



National Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council

April 24, 2014

**Aarron
Reinert**

Chair

Kyle Gorman

Vice-Chair

Drew Dawson
Designated Federal Officer
National EMS Advisory Council
Director, Office of EMS
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Next Steps for Developing a Culture of Safety in EMS

Mr. Dawson:

Recently, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of EMS released the much-anticipated National EMS Culture of Safety Strategy (www.emscultureofsafety.org). The document highlights significant safety problems and the growing concern among EMS constituents for patient and provider safety. It exposes significant gaps in research and resources for improving EMS patient, provider, and community safety.

This letter summarizes our request that the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Office of EMS, the Federal Interagency Committee on EMS (FICEMS), and their Federal and non-Federal partners on the need for immediate actions to address the recommendations of the National EMS Culture of Safety Strategy.

As representatives of more than 19,000 EMS organizations, 800,000 individual EMS clinicians, and 30 million patients annually cared for by EMS nationwide, the NEMSAC feels immediate action is required to change the status quo and improve safety for patients, providers, and the community.

The National EMS Culture of Safety Strategy describes the formation and maintenance of a service-oriented EMS Safety Resource Center as an ultimate and overarching goal that can help the EMS community improve safety nationwide.

The National EMS Advisory Council considers the following as logical and feasible first steps toward achieving that overarching goal. Specifically, the National EMS Advisory Council recommends the Department of Transportation NHTSA Office of EMS, Federal Interagency Committee on EMS, and their Federal and non-Federal partners address the following:

1: Coordinate an effort that can support the www.EMSCultureOfSafety.org website as a repository of data, information and resources germane to EMS patient, provider and community safety.

The National EMS Advisory Council

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2: As a component on that website and repository, coordinate an effort that will:

- a) Support the inclusion and dissemination of peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed literature germane to EMS patient, provider, and community safety;
- b) Support the collection and dissemination of diverse practices, processes, protocols, and programs designed to address safety concerns and challenges that affect EMS patients, providers, and the community; and
- c) Support the capability of persons and organizations to share information germane to EMS patient, provider, and community safety.

3: Coordinate an effort to address concerns in:

- a) Improving EMS ambulance engineering and design safety standards;
- b) Improving standardization and systems for safety reporting; and
- c) Improving education/training of EMS clinicians in safety practices at every level of licensure and practice.

4: Coordinate an effort to convene EMS and healthcare stakeholders annually (or bi-annually) address EMS patient, provider, and community safety.

Thank you for your consideration of these important safety recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Reinert', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Aarron Reinert
Chair