

## MIEMSS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

August 2022

### Maryland EMS Clinicians and Jurisdictional Programs

**2022 Maryland Medical Protocols for Emergency Medical Services.** *The Maryland Medical Protocols for Emergency Medical Services* (2022 edition) is available on the MIEMSS website (<http://www.miemss.org/home/emsproviders/protocols>).

The new protocols went into effect on **July 1, 2022**. **If you have not already completed your protocol update, it is essential that this be done as soon as possible.** EMS Clinicians are responsible for all of the information contained in the updates.

This year's protocol video updates have been posted to the MIEMSS Online Training Center ([www.emsonlinetraining.org](http://www.emsonlinetraining.org)); they have also been posted to MIEMSS' YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/MarylandEMS>). EMS clinicians should complete the protocol update version that aligns with their level of licensure: EMRs and EMTs should complete the BLS version, CRTs and Paramedics should complete the ALS version. Regardless of how each clinician views the video content portion of this year's update (Online Training Center, YouTube, company drill format), every EMS clinician must log in to the MIEMSS Online Training Center and complete the quiz portion in order to obtain credit for the required course.

For EMS base stations, the video update is available on the MIEMSS base station website (<http://www.miemss.org/home/hospitals/base-stations>). Hospitals may download the SCORM file from this site, if desired. Importantly, each base station coordinator must maintain learning management records or signed and dated attestation forms that reflect update completion for all base station physicians and nurses.

To download the print or digital version of the *2022 Maryland Medical Protocols for Emergency Medical Services*, or for more information, visit <https://miemss.org/home/ems-providers/protocols>.

**Monkeypox: What You Need to Know.** Monkeypox is a viral illness that typically starts with flu-like symptoms and progresses to a rash, characterized by fluid-filled lesions that resemble chickenpox or herpes, within 3 days. The rash typically starts on the face and spreads to other parts of the body.

Over 23,000 monkeypox cases have been documented in 80 countries worldwide. As of this writing, there have been over 5,000 documented cases in the United States, including 117 confirmed cases in Maryland. 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 6 feet.

The CDC has provided guidance on precautionary measures to reduce the risk of transmission. 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>.

**COVID-19.** MIEMSS continues to provide guidance on recommended steps for dealing with COVID for EMS operational programs. With the arrival of new variants, COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in Maryland continue to wax and wane. EMS continues to transport patients with COVID-19 illness as well as immunosuppressed patients. EMS clinicians should continue to use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). EMS is part of the health care system, and these guidelines are based upon CDC and Maryland Department of Health (MDH) recommendations for health care professionals:

- EMS clinicians should continue to wear surgical masks, eye protection, and gloves, at minimum, on all calls.
- If there is any concern for COVID-19 illness, clinicians should use gloves, eye protection, surgical gown, and a fit-tested N-95 or equivalent respirator.
- ALL patients encountered by EMS should be instructed to wear a surgical mask, if their clinical condition allows. EMS should provide an appropriate mask if the patient does not have one. Exceptions to this guideline include patients who have significant disabilities or children under 2 years of age.
- Consider local hospital visitor policies when allowing family members to accompany patients who otherwise are capable of making their own medical decisions.
- For patients who are suspected to have COVID-19 illness or exposure, clinicians should reference the COVID-19 EMS Guidance dated July 1, 2021.
- The Pandemic Triage Protocol is a safe and effective measure for evaluating patients with a likely viral syndrome who may be able to remain at home and advising them about self-care.

The latest information regarding monitoring and caring for patients and EMS clinicians, including COVID-19 EMS Guidance documents, may be found on the Infectious Diseases portion of the MIEMSS website. Recognizing that guidance regarding COVID-19 is ever-changing, MIEMSS continues to post new documents to the <https://www.miemss.org/home/infectious-diseases> website as updates occur.

**EMS Transfer of Care Times.** MIEMSS continues to closely monitor times on the transfer of care from EMS to hospital staff, and sends weekly reports to hospitals upon their request. Nearly all of the hospitals in Region III and many in Region IV and V now 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.

