John Napolitano, Dr. Nilesh Patel, Dr. Anderson Richard, Ms. Denise Serbay

**Guests/Attendees:** Dr. Richard Flyer (video), Mr. Daniel Garner (video), Mr. Louis Imperatrice (video), Mr. Michael Riley (video), Mr. Les Polk (video)

**Dept. of Health:** Ms. Judy Faulkner (video), Ms. Candace Gardner (video), Mr. Eric Hicken (video), Ms. Dana Johnson (video), Mr. Daniel Kazar (video), Ms. Fatima Manzoor (video), Ms. Kirsten Posselt (video), Dr. Navneet Sahu (video), Mr. Timothy Seplaki (video), Mr. Colin Taylor (video)

The Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Advisory Council convened virtually on September 17, 2024, via Microsoft Teams, with a call to order at 10:00 AM by Dr. Drago

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is a formal meeting of The Emergency Medical Services for Children Advisory Council. Adequate notice of this meeting has been published in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 231, Public Law 1975, c-10:4.10 of New Jersey entitled, "Open Public Meetings Act". Notices were sent to the Secretary of State, who posted the notice in a public place. Notices were forwarded to 12 New Jersey newspapers, two New York newspapers, two wire services, two Philadelphia newspapers, and WNET (non-commercial educational public television). Notices were posted to the Department's website at [www.nj.gov/health/ems/](http://www.nj.gov/health/ems/)

**CORRESPONDENCE**

None

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the May 2024 meeting were distributed to the members of the council via email before this meeting and were voted on for approval

Motion to approve the May 2024 meeting minutes (Mr. Sullivan). Seconded (Ms. D'Alessandro).  
Approved (Unanimous)

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

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

- Dr. Drago informed everyone that Dr. Lovell and a group of people are working on updating New Jersey's dispatcher guide cards. The focus will be on enhancing and expanding the limited pediatric guidance currently available
- Dr. Drago participated in the recent Mobile Intensive Care (MAC) Advisory Council meeting and New Jersey Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Council meeting where several issues were raised, including
  - Reviewing and providing input on the new pediatric protocols
  - Addressing considerations for blood products and TXA administration for pediatric cases
- Dr. Drago suggested forming a subcommittee to support the ongoing efforts to refine the strategic plan incorporating national core measures
- Dr. Drago highlighted preparation for TEN 4 Day where EMSC will be offering educational classes and is working on obtaining a New Jersey Proclamation recognizing TEN 4 Day
- Dr. Drago will be engaging with stakeholders who are interested in bringing Project Adam to New Jersey more information will be shared in New Business

#### **OEMS Report – Ms. Gardner**

- OEMS Update – Ms. Gardner

- Ms. Gardner informed everyone about the various positions open in the office and highly encouraged individuals to reach out for more details if interested
- Ms. Gardner updated everyone regarding the new division name Division of Disaster Preparedness, Resiliency, and Emergency Medical Services (DPREMS) She also informed that six members of the Office of EMS (OEMs) are moving to new roles within DPREMS
- Ongoing stakeholder engagement and feedback on the Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Program. Programs will be tailored to specific community needs, with EMSC input planned to shape the framework and ensure flexibility
- A BLS waiver has been issued, allowing agencies to include Albuterol, CPAP, PEEP, and glucometers
- A simultaneous waiver is underway for ALS paramedics to administer blood transfusions, with additional guidelines forthcoming
- Due to varying online education standards without clinical hours, work is ongoing to establish minimum educational standards for reciprocity
- New legislation expands eligibility for EMT training funds to include all agencies with volunteers who meet certain service commitments. Guidelines are being prepared, and instructors are reminded to complete rosters promptly for timely reimbursement
- Updates to the EMT refresher program are in progress, including a national focus on establishing minimum competencies for EMT students
- Dr. Flyer raised questions regarding follow-up on recommendations made to the Commissioner of Health in a previous meeting. Specifically, he inquired about the Commissioner's promise to engage with stakeholders on those recommendations, which focused on the need for:
  - Pediatric-readiness improvements
  - Regulatory standards aligned with national guidelines
  - Routine inspections of facilities

