



# MIEMSS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

January 2023

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## EMS NEWS DIGEST

**Governor Hogan and Transportation Officials Honor Victims of Crashes Involving Drunk, Drugged Drivers at 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Maryland Remembers Ceremony** (*Office of the Governor*). On November 21, Governor Larry Hogan joined other state officials, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) leaders, safety advocates, and law enforcement officers for the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Maryland Remembers ceremony, an event honoring Marylanders who have lost their lives to impaired driving. Maryland Remembers is held annually at the beginning of the holiday season, when impaired driving crashes tend to increase. Last year, 173 people were killed and more than 2,800 were injured on Maryland roadways due to impaired driving. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3uGELYX>

**Maryland Poison Center Celebrates 50 Years of Service** (*University of Maryland, Baltimore*). From using paper records and operating out of a basement of a building that is no longer on the University of Maryland, Baltimore campus to becoming a thriving solution-providing center serving the entire state, the Maryland Poison Center's five decades of service were celebrated with a reception and reflections on its storied history and influence. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3FogHyY>

**Md. County Commissioners OK Purchase of Four Ambulances for Carroll County EMS Department (EMS1)**. The new Board of Carroll County Commissioners held its first public meeting on December 8, and with it came a \$1.27 million purchase approval for four ambulances to be used by the county's new Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services. Although manufacturing delays could push back delivery of the vehicles by up to two years, placing the order now will ultimately save the county more than \$100,000, according to Michael Robinson Sr., director and chief of the county's Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3USBCQr>

**Carroll County has 92 Applicants for 16 Lieutenant Positions in New Fire, EMS Department (EMS1)**. Carroll County intends to hire 16 lieutenant positions, including four shift commander lieutenants and 12 station lieutenants, from a field of 92 applicants for its new Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department by mid-February, according to Director and Chief Michael Robinson Sr. Read more: <https://www.ems1.com/hiring/articles/md-county-has-92-applicants-for-16-lieutenant-positions-in-new-fire-ems-department-J00xdbyd5aRoImrI/>

**Barbara "Bobbie" Cooke, Charles County's First Volunteer Paramedic, Passes Away** (*The BayNet*). The Charles County Association of Emergency Medical Services extends its deepest condolences to the family of Barbara "Bobbie" Cooke, who passed away on January 1, 2023, at the age of 81. Cooke was the first female of the Waldorf Volunteer Rescue Squad, as well as Charles County's first volunteer paramedic. Read more: <https://thebaynet.com/ccaeems-sadly-announces-the-passing-of-barbara-bobbie-cooke/>

**Evidence-Based Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for the EMS/9-1-1 Workforce (US Fire Administration)**. A new report summarizing current evidence on exposures to infectious pathogens has found that EMS workers appear to be at a higher risk of infection when compared to firefighters and other frontline emergency personnel. Published by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, "Infection Prevention and Control for the Emergency Medical Services and 9-1-1 Workforce" also includes recommendations for areas where further research is needed. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3UQePoc>

**“Suck It Up” Culture is Killing First Responders** (*Journal of Emergency Medical Services*). Generally, we humans are not designed to constantly sift through the blood and gore of humanity and see the worst that humankind has to offer daily. There are consequences to the work we do. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3FMwXLi>.

Submit recent EMS-related news and headlines for consideration to [ptandy@miemss.org](mailto:ptandy@miemss.org).



## **MARYLAND EMS CLINICIANS AND JURISDICTIONAL PROGRAMS**

### **Infectious Diseases:**

- **Respiratory illnesses – Don’t Let Your Guard Down.** Hospitalizations for both COVID-19 and influenza are on the rise. As we see increasing volumes of patients with influenza, COVID-19, and other respiratory illnesses, patients and EMS clinicians should continue to wear surgical masks, at minimum, on all calls for service. For patients with suspected or proven COVID-19 illness, EMS clinicians should remember to use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including: gloves, gown, eye protection, and a fit-tested N-95 respirator. MIEMSS will continue to post EMS Guidance documents to the Infectious Diseases website (<https://www.miemss.org/home/infectious-diseases>) as updates occur.

**EMS Transfer of Care Times.** MIEMSS sends weekly transfer of care reports to 36 Maryland hospitals and freestanding emergency departments. All of the Region III hospitals and many in Region IV and V receive these reports. Several hospitals have used these data to re-evaluate triage processes and focus their attention on improving transfer of care times.

