

Subcommittee Report on an *EMS Agenda for the Future* Document

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November 27, 13

The Vision

Emergency medical services (EMS) of the future will be community-based health management that is fully integrated with the overall health care system. It will have the ability to identify and modify illness and injury risks, provide acute illness and injury care and follow-up, and contribute to treatment of chronic conditions and community health monitoring. This new entity will be developed from redistribution of existing health care resources and will be integrated with other health care providers and public health and public safety agencies. It will improve community health and result in more appropriate use of acute health care resources. EMS will remain the public's emergency medical safety net.

To realize this vision, the EMS Agenda proposes continued development of 14 EMS attributes, each of which is a chapter in the report.

- 1. Integration of health services*
- 2. EMS research*
- 3. Legislation and regulation*
- 4. System finance*
- 5. Human resources*
- 6. Medical direction*
- 7. Education systems*
- 8. Public education*
- 9. Prevention*
- 10. Public access*
- 11. Communication systems*
- 12. Clinical care*
- 13. Information systems*
- 14. Evaluation*

~ 1996 EMS AGENDA FOR THE FUTUREⁱ

Subcommittee on the EMS Agenda for the Future

At the May 2013 NEMSAC meeting, seven Committee members were assigned the task of providing recommendations to the Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services (FICEMS) and the U.S Department of Transportation (DOT) by answering the following questions:

- *Should the 1996 EMS Agenda for the Future be revised or updated?*
- *Is there continued value in a national vision document for EMS systems?*
- *What is the role of the Federal government in the development and publication of a national vision document?*
- *What topics should be included in the document?*
- *What should it be titled?*

The group held two conference calls during the summer, and met during the September 2013 NEMSAC Meeting in Washington DC. The subcommittee members reviewed the 14 attributes in the 1996 document. After discussions, the subcommittee recommends the DOT seek financial support and assistance from FICEMS members and pull together a representative work group charged with updating the EMS Agenda for the Future as soon as possible. Additionally, the subcommittee believes the revision team should consider modifying the existing attributes to include topics such as, clinical care including time sensitive illness and injury; special populations and discussion of co-morbidity; personnel shortages; strategies for addressing volunteerism and retention; professionalism including career advancement and salary issues; provider, patient, public safety and workplace wellness; and preparation.

Question # 1: Should the 1996 EMS Agenda for the Future be revised or updated?

Response: Yes – revised.

Discussion: The committee believes that the EMS Agenda for the Future should be revised utilizing a multidisciplinary approach supported by FICEMS.

Question # 2: Is there continued value in a national vision document for EMS?

Response: Yes.

Discussion: The 1996 Agenda for the Future is recognized as a cornerstone of EMS systems development. EMS as a discipline is now approaching the 50-year mark and continues to evolve. The committee reviewed the 14 attributes, evaluated the literature and added a few recommendations on potential content that might be useful for NEMSAC and DOT as they analyze this report.

Question # 3: What is the role of the Federal government in the development and publication of a national vision document?

Response: Leadership and support

Discussion: The Subcommittee believes that, within the sphere of NEMSAC involvement, the Federal Government plays the role of aggregator of resources – financial, scientific, educational, and etcetera - to ensure that national vision documents are updated, revised or developed to ensure

that the EMS industry operates on sound scientific evidence, thereby improving the health of our communities.

The Federal Government plays a supportive, not regulatory role by leveraging the resources of the Government and aggregating expertise from the academic, scientific and private sectors. The Federal Government gathers the community of experts on a particular topic; fosters an opportunity for sharing of information, evidence, best practices, theory and vision, and then, in a collaborative fashion communicates this aggregated knowledge to the community of users.

While regulation of the EMS industry is a state activity, many States rely upon Federal guidance in the development of statutes and rules. Vision documents that carry the Federal *imprimatur* are seen as fair starting point for state and local system enhancements. Also, because Federal funding can be tied to implementation of a vision document's goals and objectives many States implement the goals in order to access those funding streams.

Finally, in its role supporting the development of national vision documents, the Federal Government is, by and large, considered to be a fair and neutral arbiter, and thus, best able to accomplish the role of bringing the brightest minds together for the development of vision documents.

Question # 4: What topics should be included in the document?

Response: The existing attributes plus others relevant to the current situation

Discussion: The Subcommittee recommends the revised visionary document expands upon 1996 Agenda's 14 Attributes with additional attributes reflective of the future direction of emergency care including:

1. Clinical care including time sensitive illness and injury
2. Special populations and discussion of co-morbidity
3. Personnel shortages and strategies for addressing volunteerism and retention
4. Professionalism including career advancement and salary issues
5. Provider/patient/public safety and workplace wellness
6. Preparation

Question # 5: What should the revised document be titled?

Response: The committee feels that this would be best considered by the authors after revising the document.

References

ⁱ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (1996). *Agenda for the Future* (DOT HS 808 441). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation, Aug 1996. Retrieved on November 14, 2013 from http://www.ems.gov/pdf/2010/EMSAgendaWeb_7-06-10.pdf