- Ongoing quality improvement measures
- Mr. Gardner confirmed that a broader stakeholder meeting with hospital administrators and emergency department medical directors is scheduled later in the month to address pediatric readiness and related standards. The meeting is by invitation only designated for hospital CEOs and ED chairs
  - Dr. Ernest Leva requested that an update on this hospital stakeholder meeting be included on the agenda for the next EMSC meeting
- The 2024 National Conference on EMS and Awards Program – Ms. Gardner
  - Registration for the conference is open, with early registration discounts ending on the 30th. There will be a pre-conference refresher day on November 19, supported by Hackensack Meridian Health, and additional sessions on November 20-23

#### **Office of Data Analytics and Resources – Mr. Seplaki**

- Mr. Seplaki provided updates on the recent to latest version of the National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS) aims to capture more detailed data on pediatric cases, which will support expanded data insights and quality improvement
- Mr. Seplaki discussed efforts to enhance opioid safety by distributing lock bags to secure medication for at-risk populations. He mentioned that the program is actively seeking resources to make these available through EMSC
  - Dr. Leva then raised a concern regarding the lack of representation from the Poison Control Center, which used to be an active part of the committee but has not participated in recent years
    - Mr. Hicken assured Dr. Leva that he regularly communicates with Poison Control and would reach out to ensure their attendance, expressing confidence that the director would be willing to assign someone

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

- Ms. Rita attended the recent steering committee and provided the dates for the All-Grantee Team meeting from August 11<sup>th</sup> to August 15<sup>th</sup>
  - This year's meeting will emphasize family-centered care

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

- EMSC Grant Program – Mr. Hicken
  - Carry over request for some funds from last year to this year has been submitted
  - The program currently supports Child Passenger Safety Inspection Program and the Hot Car Death Prevention Program
  - During Child Passenger Safety Week EMSC will be conducting online education on September 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM and will be conducting child passenger safety checks at inspection sites throughout the state
- National Prehospital Pediatric Readiness Project (PPRP) assessment
  - Assessment results will be available towards the end of the year
- N.J.A.C. 8:43G-12.1 Emergency Department and Trauma Services (Addition and Review of Pediatric Standards)
  - Additional questions were asked regarding the suggested recommendations which were answered, and they are being moved forward
- Emergency Department Database
  - No update
- School Nurse Education Program
  - 3 online classes are scheduled for October, November, and December

- Always Ready for Children (ARC)
  - ARC-Emergency Department (ED) is currently still under the approval process
  - ARC – EMS had 2 agencies complete the program and were recognized
    - Hillside Fire Department (1<sup>st</sup> BLS agency)
    - Hackensack Meridian Health Medical Center (1<sup>st</sup> ALS agency)
- Injury Prevention Program – Andy the Ambulance
  - Ms. Manzoor and Mr. Colin have been extremely busy going all over the state to county fairs, school events, and other events providing educational material on injury prevention, seat belts, helmets, and many more safety tips
- Co-sleeping
  - Ms. Manzoor has been the lead on the project and is working on obtaining a few cribs that EMSC can provide to families that do not have the ability to provide safe sleeping spaces for their children
- Safe Drug Storage Bag
  - Currently in the process of getting funding source approved
- Safe Transport of Children Committee (STC)
  - Phase one (1) is completed. Phase two will begin Spring of 2025
  - Currently in the process of securing a funding source

## **OLD BUSINESS**

## **By-Laws**

- Mr. Hicken informed by-laws on hold until appointments are completed

## **EMSC Appointment Update**

- No updates

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Prehospital Blood to Tranexamic Acid (TXA) Discussion**

- The committee discussed the long-standing consideration of administering tranexamic acid (TXA) to pediatric patients. Initially, TXA was included in state EMS protocols only for adults, but there has been ongoing dialogue about lowering the age limit from 16 to 13, and most recently, removing the age restriction entirely
- There was significant discussion about pre-hospital blood administration for trauma, which is closely related to the discussion on TXA

