



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 December 17, 2024**

**Members Present:** Dr. Navin Ariyaprakai, Ms. Kelly Boyd, Dr. Frank Castello, Dr. Angela D'Alessandro, Dr. Louis Difazio, Ms. Maureen Donnelly, Dr. Lisa Drago, Dr. Ernest Leva, Dr. Mark McCollum, Dr. Neil Miele, Ms. Sonia Rita, Mr. Daniel Sullivan

**Members Absent:** Dr. Maya Baas, Ms. Debra Bell, Dr. Jeanne Craft, Mr. John Napolitano, Dr. Nilesh Patel, Dr. Anderson Richard, Ms. Denise Serbay, Ms. Marvella Cephas

**Guests/Attendees:** Dr. Diane Calello, Ms. Kristen Chiarolanza, Ms. Alice Condo, Dr. Richard Flyer, Lt. John Harbourt, Mr. Mike Riley, Ms. Adrienne Robertiello, Mr. Bruce Ruck, Mr. Adam Sivitz, Mr. Michael Wolfschmidt

**Dept. of Health:** Mr. Eric Hicken, Ms. Dana Johnson, Mr. Daniel Kazar, Dr. Novneet Sahu, Mr. Andrew Snyder

The Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Advisory Council convened virtually on December 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 September 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 September 2024 meeting minutes (Dr. Castello). Seconded (Dr. Ariyaprakai). Approved (Unanimous)*

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

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

- The deadline for receiving comments on EMS protocols for pre-hospital care is Friday, December 20, 2024
  - Members were reminded to email any additional comments before the deadline
  - Compiled comments will be sent to Dr. Gerard Carroll, who will ensure they reach the appropriate state entities
- The Mobile Intensive Care Advisory Council (MAC) has approved the pediatric blood protocol specifically for trauma
  - Proposal to add IV Tylenol for both adults and pediatric patients for pain and fever management
  - Draft protocol is still pending and will be shared with the group once available
- There was a discussion at the Race, Poverty, and Neglect Committee on transitioning from mandated reporting to supportive reporting
  - Stakeholder surveys are ongoing, with results expected by February next year, which will guide the development of a new plan
- Dr. Drago informed she has been actively participating in the disaster response collaborative, involving several New Jersey hospitals as part of the Pediatric Pandemic Network
  - Recent discussions focused on pediatric surge capacity

- Reports and information from these sessions are available to those interested
- Dr. Drago expressed gratitude for a strong pediatric representation at the recent National Conference on EMS

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

- OEMS Update – Mr. Kazar
  - Mr. Kazar informed the members that the whole blood waiver has been approved
    - This initiative involves paramedics being designated as transfusionists
    - Applicable to ground and air medical Advanced Life Support (ALS) teams
  - Movement on regulatory updates was confirmed. The legal review is completed; formatting corrections are in progress before final resubmission
  - Updates on restructuring the EMT refresher program are in progress. Focused on making the program more robust based on the feedback from educators and the BLS Subcommittee
- The 2024 National Conference on EMS and Awards Program – Mr. Kazar
  - The conference was a huge success, with over 1,000 attendees
  - Awards program attendance was one of the largest to date
  - This was the first year EMT refreshers were conducted at the conference in partnership with Hackensack Meridian Jersey Shore University Hospital. The program was a major success, with plans to continue next year

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

- Ms. Rita informed everyone about the upcoming All-Grantee Team meeting in August

- This year's meeting will focus on family-centered care
- Emergency Medical Services for Children Innovation & Improvement Center (EIIC) will be sending out plain language guidelines for communications, which will be distributed once available

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

- EMSC Grant Program – Mr. Hicken
  - Non-competing continuation submitted to Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) EMS for Children State Partnership Program, which includes updates on barriers, successes, and budget changes
    - Awaiting response by February 2025
- National Prehospital Pediatric Readiness Project (PPRP) assessment
  - Data expected from the University of Utah's EMS Data Center. Originally anticipated in December, now delayed
    - Link will be shared upon availability
- 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
- Emergency Department Database
  - Recommendations were provided, but no significant progress observed to date
  - Working to start data collection from the Emergency Department database
- Improving Pediatric Acute Care through Simulation (ImPACT) ED/EMS
  - Program evaluates EMS agency responses in various environments
  - Trial phase includes high, medium, and low impact agencies
  - National rollout expected by February

