

REGION 1 – Western NY

BUFFALO GENERAL MEDICAL CENTER (Kaleida Health), Erie County, opened a new helipad in mid-February atop the “A” tower. Previously, critical patients arriving by medivac were transported first to the helipad at Erie County Medical Center (ECMC) and transferred by ground ambulance. Buffalo General, with the opening of its Gates Vascular Institute in 2012, expects good use of the helipad as a specialized tertiary care center providing cardiac, stroke and vascular care and operations. ECMC continues to be the region’s Level 1 Trauma Center.

MILLARD FILLMORE GATES HOSPITAL (Kaleida Health), Buffalo, closed its Hyperbaric Medicine Program effective 11/30/11 and the facility will no longer provide hyperbaric treatment for individuals who have suffered from carbon monoxide poisoning or from “the bends” from diving accidents. The NYS DOH advised that patients with emergent carbon monoxide poisoning be transported to University Hospital in Syracuse. The distance is about 150 miles. Subsequently, the Western Regional Medical Advisory Committee issued a directive advising: All patients with symptoms of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning or “the bends” from diving shall be placed on high-flow oxygen via non-rebreather and transported as follows:

- Patients with burns and symptoms of CO poisoning shall be transported according to the *Adult and Pediatric Trauma Triage and Transport Guidelines*.
- Patients without burns, but with symptoms of CO poisoning or “the bends” shall be transported to the closest hospital.

CAMILLUS FIRE DEPARTMENT, Onondaga County, had its 501 (c)(3) status restored retroactively through the efforts of US Senator Charles Schumer enabling it to accept a \$13,000 donation that had been held up. Fundraising events such as hosting pancake breakfasts, comedy nights, etc can be resumed. Under a federal law passed in 2006, most tax-exempt groups must file an annual information return or notice with the IRS. For small organizations the law imposed a filing requirement for the first time in 2007. The law also called for the automatic revocation of the tax-exempt status of any organization that does not file the required returns or notice for three consecutive years. The IRS notified non-profits nationwide that they had to keep current with filing paperwork such as FORM 990 annual informational returns if they wished to retain their ability to accept tax-deductible contributions. In 2011 the IRS began notifying non-complying organizations, mostly long inactive groups including 480 in central New York alone, that their 501 (c)(3) status had been revoked. Active organizations such as the Camillus Fire Department, that had for some reason failed to file the necessary annual paperwork also got caught up in the “housecleaning”. Losing 501(c) (3) status would also affect an organization’s ability to receive government and corporate grant. Organizations can regain their tax-exempt status but must file as if first time filers. A full list of New York organizations that lost their tax-exempt status is at http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2011/06/irs_revokes_tax-exempt_status.html

EAST AREA VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY SERVICES (EAVES), Onondaga County, received a \$60,000 Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant. EAVES will use the federal funding to purchase three new Lifepaks, 15 cardiac monitors and an emergency generator for their station. In 2011, EAVES responded to 2,570 emergency calls in areas covered by the East Syracuse Fire District.

FINGER LAKES REMSCO, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne & Yates Counties

The region presented a proposal to SEMAC/SEMSCO to begin a pilot project on the application of continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) by basic life support personnel in the Finger Lakes Region. This project is in the beginning phases with some agencies already having been contacted regarding participation in the project. Other potential participating agencies have yet to be contacted and as the project gets closer to implementation more details will be made available.

The Regional EMS Program Agency is partnering with the Rochester Regional Health Information Organization (RHIO) for a Center for Medicate Services Innovation Challenge Grant. If approved, it would allow the region to provide ePCE capabilities to all of the agencies in the region to provide agencies with training in workflow redesign to more quickly complete PCRs and provide capabilities for all

advanced level agencies to transmit 12 lead EKGs to Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) centers to better aid in the care of the region's cardiac patients. Additionally, as this project would move forward all of the agencies' PCR data would be set up to go directly into a regional standardized virtual patient record the RHIO has been developing for the past several years.

FAXTON-ST. LUKE'S EMS EDUCATION PROGRAM, Utica, NY, has been approved by the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Services to offer the Basic EMT Core Program on-line. This program is being offered to all Midstate REMSCO Basic EMT's whose agencies have been approved by the Bureau of EMS as participants of the Core (Pilot) program and would like to recertify their Basic EMT through the Core Program. Students are only required to attend 2 classes and can complete all Basic EMT Core requirements on line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Interested students can register for this program or if you would like more information, you can get this by calling Bill Perry at (315) 624-4539.

