



MIEMSS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

December 2022

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EMS NEWS DIGEST

Governor Hogan Announces Statewide Preparedness Efforts to Address Increase in RSV and Potential COVID-19 and Flu Surges, Including C4 Pediatric Surge Operations (*Office of the Governor*). As hospitals in the region and across the country experience an increase in respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) admissions, Governor Larry Hogan has announced a series of new mitigation actions, along with preparedness efforts for potential fall and winter COVID-19 and flu surges in Maryland. To help mitigate an increase in hospital admissions, particularly among children experiencing RSV, Rhinovirus, or Enterovirus D68, MIEMSS will expand its Critical Care Coordination Center (C4) capability to include pediatric surge operations. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3VobWMO>.

Maryland Department of Health Launches RSV Resource Webpage, Urges Marylanders to Take Precautions, Get Flu and COVID Vaccines (*Maryland Department of Health*). The Maryland Department of Health has launched a new webpage offering resources about respiratory virus infections spreading rapidly this fall, as well as steps that Marylanders can take to protect themselves. The move follows Governor Larry Hogan's announcement about statewide preparedness efforts to address an increase in respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and potential COVID-19 and flu surges. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3EUonKg>.

Maryland Department of Health Releases RSV Hospitalization Data Dashboard, Urges Marylanders to Wash Hands, Take Precautions (*Maryland Department of Health*). The Maryland Department of Health has released a respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) data dashboard containing RSV hospitalization numbers in the state. The RSV data dashboard will be updated on Thursdays and display RSV hospitalizations by respiratory season. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3EUlkRc>.

Calvert County Implements Cost Recovery Program for Emergency Transport (*The Southern Maryland Chronicle*). The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners has accepted a memorandum of agreement with many of the county's volunteer fire, rescue, and EMS departments to implement a centralized EMS transport billing system. EMS transport billing enables fire, rescue, and EMS companies to recover some of the costs of providing ambulance transportation. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3U4xbBz>.

Harford County Expands Volunteer Fire and EMS Pension Benefits (*Maryland Association of Counties*). In October, the Harford County Council approved legislation proposed by County Executive (and former Level VFC EMT) Barry Glassman that expands eligibility for the county's volunteer fire and EMS clinicians to qualify for pension benefits. The [new law](#) lowers the eligibility age from 55 to 50-years-old for those with 25 or more years of service and lowers the age from 70 to 60-years-old for those with five consecutive years of service and at least 10 active years. The legislation also removes the monthly cap on benefits that can be earned by longtime volunteers. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3i12jV7>.

Tracheostomy Tube Shortage Likely to Impact Pediatric Patients; FDA Offers Guidance (*American Academy of Pediatrics News*). With a shortage of tracheostomy tubes, the Food and Drug Administration is offering guidance to support health care providers and patients who need the equipment. The shortage of tubes, including Bivona tracheostomy tubes manufactured by ICU Medical, is more likely to impact pediatric patients, the FDA said, because the supply of alternative tubes with similar functionality may be limited. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3AF5B6Y>.

Submit recent EMS-related news and headlines for consideration to ptandy@miemss.org.

MARYLAND EMS CLINICIANS AND JURISDICTIONAL PROGRAMS

Infectious Diseases:

- **Respiratory illnesses – Don't Let Your Guard Down.** 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.
- **Monkeypox.** EMS clinicians should continue to remain vigilant for monkeypox in patients who present with fever in combination with a rash. Monkeypox may start with a flu-like illness, followed by development of a rash within a few days, characterized by fluid-filled lesions that resemble chickenpox or herpes. The rash typically starts on the face and spreads to other parts of the body. Viral spread typically requires close contact with an infected person or animal (e.g., primates, small mammals), contaminated materials, or by respiratory droplets that can travel as far as six feet.
EMS clinicians should pay close attention to recommended personal protective equipment (PPE), which includes: gown, gloves, eye protection and NIOSH-approved N-95 (or equivalent) respirator. Read more here: <https://www.miemss.org/home/Portals/0/Memos/Memo-Monkeypox-What-You-Need-to-Know-20220526.pdf?ver=2022-05-26-120520-063>.

EMS Transfer of Care Times. MIEMSS sends weekly transfer of care reports to 34 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.

eMEDS®/CRISP Integration. MIEMSS continues to collaborate with the Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP), Maryland's designated health information exchange (HIE). This ongoing relationship has yielded a number of recent fruitful projects:

- Enhanced COVID-19 data collection to include pediatric emergency department boarding patients, and data visualization.
- Implemented expanded healthcare continuum of care’s access to pre-hospital EMS data to include electro-cardiograms and other media.
- Established roadmap to achieve incorporation of Mobile Integrated Health data from eMEDS® into CRISP.



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.

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:

- Continuing to review SOPs and guidance documents to identify areas for revision and updating.
- Initiating orientation and training for new full-time and contractual employees in November.
- All EMRC/SYSCOM staff have been enrolled and are currently participating in the CommLink virtual training, continuing education, and certification program for air and ground transport communications specialists. This is a CAMTS approved curriculum and covers all of the required topic material listed in the *CAMTS 11th Edition Standards*.