We encourage leaders to continue collaborative discussions with hospitals on strategies to transfer care from EMS to hospital staff in an efficient fashion. In addition, the Direct to Triage Protocol enables delivery of stable patients to the ED triage waiting area. Of note, it is important that the patient report be conveyed to nursing staff when using this protocol.

**Statewide EMS Communication System Upgrade.** The MIEMSS EMS Communications System Upgrade Project is in the Implementation Stage of Phase 1, which encompasses the Southern Maryland – EMS Region V. The Implementation Stage began in May 2021, after the successful completion on Factory Acceptance Testing of the Phase 1 equipment in March and delivery of Phase 1 Equipment in April. Current work includes the integration of the NICE audio recording system with the InterTalk™ console system and enhancements to the system software. All microwave installations associated with Phase 1 as well as a significant portion of the Phase 2 microwave have been completed. System core integrations and console configurations will be completed in the first quarter of 2023; these are precursors to performing Regional Acceptance Testing in 3Q23. MIEMSS has approved the contractor, OCI, to commence work on the Phase 2 (Region III and Western Maryland) to mitigate timeline challenges due to Phase 1 equipment installation delays, COVID-19 impacts (e.g., travel ban, personnel quarantines) and resolving issues related to new equipment, e.g., tuning/optimization, firmware updates, and

addressing the occasional part failure. The project team continually looks for targets of opportunity to mitigate timeline challenges. Current projected CUP Final Acceptance is estimated to be July 9, 2025.

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## **EMS PREPAREDNESS AND OPERATIONS**

### **General Report:**

Work continues within several active workgroups; these include:

- ***Crisis Scene Collaboration Workgroup***. This group was formed to identify best practices, training, and tools to assist Fire/EMS and Law Enforcement (LE) personnel to safely and effectively work together in assisting agitated individuals at incident scenes. This workgroup is made up of representatives from Fire/EMS departments, Medical Directors, LE, mental health clinicians, the Attorney General’s Office, and a civil rights expert. The workgroup has met several times and is currently collecting expert advice and information and completing a draft guidance document.
- ***Active Assailant Interagency Workgroup***. This workgroup continues efforts in support of Governor Hogan’s Executive Order “Active-Assailant Incident Preparation and Coordination,” issued in February 2019. The Maryland State Police and MIEMSS continue to co-chair the work group. Meetings have resumed virtually after a short pause caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. Participants include representatives from hospitals, public/private education, federal, state, and local Fire, EMS, emergency management, LE, and other organizations. Several subcommittees continue to make progress towards completion of identified goals and objectives. Last year, the workgroup completed work on a new website, <https://aaiwg.maryland.gov/>, where workgroup and related materials are located. The focus in the coming year will be on community outreach and recovery. Recovery efforts will focus on emergency people search and family support to assist those involved in or affected by active assailant events. A statewide symposium was held on October 14, 2022, in Annapolis.
- ***Responder Health and Wellness Workgroup***. In 2019, a workgroup was formed with the goal of improving the health and wellness of Maryland’s first responders. The group brings together critical incident stress management and peer support team members from Fire/EMS, Law Enforcement, 9-1-1 centers, and commercial ambulance agencies. Licensed mental health clinicians also support the workgroup. The vision of this group is to ensure that “*Every Maryland first responder has the health and wellness knowledge and support necessary to thrive.*” During the 2022 legislative session, a Peer Support Bill (SB 446) was passed and signed by the governor. The Bill provides confidentiality protection for peer support team activities as well as other provisions. The new law also requires the Behavioral Health Administration, in consultation with MIEMSS, to study and write a report on specified items related to peer support teams. The study is getting underway. BHA has tasked the University of Maryland, Baltimore Systems Evaluation Center with coordinating the work and preparing the draft report. A group of well-qualified wellness folks from the Fire and EMS community as well as MIEMSS staff has been assembled to assist and provide input.

- **Automatic Electronic Defibrillator (AED) Program.** The Region IV office is responsible for managing the AED registration and renewal process as required by COMAR and the Annotated Code of Maryland. For the month of November 2022, they:
  - o processed 16 program renewal requests,
  - o renewed 64 AEDs located at sites throughout the state,
  - o processed seven (7) new programs,
  - o approved the placement of 13 new AEDs at sites throughout the state, and
  - o continued to answer a multitude of questions from organizations participating in the AED program.