OGDENSBURG VOLUNTEER RESQUE SQUAD, St. Lawrence County, is waiting for expected confirmation of a \$1.5 million loan from the US Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Office to enable it to purchase and renovate a former retail location into its new headquarters. The \$1.7 million project calls for \$740,000 to be used for purchase of the Hackett's Hardware store 54,295 square foot building at 1223 Pickering Street and about \$1 million for renovations. In addition to the loan, the squad will cover expenses with cash and fundraisers. About 24,000 square feet will be used by the squad for housing its vehicles and for offices, training and meeting rooms, sleeping quarters and other accommodations. The remaining portions of the building will be offered for rent to help pay off the loan. If the loan is approved, the squad will pay \$90,000 over 30 years. Annual payments to the city in lieu of property taxes may also be involved. An alternative plan of building from the ground up on 25 acres of land owned by the squad was estimated at \$4 to 5 million and was ruled out.

ONONDAGA COUNTY is being permitted to use already-secured federal funds to enable the county to join the Central New York Interoperable Communications Consortium, which will boost public safety. Onondaga County had asked the US Department of Homeland Security for permission to spend \$325,000 of already disbursed funding to reprogram 1,000 public safety radios so that they can communicate with first responders in Madison, Cayuga, Oswego, and Cortland County. Citing department policy, DHS refused the request because the radios were originally purchased using non-DHS funding. Senator Charles Schumer was apprised of the situation and was able to get DHS to reverse its position in February. The regional build-out is progressing on schedule and it is expected that four of the five counties will be online by the end of 2012. Read Senator Schumer's press release at <http://schumer.senate.gov/Newsroom/record.cfm?id=336060>

ONONDAGA COUNTY SHERIFF'S medivac helicopter service available to 13 counties is facing budget issues. The Sheriff is reportedly seeking voluntary \$5,000 to \$10,000 annual payments from each county served.

OSWEGO COUNTY RADIO PROJECT -Oswego County is funding development of a Motorola P25 digital 10-Channel Trunked Land Mobile Radio System (TLMR) to replace the current 800 MHz radio system. There are 47 user agencies in Oswego County who will employ the new system. A local news outlet summarized the status. The first order of subscriber units, portables, mobile and control stations will be submitted in May and training will coincide with the roll-out of the new equipment. Testing is scheduled to be conducted in June, July and August and the new system is on track to be fully deployed and accepted in September. To achieve acceptance, the new system is required to work in 97 percent of the county with portable radios compared to the current system where mobile requirements were only 95 percent. This new communications system will use a total of 14 transmitter sites, compared to 6 with the old system. Existing towers in the city of Oswego, and the towns of Boylston, Constantia, Granby, Hastings and Redfield have all been refurbished and new towers in the city of Fulton and the towns of Orwell, Oswego, Redfield and Sandy Creek have been constructed. The radio sites and network design will have a very high reliability rating and provide continuous communications coverage,

even in the event of equipment failure, natural or manmade incidents. A series of servers, monitors, and related equipment that supports the TLMR network is monitored from the Oswego County E-911 Center and connected to the master site in Onondaga County.

This system is part of the Central NY Interoperable Communications Consortium (CNYICC). Cayuga and Madison counties are also part of this system and talks have begun in Cortland and Jefferson counties to incorporate them as well.

SUSQUEHANNA REGIONAL EMS COUNCIL (SREMS), serving Broome, Chenango & Tioga Counties, adopted ImageTrend for a Region-wide ePCR System, at a cost of about \$49,000 plus a few options. The SREMS ePCR Committee worked for a year to come up with a vender that would meet the needs of the Region and be cost effective. SREMS will be paying most of the approximately \$45,000 start-up costs and seeking contributions from other sources such as the hospitals in the region to pay for the balance - about \$15,000 for other options. For agencies that do less than 500 calls a year the annual cost will be a \$500 flat fee. For agencies that do over 500 calls a year, the cost will start at \$2.00 per call. The current ePCR system will be discontinued on January 1, 2013. The ePCR Committee will be working on getting a plan together, to assist in a timely cut-over to ImageTrend. Agencies may still use another vender at their own expense after getting approval from their Medical Director and REMAC to use a different vender. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation with additional information is online at <http://srems.com/site/newsFiles/Future-of-ePCR-in-the-Susquehanna-Regional-EMS-System.pdf>