MIEMSS sincerely appreciates the great flexibility of Maryland's EMS clinicians and jurisdictions as they respond to challenges in our health care system. MIEMSS will continue to advocate for additional strategies and resources to provide assistance in any way possible.

**Medicaid Supplemental Payment Program.** MIEMSS continues to work with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) on the Medicaid Supplemental Payment Program that will help rebalance reimbursement to EMS for the unreimbursed costs of providing services to Medicaid patients by calculating and obtaining the appropriate portion of federal reimbursement for these services. Eligible to participate in the program are EMS Board-designated Jurisdictional EMS Operational Programs that is funded directly by public (tax) dollars; bills Medicaid for EMS transports; and documents expenses paid with public (tax receipt) funds.

The thirteen JEMSOPs that participated in the program in FY22 will receive a total of for costs incurred during a nine-month period in FY22. The 13 JEMSOPs include: Allegany County; City of Annapolis; Anne Arundel County; Baltimore City; Baltimore County; Caroline County; Dorchester County; Frederick County; Harford County; Howard County; Montgomery County; Prince George’s County; and Queen Anne’s County.

More than 80 percent of all emergency service transports provided to Medicaid members, and 23 percent of all emergency transports overall, by participating JEMSOPs are potentially eligible for a supplemental payment. ESPP will continue for the foreseeable future to provide annual federal reimbursement for EMS Medicaid costs. JEMSOPs that did not participate in the first year of the program have the opportunity to do so in the future.



## **Recent News**

**MDH Launches 988, the New National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.** The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) has announced the launch of 988, the new National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, in Maryland. Contacting 988 provides a direct connection to support for anyone experiencing a mental health or substance abuse crisis, having thoughts of suicide, or being worried about someone who may need crisis support. “988 is an easy-to-remember number and an incredibly fast way to get anyone who experiences a behavioral health crisis the help they need right away,” said MDH Secretary Dennis R. Schrader. “In addition, in Maryland, we are integrating 988 into our existing and expanding crisis system support network.” Read more here: <https://health.maryland.gov/newsroom/Pages/Maryland-Department-of-Health-launches-988,-the-new-National-Suicide-&-Crisis-Lifeline.aspx>.

**Md. County Commissioners OK \$52K for Medical Director for New Fire/EMS Department.** Carroll County government is forging a relationship with Johns Hopkins School of Medicine to hire a medical director who will oversee operations for the county’s new Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services. The Board of Carroll County Commissioners voted unanimously on July 21 to approve a \$52,000 annual independent contract with Johns Hopkins, which will hire the position. The medical director will work six to eight hours per week overseeing all operations of the county’s EMS department, but could eventually move to a full-time position if needed. Read more here:

<https://www.ems1.com/medical-director/articles/md-county-commissioners-ok-52k-for-medical-director-for-new-fireems-department-3ovg77ZtEyJP9hpr/>.

**Aug. 26: Free Supplies at Back to School Event Hosted by Prince George’s Police, EMS.** The Prince George’s County Police Athletic League, in cooperation with the Office of Community Relations and Prince George’s County Fire/EMS, will host a back to school celebration on August 26, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., 7600 Barlowe Road in Landover. Free school supplies will be distributed at the event, which will also feature kickball games, a moon bounce, obstacle courses, music, food, and more. Read more here: <https://patch.com/maryland/bowie/free-supplies-back-school-event-hosted-police-ems-aug-26>.

**Prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 Amongst EMS and Healthcare Personnel in the Early Days of the Pandemic.** A new study published in the Journal of Emergency Medical Services measured over time new incident cases of both symptomatic and asymptomatic COVID-19 among urban emergency medical services and ED healthcare personnel. Read more here: <https://www.jems.com/coronavirus/prevalence-of-sars-cov-2-ems-healthcare-personnel/>.



## **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 three 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 will be held in Annapolis on October 14, 2022.

- **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, LE, 9-1-1 centers, and commercial ambulance agencies. Licensed mental health clinicians also support the workgroup. Efforts have resumed following a pause stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. 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 was passed and signed by the governor. The Bill (SB 446) 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. MIEMSS personnel and members of the first responder health and wellness workgroup will assist with this study.