**Field Operations:**

- Working with state, federal, and local partners on the Baltimore National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) plan update.
- Finalizing implementation plan for the Maryland Emergency Medical Resource Alerting Database Next-Generation (MEMRAD-NG) system for MIEMSS.
- In conjunction with the Regional Coordinators and SOCALR Director, continuing distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 Test Kits (PCR and Antigen) to Maryland Public Safety and Commercial EMS Agencies.
- In conjunction with our Data Manager, continuing to work on pre-hospital patient care report data (eMEDS®) integration and analysis with the Maryland Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE) team. MIEMSS recently completed an opioid analysis project with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab.

**EMRC/SYSCOM:**

- The Center continued to address staffing challenges brought about by resignations and sick leave occurrences. Several FTE and PCS vacancies have been filled. The new team members are currently in training and serving as EMRC operators.
- EMRC/SYSCOM management is coordinating SYSCOM (Phase III) training sessions for staff members not yet qualified for medevac operations. Both MIEMSS and MSP training representatives will be collaborating in the presentation of the joint agency curriculum.
- The center has provided operators to the Communications Engineering Department to function as “trouble shooters” and evaluators for the Intertalk equipment (CUP) project.
- Scheduling of Supervisor meeting(s) and full staff continuing education sessions in planning stage first quarter of 2023.

**Programs:**

- **Critical Care Coordination Center (C4).** MIEMSS continues to utilize the C4 to help physicians identify available hospital critical care resources when patient transfers are necessary. Over 5,000 assists have been generated. C4 is staffed with two (2) critical care coordinators and a Central Intensivist Physician (CIP) 24/7. Any Maryland hospital with a patient needing a critical care transfer or treatment guidance can contact the C4 at 410-706-7797 and select Option #1 to be connected with the Adult ICU coordinator and physician team. The C4 coordinator has a near-real time view of statewide hospital critical care bed capacity. The CIP then works with

referring physicians to identify patients' anticipated critical care needs. The C4 coordinator and CIP, working jointly with the sending and receiving facilities, match the patients with available critical care resources that can manage the patients' conditions. MIEMSS has expanded the C4 to also include Pediatrics, accessed by calling 410-706-7797 and selection Option #2, which connects the caller with the Pediatric coordinator and pediatric emergency care and critical care physician team. "C4-Pediatrics" provides an EMS Coordinator and Central Advisor Pediatric Physician available 24/7 by phone. C4-Pediatrics provides consultation and facilitates the transfer of patients requiring a Pediatric Intensive Care Unit or Pediatric Acute Care Unit utilizing the intensive care bed surveillance system at MIEMSS. Efforts are underway for a statewide tour to promote the CH this fall.

- **Voluntary Ambulance Inspection Program (VAIP).** The VAIP document has been completed and posted to the MIEMSS website in conjunction with the 2022 *Maryland Medical Protocols for Emergency Medical Services*; go to <https://miemss.org/home/vaip>.

### Regional Highlights:

- **Regions I and II:**
  - o Regional Coordinators continue to deploy rapid and PCR tests to public safety EMSOPs.
  - o Regional Coordinators have been visiting hospital emergency departments to offer assistance during latest surge with several facilities under "crisis standards of care."
  - o VAIP inspections being coordinated for Region I EMSOPs.
- **Region III:**
  - o Coordinating final review of NCR Regional Trauma Plan.
  - o Completed ambulance inspections for Harford County.
  - o Supporting the Critical Care Coordination Center (C4) in staffing shifts.
  - o Speakers at the first Latin-American Prehospital Emergencies Conference (virtual) on spinal trauma management.
  - o Submitted C4 operations manuscript for publication.
  - o Supporting EMS Care 2023 program review.
  - o Proctored Paramedic National Registry Exam at CCBC.
  - o Continuing to support LVAD training opportunities.
- **Region IV:**
  - o Continue working with several recipients of the 2021 Cardiac Device grant with their reimbursements.
  - o Working with the 2022 Cardiac Device Grant awardees from Region IV on the final grant documents.
  - o Completed all Region IV Hospital Base Station re-designations assuring COMAR compliance.
  - o Supporting Winterfest EMS 2023 Planning Committee. Winterfest EMS 2023 will be held February 3-5.
  - o Continuing work on the VAIP program including trialing improved methods to conduct and document inspections.
  - o Supporting the Office of State EMS Medical Director with the Somerset County EMS SWOT Analysis. A group of stakeholders from Somerset County and neighboring jurisdictions are meeting every three weeks to develop recommendations to improve the EMS System in Somerset County.