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 4,800 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 Facilitating distribution of DuoDotes to jurisdictions.
 - o Facilitating quarterly Base Station Coordinators meeting for Region III.
 - o Coordinating final review of NCR Regional Trauma Plan.
 - o Finalizing 2023 meeting schedule for the Cardiac Arrest Steering Committee.
 - o Managing ambulance inspections for Harford, Carroll, and Howard Counties.
 - o Supporting Region V Base Station site surveys.
 - o Supporting the Critical Care Coordination Center (C4) in staffing shifts.
- **Region IV:**
 - o Continue working with several recipients of the 2021 Cardiac Device grant with their reimbursements.
 - o Assisting Region IV EMS Council with 2022 Cardiac Device Grant applications.
 - o Assisted with the 2022 Annual Base Station Coordinators’ Summit.
 - o Working with various stakeholders in the First Responder Health and Wellness area on statewide projects.
 - 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.
 - o Currently facilitating Hospital Base Station re-designations for six (6) hospitals in Region IV.
 - o Continuing to support Winterfest 2022 by sending Nursing ConEd Certificates to students completing course requirements.
 - o Supporting Winterfest 2023 Planning Committee.
- **Region V:**
 - o Completing Base Station re-designation process as part of the COMAR requirement.
 - o Continue to work with regional EMSOPs in support of ongoing financial awards.
 - o Continue to work with the MWCOCG to support inter-agency development and coordination.
 - o 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.



HOSPITAL PROGRAMS

Trauma and Specialty Centers. The following COMAR Regulations are in the “State” process for promulgation:

- *General Provisions* – Approved by the EMS Board and is going through the DSD process
- *Perinatal Standards* – Approved by the EMS Board and is going through the DSD process
- *Pediatric Trauma* – Approved by the EMS Board going through the DSD process

Trauma and Specialty Center Programs due for re-designation in CY 2023 have submitted their Letters of Intent. A notice was published in the April 8, 2022, edition of *The Maryland Register* listing the centers seeking re-designation. Application for re-designation in CY 2023 were mailed out to the centers and due back to MIEMSS by October 21, 2022. All applications have been received. The Office of Care Integration is currently reviewing all application for completeness and accuracy. The Office of Care Integration will contact organizations to schedule on-site surveys in CY 2023. A 30-day notice will be given.



CARDIAC

Public Access AED Program. AED information, including application information, is located in the public information tab under “Public Access Automated External Defibrillator”.

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 CASC meeting is scheduled for December 7, 2022, from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. With administrative support, the meeting and minutes will be generated to represent the discussions had at the meeting.

The Maryland Resuscitation Academy presented its 34th course over 10 years for EMS agencies from Maryland and the region, committed to improving survival from sudden cardiac arrest, November 29 – 30, 2022, with 85 accepted participants.



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Emergency Medical Services for Children Department (EMS for Children). PEMAC met on November 2, 2022, for the regular business meeting followed by the 16th Annual Maryland EMSC Research Forum. The Research Forum included presentations for EMS and ED professionals along with the top four Pediatric EMS articles of the year and a briefing on the C4Pediatric first-year experience to date. Maryland EMSC is planning pediatric simulations and hospital visits as part of the EMSC Rural Pediatric Readiness Grant that focus 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 ED, expand the number of Pediatric Champions, focus on pediatric disaster planning, and expanding the Family Advisory Network.

The EMSC Department coordinates four (4) 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 virtual meeting on January 4 will provide a comprehensive review of the 2023 EMS Assessment conducted by the federal EMSC program. Meeting dates for 2023 will be finalized at that meeting.
 - o Pediatric Readiness orientations for Hospital Champions will be repeated in early January for those who could not attend in the fall.
 - o Twenty (20) Safe Sleep Displays have been distributed to Safe Kids, EMS Champions, Hospital, and ENA partners.
 - o A winter project will develop a medication safety display package in partnership with the Maryland Poison Center and Safe Kids coalitions.
 - o Conference planning for 2023 regional and state EMS and ENA has started with pediatric tracks.
- ***The Child Passenger Safety and Occupant Protection (CPS & OP) Healthcare Project*** (state-funded through the MHSO) received a 23rd year of funding starting October 1, 2022, which will continue 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. All

webinars are archived on the MIEMSS YouTube channel. Social media material will continue to inform families and caretakers. Contact the project at 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 direct 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 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*. The state and local coalition are exploring the logistics of hosting a training for health care professionals and health educators on poison prevention education and medication safety for all ages. 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 at Gaylord Conference Center in Prince George’s County Maryland July 23-26. The abstract deadline for presentations and posters was November 28, 2022. Contact 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,** is being offered 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.** Save-the-date flyer is posted and full conference schedule will be available soon.
- **EMS Care 2023** will be held April 26 – 30, 2023, in Ocean City. Call for speakers was distributed 11/1/22.
- **Mid-Atlantic Life Safety Conference: September 19, 2023.** The committee will meet in December to start planning for next year.



PREVENTION

2022 Holiday Season Impaired Driving Enforcement Mobilization (December 14, 2022 – January 1, 2023). This holiday season is just around the corner. As we prepare for festivities with family and friends, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration wants to remind all drivers of the dangers of impaired driving with campaign materials that you can use to promote safe driving habits. Visit <https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drug-impaired-driving/holiday-season/drive-high-get-dui> for more information.

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EMS CLINICIAN SERVICES

eLicensure Steering Committee: January 3, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. Email 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.

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2022/2023 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

2022 ALS State Content Courses and the ALS Protocol Orientation Course: 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 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.