**Field Operations:**

- Working with state, federal, and local partners on the Baltimore National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) plan update.
- Planning and evaluating a next-generation Maryland Emergency Medical Resource Alerting Database (MEMRAD) system for MIEMSS.
- In conjunction with the Regional Coordinators and SOCALR Director, continuing to distribute 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.
- Began the recruitment process for contractual EMSCO-I positions.

**Programs:**

- **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 July 2022, they:
  - o processed 16 program renewal requests,
  - o renewed 44 AEDs located at sites throughout the state,
  - o processed 11 new programs,
  - o approved the placement of 22 new AEDs at sites throughout the state, and
  - o continued to answer a multitude of questions from organizations participating in the program.

- **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 3,100 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 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.
  
- **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."
  
- **Region III:**
  - o Supporting multiple grants, including the Cardiac Devices, Advanced Life Support Training, and Naloxone Leave-Behind Grants.
  - o Preparing for Voluntary Ambulance Inspections.
  - o Preparing for base station site surveys for Region III hospitals.
  
- **Region IV:**
  - o Continue to support Winterfest / Miltenberger online conferences. This online continuing education content will remain available through December 31, 2022.
  - o Continue working with several recipients of the Cardiac Device grant to assist them with their reimbursements.
  - o Working with various stakeholders in the First Responder Health and Wellness area on statewide projects.
  - o Assisting two Region IV jurisdictions with ELITE enhancements.
  - o Region IV staff continue to support Maryland's continuing COVID-19 response efforts.

- Currently facilitating Hospital Base Station re-designations for three hospitals in Region IV.
  - Supporting Tidal Health Peninsula Trauma Conference scheduled for September 23 in Ocean City.
  - Provided support to Region IV EMS Clinicians needing assistance with licensure.
  - Supported efforts to reconcile EDAS data at hospital emergency departments throughout the region.
  - Supporting Winterfest 2023 Planning Committee. Winterfest 2023 is scheduled for February 3- 5, 2023, in Easton.
- **Region V:**
- Continue to support Maryland’s COVID-19 response efforts.
  - Continue to work on EMS Bases Station Updates
  - Continue to meet with and support EMS Operational Programs
  - Continue to work with the MWCOCG to support inter-agency development.



## Emergency Medical Services for Children

**Emergency Medical Services for Children Department (EMS for Children)**. The EMSC Department coordinates the state Pediatric Emergency Medical Advisory Committee (PEMAC) and Pediatric Data Analysis Research Team (DART) meetings with ongoing subcommittees and a workgroup focused on protocol revisions and EMS data analysis. PEMAC met on July 6, 2022, with afternoon work focused on reviewing the Pediatric Cardiac protocols and the development of an educational bundle for EMS Clinicians. The Summer Pediatric EMS Champions Forum was held virtually in July and included a presentation on Pediatric Asthma, Pediatric Asthma assessment tool research and the results of the 2022 EMS Assessment completed in March. Pediatric EMS Champions are supporting the Pediatric HPCPR and PEPP Courses offered by EMSC this summer. The next Champion forum will be in person in October with a PEPP Course optional.

The EMSC Department coordinates four (4) different grant programs that remain funded:

- **EMSC State Partnership Grant** (federally funded by HRSA/MCHB) focuses on federal performance measures specific to emergency care in EMS and emergency departments. Central to “Pediatric Readiness” is the presence of a pediatric champion in each EMSOP and each ED. Education that includes both skills and scenarios are under development in Maryland and many states with the goal of a shared online resource library. The Family Advisory Network (FAN) 2021-2022 project focuses on the dissemination of Safe Sleep education and creating teaching resources for EMS and ED public education. Fifteen interactive displays are located across Maryland through Safe Kids coalitions, Safe Kids Community Partners, and Risk Watch teams.

The MSFA Convention presentation is being updated for wider distribution in local communities. Contact the EMSC program at [PEPP@miemss.org](mailto:PEPP@miemss.org).