- Working with various stakeholders in the First Responder Health and Wellness area on statewide projects.
- Continuing to support Winterfest 2022 by sending Nursing ConEd Certificates to students completing course requirements.
- **Region V:**
  - Completing Base Station re-designation process as part of the COMAR requirement.
  - Continue to work with regional EMSOPs in support of ongoing financial awards.
  - Continue to work with the MWCOCG to support inter-agency development and coordination.
  - Continue to work with MIEMSS leadership and CRISP in support of the Emergency Department Advisory System (EDAS).
  - Continue to collect, collate and validate the daily hospital COVID census, capacity, and bed availability data and reporting to state partners coordinating the ongoing COVID response.
  - Coordinate with the Communications Division and Region V hospitals to support the Hospital Communication Upgrade Project and assist partner hospitals in orienting on their new equipment
  - Work with EMS agencies to support the VAIP inspection process.



**CARDIAC**

**Cardiac Arrest Steering Committee.** The mission of the Cardiac Arrest Steering Committee (CASC) is to improve cardiac arrest survival in all communities in Maryland. In the past year, the CASC has been evaluating two new educational and implementation strategies that utilize feedback of high-fidelity simulation data on CPR performance to EMS clinicians and on telephone CPR data to 9-1-1 Specialists. Results of these trials are positive and have been presented to the 9-1-1 Board and to SEMSAC. Plans are underway to share the results of these pilot programs and identify a few early-adopter communities that may be interested in trying new educational and quality improvement strategies to improve survival in their communities. The next Cardiac Arrest Steering Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 1, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. Attendance may be in-person or virtual.



**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN**

**Emergency Medical Services for Children Department (EMS for Children).** PEMAC met on January 4, 2023, for the regular business meeting followed by the first of four quarterly Pediatric EMS Champion meetings. The January Champion meeting focused on the national EMS Assessment hosted by the federal EMSC program that surveys almost 16,000 EMS agencies on their “Pediatric Readiness” and includes questions on pediatric skills and scenario training for EMS clinicians. Maryland EMSC is planning pediatric simulations and hospital visits as part of the EMSC Rural Pediatric Readiness Grant, which

focuses on Pediatric Readiness in rural hospitals. The renewal EMSC State partnership grant was submitted to HRSA for the next four-year cycle to continue Pediatric Readiness work with EMS and EDs, expand the number of Pediatric Champions, focus on pediatric disaster planning, and expanding the Family Advisory Network.

The EMSC Department coordinates four different grant programs:

- **The EMSC State Partnership Grant** (federally funded by HRSA/MCHB) focuses on Pediatric Readiness for both EMS agencies and Emergency Departments, including identifying a pediatric champion (or a plurality) to provide both advocacy and facilitate communication to all members of the agency/hospital. Educational programs are being designed to include both skills and scenarios, many written by these champions.
  - o Pediatric EMS Champion in-person training and networking will again be held the Thursday and Friday before EMS Care in Ocean City in April 2023. A pediatric simulation workshop for EMS is being offered as a preconference to Winterfest on February 3, 2023, while a PEPP hybrid course is being offered as a preconference to Miltenberger on March 10, 2023.
  - o Pediatric Readiness orientations for Hospital Champions were held in October and December 2022, and a quarterly ED Forum schedule is being finalized. Two national pediatric nursing courses are being offered this winter: PCAR, February 15-16, 2023, in Annapolis, and CPEN, March 8-9, 2023, at Rocky Gap.
  - o Twenty (20) Safe Sleep Displays have been distributed to Safe Kids, EMS Champions, hospital, and ENA partners. In February, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms will be distributed in partnership with the MSFA Fire & Injury Prevention Committee/Risk Watch subcommittee.
  - o A winter project will develop a medication safety display package in partnership with the Maryland Poison Center and Safe Kids coalitions.
  - o 2023 Conference with EMS and ENA will include pediatric tracks.
- **The Child Passenger Safety and Occupant Protection (CPS & OP) Healthcare Project** (state-funded through the MHSO) received a 23<sup>rd</sup> year of funding starting October 1, 2022, which continues to provide outreach to health care providers to as well as education and parent educational tools on child passenger safety. Salisbury Fire Department is the newest EMS Operational Program to participate in the pilot Car Seat Project for EMS Supervisor vehicles. Two webinars are planned for 2023 and prior webinars are archived on the MIEMSS YouTube channel. Social media materials will continue to inform families and caretakers. Contact the project at [cps@miemss.org](mailto:cps@miemss.org).
- **The Bike Helmet Safety Project** (state-funded through the MHSO) is in a sixth year of providing bike helmets and bike safety education through Safe Kids Coalitions and community partners, Trauma Centers, and Pediatric EMS Champions. Over 300 helmets were directly shipped to Safe Kids Coalitions and community partners in September. The project is seeking stories of children and adults “Saved by the Helmet” throughout the year. Contact [bikesafety@miemss.org](mailto:bikesafety@miemss.org) for more information or to request educational materials.
- **The Safe Kids Maryland** state coalition continues to provide prevention information through social media and articles in *Maryland EMS News*. 2023 Safe Kids Maryland state coalition meetings are scheduled for March 1, 2023, and September 6, 2023, in-person at MIEMSS. The



2023 international Safe Kids PREV CON will be held July 23-26, 2023, at Gaylord Conference Center in Prince George’s County, Maryland. Contact [safekidsmd@miemss.org](mailto:safekidsmd@miemss.org) to join the email event announcements.

**Dates to Save:**

- **Winterfest 2023: February 3-5, 2023, in Easton, Maryland.** Pediatric Preconference will focus on medical emergencies in children and youth through simulation.
- **PCAR – Pediatric Care After Resuscitation Course: February 15-16, 2023 at the DoubleTree in Annapolis, Maryland.** This course focuses on pediatric trauma care after the first 30 minutes of acute resuscitation and was developed for nurses working in every phase of trauma care.
- **Miltenberger 2023: March 8-11, 2023, at Rocky Gap Conference Center.** EMSC is hosting a CPEN Review Course on March 8 and March 9 for nurses, and a PEPP-4 hybrid course on Friday, March 10. Online registration will be available soon.
- **Public Fire & Life Safety Educators Seminar: March 25, 2023, at MFRI headquarters in College Park.** A save-the-date flyer has been posted and a full conference schedule will be available soon.
- **EMS Care 2023: April 26-30, 2023, in Ocean City, Maryland.** A call for speakers was distributed on November 1, 2022.
- **Mid-Atlantic Life Safety Conference: September 19, 2023.** The committee met in December and is currently planning this year’s conference.



**PREVENTION**

**Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving: Super Bowl (February 12, 2023).** Each year, the Super Bowl garners millions of viewers, with many taking the opportunity to cheer on their favorite team with a night out or by attending a party. To help keep us all safe on the roads, NHTSA is teaming up with State and local traffic safety advocates to remind football enthusiasts that “Fans Don’t Let Fans Drive Drunk.” If you plan to drink alcohol, plan for a sober ride home. If you’re hosting a party, take care of your guests. For further tips and campaign materials on how to stay safe on Super Bowl Sunday, visit <https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/buzzed-driving-drunk-driving/super-bowl>.



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## **EMS CLINICIAN SERVICES**

**eLicensure Steering Committee:** April 4, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. Email [mmeyers@miemss.org](mailto:mmeyers@miemss.org) if you wish to represent your EMSOP or Education Program.

**Licensure-support@miemss.org** is the communication method that we prefer clinicians use to contact our office with questions and concerns. All communications go into a KACE system, which is time-stamped. This helps the team categorize the ticket to the right department and helps us respond to you in a more efficient manner.

**Expiration Date Change:** All clinicians who were due to expire on June 30, 2023, will have a new expiration date of July 31, 2023. All clinicians who were due to expire on December 31, 2023, will have a new expiration date of January 31, 2024.

**Forgot Password?** Licensure now has a password reset on the sign-in page. If you enter the password incorrectly too many times, you will have a 15-minute waiting period before you can attempt to change the password.

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## **2022/2023 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

**2022 ALS State Content Courses and the ALS Protocol Orientation Course.** These courses are live on the Online Training Center (<https://www.emsonlinetraining.org/>).

**EMT Stipend Program.** MIEMSS has processed all 500 applicants for the stipend. Direct deposit is now available to receive payments quicker. Please check your email for instructions on how to apply for direct deposit. Email [abrethauer@miemss.org](mailto:abrethauer@miemss.org) if you have questions.

### **Save the Date:**

- **Winterfest EMS Conference.** Friday, February 3-5, 2023, in Easton, MD.
- **Miltenberger EMS Seminar.** Wednesday, February 8-11, 2023, at Rocky Gap Casino Resort.
- **EMS Care 2023.** Wednesday, April 26-30, 2023, at the Ocean City Fontainebleu Resort in Ocean City, MD.