

NYS DOH Bureau of EMS & Trauma Services
Bi-Weekly Webex Update for EMS Agency Leadership
Wednesday 7/29/20, 3:00 PM to 3:34 PM
Unofficial Notes

NYS DOH BEMS&TS Panelists:

Ryan Greenberg, Director, Bureau of EMS & Trauma Services
Steven Dziura, Deputy Director, Bureau of EMS & Trauma Services
Peter Brodie, Deputy Chief, Informatics
Daniel Clayton, Section Chief, Operations Branch
Jean Taylor, Deputy Chief, Education Branch
Richard Robinson, Deputy Chief, NYC, Metropolitan Region
Valerie Ozga, Vital Signs Academy

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- BEMS&TS has learned that NYS Department of Motor Vehicle local offices in the counties in many if not all cases are handling vehicle registration renewals by drop box only and are not taking appointments. Bureau trying to get around this at the state level with DMV. Agencies should check registrations ahead of coming due and be aware of the drop box process. DMV advises drop box process takes 7 to 10 days and it is unknown if this includes mailing time or not. If there is a lapse in vehicle registration agency would have to take an ambulance out of service and this has actually happened on a couple of occasions in the last 2 weeks across the state. For a small service with only 1 ambulance that can have an effect on their finances as well as public safety.
- Bureau's Operations Unit is following suit of Education Unit and instructor re-certifications process which over the last several years has not been mailing out recertification packages 90 days prior to expiration of CIC & CLI. Onus will now be with EMS agency in getting recertification packages completed, signed, executed in advance of expiration date. All required forms are on the DOH web site (click [HERE](#)). Services with controlled substances also have to submit appropriate forms for that purpose. Any questions about what forms are necessary should be directed to District Chief or Regional Office Deputy Chief via e-mail or phone. Check Ambulance Operating Certificate which should be hanging on a wall in public view and make sure applications are submitted in timely and sufficient manner so that even if BEMS&TS is not able to process paperwork an agency is covered by the State Administrative Procedures Act (SAPA).
- Bureau is accepting scanned good clean PDF copies.
- If having trouble finding a notary to notarize documents do to COVID-19 do not worry too much about that as sometime moving down the road the Bureau will be taking notary requirement off its forms. Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement forms are another matter and still require notarization.
- Question: Several nursing homes across the state are requiring EMS personnel on arrival before taking a patient out of the facility on a 911 call to submit to a COVID-19 test or submit proof of a negative test result with the last 7 days. What is DOH guidance? Response: Official BEMS&TS position is "Executive Order 202.30 does not mandate COVID-19 testing of emergency medical technicians, law enforcement officers, firefighters or other 1st responders entering an acute care facility such as a nursing home under exigent circumstances".
- Question: Are EMTs and EMT-Ps not permitted to do nasal swabbing? Answer: That is not necessarily true and since March those personnel have done swabbing with specific BEMS&TS approval and appropriate training usually by a physician Medical Director.

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- Really nothing new in education.
- Still dealing with some of the same issues we've had with PSI Computer Based Testing and trying to get them resolved.
- Several new course applications have been received for the fall.
- Question: In order to be in a CME program does EMT have to be with the organization that administrates the program? Answer: Yes, have to be a provider with that agency. Ryan Greenberg

added that there may be future guidance that suspends that requirement for a period of time but it is currently in place.

- Question: With certifications extended due to COVID-19 what format, old or new, should EMS personnel use for CME re-certifications? Answer: Use new format. Ryan Greenberg added that if people are looking for additional hours almost all of the those additional hours they would need are available on the Vital Signs Academy or will be in the upcoming coming weeks.

Valerie Ozga valerie.ozga@health.ny.gov

- Not much news to report.
- Vital Signs Academy has been going continuously and strong.
- It's been a month since implementation of the new process of the quiz after the webinar and we seem have worked out the kinks and it is going smoothly making life easier for all.
- Still looking for presenters. If interested send e-mail to Valerie Ozga and/or John MacMillan.
- Working with Course Sponsors for August and September presentations and there are slots open.
- Questions: What should individuals do who have not received certificates from Vital Signs Academy? Answer: We are working to have them done shortly.

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- Making concerted effort to e-mail out renewal paperwork to EMS agencies. Can't say we'll continue to do that forever and ever but will continue in beginning months so no one is surprised.
- MARO (Metropolitan Area Regional Office) staff is out doing somewhat normal work such as investigations stuff as well as supporting travel advisory stuff put forth by Governor's Office at airports, rail hubs and up until today at Westchester County Airport.