- ***Child Passenger Safety and Occupant Protection (CPS & OP) Healthcare Project*** (federally funded by NHTSA through the Maryland Highway Safety Office [MHSO]). The project's 22<sup>nd</sup> year of funding began on October 1, 2021. It continues to provide outreach to health care providers to provide education and parent educational tools on child passenger safety. The project collaborates with local Safe Kids chapters and coalitions, KISS program at MDH, EMS agencies working on CPS, and hospital EDs and nurseries to provide education and car seat resources. Vehicular Heatstroke Prevention Awareness is ongoing, with in-person outdoor thermometer displays and social media education. CPS Webinars are scheduled for summer and fall – flyers will be out soon. This grant year includes a pilot program to provide “3 in 1” Car Seats (seats that can be used for infants, toddler and older children) for EMS Agencies to use when the child is not the patient and needs to be transported safely. Allegany, Washington, Calvert, and Ocean City EMSOP are participating in this pilot. CPS Updates on how & why car seats protect children was a breakout session at both EMS Care Conference and MSFA Convention 2022 in Ocean City. Contact the project at [cps@miemss.org](mailto:cps@miemss.org).
- ***Bike Helmet Safety Project*** (state funded through the MHSO) is about to start a sixth year of funding. During the first five years, almost 4,100 bicycle helmets have been distributed through Safe Kids coalitions and community partners, Trauma Centers, and Pediatric EMS Champions. Bike safety educational materials are available and new display signs are available for returning to in-person outreach and education. A new educational poster is now available on the Anatomy and function of the Brain along with the importance of using a helmet. Contact [bikesafety@miemss.org](mailto:bikesafety@miemss.org) for more information or to request educational materials.
- ***Safe Kids Maryland*** state coalition continues to provide prevention information through social media and articles in *Maryland EMS News*. The spring meeting on March 2 featured presentations from the Maryland Poison Center and Safe Kids Worldwide “Ready to Roll” programs. September 7, 2022, meeting will be at 12:30 p.m. following PEMAC. Contact [safekidsmd@miemss.org](mailto:safekidsmd@miemss.org) to join the email event announcements.

Maryland Safe Kids Coalition, EMSC Family Advisory Network, and Maryland Risk Watch teams continues to lead the “Steps to Safety” at the MSFA Convention with support from the MSFA Fire and Injury Prevention/Life Safety Committee. Eight Steps to Safety prevention interactive training stations were provide to children, families, and injury/fire prevention advocates at the MSFA Convention in June 2022. The MIEMSS YouTube account has PSAs posted on “What to Expect When You Dial 9-1-1” and “Right Care When it Counts”. Contact Maryland Risk Watch at [riskwatch@msfa.org](mailto:riskwatch@msfa.org).

Dates to Save:

- ***Mid-Atlantic Life Safety Conference: September 20, 2022***, at the JH Applied Physics Lab in Laurel Maryland. Brochure and online registration to be available soon.
- ***Public Fire & Life Safety Educators Seminar: March 25, 2022*** at MFRI headquarters in College Park. Save the date flyer is posted and full conference schedule will be available in the fall.



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## **Prevention**

**2022 August/Labor Day Impaired Driving Prevention Campaign Materials Now Available.** The 2022 impaired driving national enforcement mobilization “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” goes into effect across the country from August 17 to September 5, 2022. Impaired driving - one of the deadliest and most often committed, yet preventable crimes – has become a serious safety epidemic in our country. Research shows that high-visibility enforcement can reduce impaired driving fatalities by as much as 20%. This is why NHTSA has prepared these campaign materials to maximize participation in this year's high-visibility enforcement mobilization campaign. Read more here: <https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/drive-sober-or-get-pulled-over/national-mobilization>.

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## **2022 Educational Programs**

**EMT Stipend Program.** MIEMSS has processed 440 applicants for the stipend and will continue to process them until June 30, 2023. Applicants should monitor their spam folders for correspondence and instructions on how to proceed to the next step. Email [abrethauer@miemss.org](mailto:abrethauer@miemss.org) if you have questions.

**Save the Date: Critical Issues in Trauma 2022.** Saturday, November 12, 2022, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Suburban Hospital Auditorium. Four hours of trauma-related continuing education.

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## **EMS Clinician Services**

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