- School Nurse Education Program
  - Three sessions completed in the fall of 2024; three more planned for the spring of 2025
- Injury Prevention Program – Andy the Ambulance
  - Successful summer and fall with outreach at schools, fairs, and events
  - Promoted EMS for Children program and distributed child safety materials
- Safe Drug Storage Bag
  - Funding for 3,000 bags was not aligned with current grant objectives
  - Exploring new funding sources for early 2025
- Safe Transport of Children Committee (STC)
  - Mr. Hicken informed everyone he has been the chair of the National Association of State EMS Officials STC for 7 years
  - Phase one (1) is completed
  - Phase two (2) in planning with federal and private agency collaboration. Additional funding needed: 1.2 – 1.3 million dollars
  - Testing phase anticipated to begin in 2025
  - Ms. Robertiello requested information on whether children with disabilities are included in the planning phase? To which Mr. Hicken responded yes
- Child Passenger Safety Inspection Events 2025
  - Open for scheduling at fire departments, EMS agencies, or police departments
  - Events include inspection, hazard safety setups, and car seat distribution (forward-facing, rear-facing, convertible seats) at no cost

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- Dr. Castello mentioned a New York Times article (published November 4th) on the National Pediatric Readiness Project
  - The article highlighted the minimal funding required to make all U.S. emergency rooms pediatric-ready
  - Suggested distributing the article to the committee for review
  - Dr. Lisa Drago supported the idea of sharing the article with the group
  - The article can be viewed here:  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/11/01/health/child-deaths-emergency-room.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare>
- Dr. Leva raised a question regarding school safety in light of recent school shootings
  - Suggested considering a recommendation for mandatory active shooter drills in schools alongside fire drills
  - Noted the importance of preparing for potential active shooter scenarios in New Jersey schools
  - Detailed discussion took place on active shooter drills

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Hospital Stakeholder Meeting**

- Meeting occurred recently with participation from approximately 100 – 150 attendees. Topics discussed included:
  - Emergency department standards for pediatric care
  - Coordination with the New Jersey Hospital Association

### **By-Laws**

- No updates reported

### **EMSC Appointment Update**

- No updates reported

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Dr. Flyer requested a follow-up discussion on the Hospital Stakeholder Meeting, specifically actionable points from the meeting, particularly regarding:
  - Regulation that mirrors national standards
  - Inspection of facilities
  - Ongoing Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Mr. Hicken responded that while the meeting had detailed discussions, specific, actionable items were not immediately available
- Dr. Flyer expressed concerns about the slow progress on creating a pediatric EMS system akin to the existing trauma system
  - Mr. Hicken will follow up with specific outcomes and next steps
- Ms. Robertiello informed that she recently presented at the Injury Free Coalition for Kids Conference in Florida
  - Emphasized potential collaborations for safety and injury prevention initiatives
  - Invited input from the group for narrative development for the Inclusive Healthy Communities Grant Proposal, which focuses on active shooter and terrorism preparedness for children and individuals with disabilities in healthcare settings
- Dr. Miele shared a personal tragedy related to the suicide
  - Raised concerns about inadequate fencing and signage along train tracks (specifically Amtrak's Northeast Corridor)
  - Advocated for suicide prevention measures, including better infrastructure and mental health awareness
  - Ms. Boyd suggested leveraging the Ombudsman's office to advocate for improved mental health and suicide prevention measures

- Provided contact details for Mr. Paul Aronsohn and additional guidance on navigating state resources
  - Mr. Paul S. Aronsohn ([paul.aronsohn@treas.nj.gov](mailto:paul.aronsohn@treas.nj.gov))  
New Jersey Ombudsman for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and Their Families  
State of New Jersey  
P.O. Box 205  
Trenton, NJ 08625
  - Mr. Ed Hoff ([EHoff@njtransit.com](mailto:EHoff@njtransit.com))  
Director, ADA Compliance  
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  - Ms. Megan B. Sullivan LPC, LCADC ([megan.sullivan@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:megan.sullivan@dhs.nj.gov))  
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609-989-3990
- Dr. Ariyaprakai highlighted concerns from emergency physicians about prioritization of pediatric ED readiness
  - Emphasized the need to focus on raising readiness at all emergency departments rather than solely prioritizing specialized pediatric facilities
  - Dr. Castello emphasized the need for Pediatric Coordinators to meet existing regulatory requirements



- Dr. Sivitz shared examples of successful pediatric readiness initiatives in other states (e.g., Delaware) and called for clear guidance and structure for New Jersey
- Dr. Leva supported a two-tiered system for pediatric care while ensuring regulations for all hospitals are enforced
- Detailed discussion took place on pediatric readiness and emergency department standards

### **MEETING SCHEDULE**

- March 18, 2025, at 10:00 AM via Microsoft TEAMS
- June 17, 2025, at 10:00 AM via Microsoft TEAMS
- 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 (Dr. Drago). Seconded (Mr. Sullivan). Approved (unanimous)*

This meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM