



County of San Diego

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HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
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MISSION STATEMENT

“As advisors to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, the Mission of the Emergency Medical Care Committee is to be an advocate for the community through the development of strategies for continuous improvement of the emergency medical services system.”

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMITTEE (EMCC) MEETING

Frank Parra, Chair/ Chara Cote, R.N., Vice-Chair
c/o Emergency Medical Services
Virtual meeting via Zoom

Minutes

Thursday, January 28, 2021

Members Present

Adler, Fred – District 3
Blacksberg, David – HASDIC
Cote, R.N., Chara – Base Hospital Nurse Coordinators
Covell, R.N., Brian – District 2
Froelich, Dan – County Paramedic Agencies’ Committee
Graydon, R.N., Cheryl – Emergency Nurses’ Association
Kahn, M.D., Christopher – District 4
Lyons, R.N., Laura – American Red Cross
McJannet, R.N., Catherine – District 1
Mercer, Kevin – SD County Ambulance Association
Molloy, Bernie – SD County Fire Districts’ Association
Parra, Frank – SD County Fire Chiefs’ Association
Pearson, Danielle – County Paramedic Agencies Committee (Alt)
Rosenberg, R.N., Linda – Emergency Nurses’ Association (Alt)
Scott, M.D., Christopher – SD County Medical Society
Sloan, M.D., Christian – District 5

In Attendance

Abbott, Stephen – North County FPD
Baudoin, Madeleine – AMR
Beckert, Mark – Carlsbad Fire
Caplan, Gregg – Ambu Inc
Francis, Allen – CCHCS/CDCR
Hinton, William – Mercy Air
Hutchinson, Heidi
Pierce, Jodi – SDFD
Ruiz, Sal – CSA-17 EMS Coordinator
Sullivan, Don – AMR
Sumek, Caryn – HASDIC

Not in Attendance

Law Enforcement Agencies
Military Agencies
SD County Paramedic Association

County Staff

Beam, Jamie
Bey, Christian
Chmielewski, R.N., Lorraine
Cavanaugh, Adria
Christison, Brian
del Toro, Nicole (recorder)
Gall, R.N., Jessica
Hrubvocak, Wendy
Koenig, M.D., Kristi
Martin, Adelver
Pacheco, R.N., Cheryl

Parr, Andy
Pitner, Jaime
Rogers, Cody
Schoenheit, R.N., Candy
Smith, PhD, Josh

I. CALL TO ORDER/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ INTRODUCTIONS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

Frank Parra, EMCC Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM. Due to the meeting being held virtually, the group skipped the Pledge of Allegiance and introductions. Christian Sloan was introduced as the newly appointed member representing District 5. No announcements were made. Attendance was captured online via the chat box.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS/ PETITIONS

There were no public comments or petitions submitted.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Catherine McJannet, seconded by Chris Scott to approve the November 19, 2020 minutes. Motion carried by consensus.

IV. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Prehospital/Hospital Subcommittee – Chara Cote, RN

The group met and went over several policies. Dr. Chris Kahn provided an update on P-801; Dr. Chris Scott provided an update on S-010. Discussed S-008 with Dr. Chris Scott. All policies discussed are on today's agenda.

B. Education/Research Subcommittee – Cheryl Graydon, RN

Did not meet.

C. Disaster Planning Subcommittee – David Blacksborg

Did not meet.

V. COUNTY REPORT (Reports)

A. Clinical Report – Kristi Koenig, MD

- Lifting of the Stay at home order; back in purple tier locally.
- New State Public Health Order which remains in effect.
- R.eff remains < 1, indicating control of disease spread, but can change rapidly and move back into conditions of exponential spread
- Coming down nicely off our third wave that peaked following the holiday gatherings, HOWEVER new case numbers remain high
- Locally, situation is improving, but remain at marginal healthcare system capacity
- Making progress on vaccination, have great infrastructure to administer in San Diego, but there are still shortages
 - THANK YOU to those of you who are assisting as vaccinators; this is essential
 - Not lowering the case rate yet, but will start to see deaths coming down in >65 year olds and SNF patients as we get more of that cohort vaccinated
- We are in a race against time to get people vaccinated

- Concern for new variants; UK variant (B.1.1.7) more contagious (and probably more lethal), may lead to a 30-40% surge in March and April
 - Need to get people vaccinated and continued NPIs (3Ws) to slow the spread
 - Still haven't proven that vaccination prevents INFECTION and TRANSMISSION so, for now, need to continue masking and distancing even if fully vaccinated
 - Growing evidence that DOUBLE masking more effective
- There is a new HO quarantine order based on updated CDC guidance that Brian will cover
- Experts suggest we should be wearing more than just cloth masks, and double masking
- A memo was sent over the weekend through LEMSIS to EMS personnel regarding to encourage everyone to vaccinate and mask up
- County EMS has been initiating a lot of changes to try to maintain and improve our overall system capacity; looking at entire system and taking input from various groups on their various components; implemented various interventions
- Whether we have a fourth surge is up to us; if we can continue NPIs and get the vaccine out, we may be able to blunt or prevent it, but it's too soon to tell and the modelers are still predicting a major surge, just not quite as early as predicated before
 - More spread means not only more disease and deaths, but importantly, increased risk of the emergence of even more dangerous variants
- That prediction, coupled with borderline ICU capacity, means will need to continue our temporary COVID EMS directives for the next several weeks, at least (will re-evaluate prior to March 8)
- The good news is that we've seen virtually NO flu this season, supporting the fact that NPIs and vaccinations work!

In summary, most of our metrics are improving or coming off the third wave, but baseline numbers remain high. Very serious concern about the new and much greater surge that could occur at the end of February and into March/April, as it is very likely the UK variant will take over as the predominant variant. Must get this pandemic under control by vaccinations, continue NPIs even after vaccination, and stay the course.

B. Administrative Report – Brian Christison

1. Actions taken during COVID-19: The following categories have been updated since the last EMCC meeting, which are also posted at www.sandiegocountyems.com:
 - CoSD EMS Frequently Asked/Answered Questions (FAQs) document
 - CoSD EMS All Provider Communications
 - CoSD EMS Local Optional Scope Approvals
 - CoSD EMS Memos
 - Health Services Capacity Task Force Actions
 - Expanded Operational Group coordination calls continue
2. Budget update – EMS staff is currently working closely with the agency budget office and MCSD administration to build a budget for next year. A fee package will be going before the Board of Supervisors in the coming months. Some fees will be adjusting. As soon as that information is available, it will be shared to EMCC in a PowerPoint presentation introducing some of those changes.
3. EMT Renewals – submit early.

In the spring of odd-numbered years (2019,2021, etc.), the County EMS Credentialing Team is inundated with EMT renewal applications. The monthly credentialing average is about 300 applications, swelling to over 900 in March, 2021. Agencies are asked to

work with their EMT staff to make sure their applications are submitted early to avoid the rush. As a reminder, EMT Skills Verifications are waived for the Coronavirus emergency, making the application process that much easier.

4. Capacity Plan – The All-Hazard Health Service Capacity Management Plan is currently at a Level 1 Full Activation (the highest level). EMS Epidemiologists continue to carefully monitor Healthcare, Hospital and EMS system metrics in SD county and regionally. The All-Hazard Health Services Capacity Taskforce continues to meet every Tuesday at noon and allows the group to discuss the situation and have a voice in the system.
5. The EMCC Education and Research Subcommittee will reconvene in February. The Education and Research Subcommittee will meet quarterly, or more frequently, as needed. This reactivated group will focus on the current Community Paramedic pilot program and advising County EMS on the recently signed-AB 1544.
6. EMCC Membership – Chair, Vice-Chair and subcommittee membership will reconvene in February.
7. Policies and Protocols: The 2019-2020 protocol review process was well underway when the COVID-19 Pandemic upended the process. As a review, The Treatment Protocol Task Force met November 15, 2019. This comprehensive discussion was followed by drafts over the winter months, and BSPC reviewed and approved multiple protocol updates in January and February. County EMS is gearing up to restart the remaining reviews, with an anticipated July 1, 2021 implementation date.
8. Non-operational County-owned EMS radios are still being recalled and need to come home. If you have a radio that is no longer working, or you just need more information, please contact the PHPR/EMS Duty Officer at SDEMSDO@sdcounty.ca.gov.
9. Love your Heart event February 8-14, 2021. Centered around Valentine's Day; programs throughout the month. Some onsite locations for blood pressure monitoring. See link for resources <https://www.livewellsd.org/love-your-heart/>.

C. EOC Report – Andy Parr

EMS Administrator gave an update report from the County's Emergency Operation Center (EOC) regarding activities ongoing. The EOC has shifted their focus to vaccinations.

VI. SYSTEM POLICY REVIEW (EMCC Advisory Position)

A. Ad hoc Committees

- i. P-801: Designation of Providers of Advanced Life Support Service – Ad hoc Committee Status Report (Dr. Chris Kahn)

The committee met in November and an updated version was sent out. Received very few comments back. Will send an updated version to the group with a last chance to comment. Will bring back to the Prehospital/Hospital Subcommittee for full discussion.

- ii. S-010: Guidelines for Hospitals Requesting Ambulance Diversion – Ad hoc Committee Status Report (Dr. Chris Scott)

This was brought to Prehospital/Hospital Subcommittee a few months back and was approved. However, additional changes were recommended from the trauma folks regarding verbiage. Brought back to Prehospital/Hospital for approval to bring to EMCC.

B. Policy Review

- i. S-008: Interfacility Transfers – Levels of Care – Brian Christison
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ii. T-705: Trauma Catchment Service Area – Candy Schoenheit

iii. T-710: Designation of a Trauma Center – Candy Schoenheit

These policies were reviewed at the Prehospital/Hospital Subcommittee meeting in January. Will be ready in February for final discussion.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. MEDCC – BLS Ambulance Company Dispatch Center Radio-Link (Report)

EMS has assigned portable radios to all private EMT ambulance agency dispatch centers. EMS believes there are numerous benefits to having such a channel (mirroring a similar channel for LE and fire agency dispatch centers). Private EMT ambulance agencies receive a Resource Bridge alert to monitor the “MEDCC” Channel, and this places them all on the same channel so they can receive incident details and respond quickly to any requests. EMS’s goal is to provide a coordination radio channel which we believe will greatly increase rapidity of dispatching EMT ambulances to all incidents, but in particular, MCI incidents.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Comprehensive Evaluation of the Base Hospital System and Trauma Catchment Area Designations

i. February 9 Board of Supervisors agenda items:

- 1) The comprehensive evaluation of the base hospital system and trauma catchment area designations will be initiated by County EMS no later than July 1, 2021 and will hire a private contractor to assist, which is expected to take 18 months to complete. Hospital partners and stakeholders will have input in the process.
- 2) County Service Area 17 is operated by AMR and is up for reprocurement this year on January 1, 2021. If interested in ambulance service or would like to watch the process, can log on to the County’s Buynet. There will be three opportunities for folks to comment on the San Dieguito area.

IX. NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNMENT

The next EMCC meeting is scheduled on Thursday, February 25, 2021 via Zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 10:37 AM.