### **Project ADAM Presentation**

- Mr. Riley from Cooper Medical Center, presented Project ADAM, which aims to create “heart-safe” schools through CPR training, AED accessibility, and cardiac emergency drills
  - **Goals:** Designate schools as “heart-safe” and encourage cardiac emergency preparedness in alignment with New Jersey’s Janet’s Law
  - **New Jersey Initiative:** Cooper Medical Center has applied to become a Project ADAM affiliate, aiming for statewide implementation. Support from the Council was requested to further the program’s reach
  - The committee will continue to discuss and refine protocols for TXA and blood administration in pediatric patients, emphasizing the need for training and clear guidelines

### **Introduction of New State Medical Director – Dr. Novneet Sahu**

- Dr. Sahu introduced himself. He holds training in both emergency medicine and family medicine, practicing at University Hospital in Newark and running a family medicine practice at Rutgers. His residency training was completed at Christiana Care in Delaware, where he gained experience with EMS systems

### **Prehospital Pediatric Protocol Review**

- Dr. Drago opened the discussion regarding the review of pre-hospital pediatric protocols. She noted that the National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO) periodically revises model guidelines that include pediatric considerations, which New Jersey incorporates into its statewide protocols
- Dr. Drago stated the strategic plan is currently under review. She has been reviewing other states and collecting data Mr. Hicken suggested creating a sub-committee for the program
- Current protocols combine adult and pediatric sections within the same document. Dr. Drago expressed a desire for broader input on pediatric protocols, emphasizing the need for diverse opinions beyond her own
- Dr. Drago invited members to participate in the review process, indicating that there is a version of the pediatric protocols available for sharing. She encouraged those interested in reviewing the protocols to provide feedback, which would be invaluable in ensuring that the protocols are up-to-date, effective, and beneficial for pediatric patients
- The plan is to circulate the document among committee members, collect feedback, and compile recommendations to present to the MAC Advisory Council Meeting

### **Pediatric Guide Cards**

- Dr. Drago highlighted the existing national and New Jersey-specific pediatric guide cards, noting that they serve different purposes and can have variations within New Jersey. Most guide cards currently in use focus on basic resuscitation protocols, such as those for cardiac arrest
- Dr. Drago proposed the idea of creating distinct pediatric guide cards to ensure age-appropriate care for pediatric patients. She invited feedback and suggestions on what specific topics these cards should address and how to approach the development process



- Dr. Leva supported the idea, expressing a willingness to assist with the creation of these guide cards. He emphasized the importance of guide cards in directing pre-hospital care for children

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#### EMSC Program Strategic Plan

#### **TEN 4 Day**

- Dr. Drago inquired about the status of the requested proclamation
  - Mr. Hicken responded that the timeline was too short to finalize it this year, so it will need to be postponed until next year
  - Mr. Hicken indicated that efforts are underway to promote the day through social media. He plans to send information to the communications team to raise awareness and share details about the events with a broader audience

#### **Race, Poverty, Neglect Subcommittee**

- The organizers of the focus group indicated they would compile a consensus and report back on the discussions, particularly focusing on the challenges of punitive reporting and how to support families better

#### **Fatalities Due to Drowning**

- Dr. Leva highlighted the alarming trend of pediatric fatalities in New Jersey due to drowning, specifically mentioning that children are drowning in their own pools despite existing laws requiring barriers. He noted that while barriers effectively prevent children from wandering into neighbors' pools, they often still drown in their own pools because the house can be counted as one of those barriers
- Dr. Leva mentioned previous suggestions made to legislation and the Commissioner to change the law so that a house cannot be used as a barrier. He expressed a desire to reinvigorate this conversation given the four reported child fatalities in the state this year
  - Mr. Hicken shared that the Department of Health has recognized the rise in pediatric drownings and is exploring solutions, such as the introduction of bracelets for caregivers responsible for monitoring pools during gatherings. He expressed openness to collaboration on finding solutions to reduce drowning incidents, including possibly implementing motion sensors in pools

- A detail discussion took place regarding finding solutions to reduce drowning

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- No Comment

#### **MEETING SCHEDULE**

- December 17, 2024, 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 11:41 AM