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- Working on a lot of exciting things.
- NYC agencies were instructed to send paper PCRs to BEMS&TS in Albany. There was a pause on that for about a week and a half but that has been lifted and NYC agencies should resume sending paper PCRs to Albany.
- Working on a paper PCR portal. In the future instead of sending in paper PCRs agency personnel would scan them in as PDFs and then fill out a brief on-line form. This is to make it much easier for agencies.
- Team is working on documentation standard taking into consideration feedback that was provided last fall. Developing validation rules. This was delayed by pandemic but expect it to be out during the 4th quarter of this year.
- BLSFR documentation standard is being worked on which will be different than that for transport agencies.
- Expect more to come from Informatics. EMS data is the fastest healthcare data received in NYS.

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- Working this week on a provider portal. Forms will still be paper based format but submission will be to a centralized on-line site. Will be starting with education forms but will add other subjects such as verification requests and requests for duplicate cards (when we start printing cards again).
- In evaluation process on a protocol app. It will be a statewide app and different regional protocols will be on there so any provider can use the app.
- Statewide meetings are coming up. They will be virtual. All the Committee meetings will be on Wednesday 8/12/20. State Emergency Medical Advisory Committee (SEMAC) will be in the morning on Thursday 8/13/20 and the State Emergency Medical Service Council (SEMSCO) will be in the afternoon on Thursday 8/13/20. Check DOH website for log-in information as meeting dates get closer. Everyone is encouraged to participate.
- Question: 17 year old EMTs are riding ambulances. There were questions about minors' ability to take RMAs and pronounce death. Has DOH Division of Legal Affairs resolved the issues? Are there other issues? Answer: Working on that with Legal but realistically responses will take time so everything is addressed in 1 coordinated effort without going back and forth.
- Question: Will EMT-Ps be able to administer vaccines? Answer: Not permitted to give vaccines today. In emergency situations in the past the Commissioner of Health has given permission. If there is a future need it would be at the discretion of Commissioner at the time.

- Working on a platform for any agency that wants to go with ePCRs. This is a little bit further down the line.
- VITAL SIGNS Conference plan is expected by next week. Expect announcement by the State Council meetings.
- Question: What are the ultimate plans for civil disturbances and protests? Answer: That was something we were looking at a couple weeks ago and further discussion was that it was a local situation to have a plan in place. If agencies need more direction and policy guidance we are happy to bring it back to the table.
- Question: NYC provider attended Train-the-Trainer program in March for 2020 Protocol Update. Implementation has been delayed but will DOH provide additional training aid? Answer: NYS has hour and a half on-line update. NYC Region opted for shorter 15 minute update as Region was providing its own training. For agencies that want to have NYS training they can reach out to John MacMillan for access.
- Question: EMS agencies are facing increased financial issues and are noticing that more people are keeping insurance checks and not paying their bills. Is there anything way the BEMS&TS can help with pushing direct payments/reimbursements? Answer: The Bureau does not deal with lobbying or regulatory matters related to billing and payment. Speak with your Association or elected officials.
- Ensure your providers are OK. Check on them whenever you can. Complexity of calls has changed.
- We do not know what the fall will bring. Consider stocking up on additional PPE, look at response models, operational policies, etc. so we are prepared for any second wave of COVID-19. Work with other agencies on staffing and coverage to supplement staffing if needed.

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- EMS is considered an essential service for opening up and continuing to operate. All businesses including EMS is required to follow guidance posted on the [NYForward](#) website.
- We are subject to social distancing requirements whenever possible such as in-station activities including meals and training. Surgical masks at a minimum should be used responding to and returning from calls. Additional PPE is to be used in actual or suspected COVID-19 situations. At no time should EMS be interfacing with the public without wearing a mask. This is enforceable by the BEMS&TS and other government agencies.
- Question: Dutchess County provider asked about proper way of transporting a patient in police custody secured on a stretcher, with patient's hands cuffed behind their back and a collar in place. This has been seen in on multiple occasions. Answer: Probably should not be recommended, however, there may exist circumstances where it would. Prior to taking official position want to do a little bit of research and know all the facts and respond at next meeting with official guidance from the Department.
- Agencies seeking guidance or answers to questions should be very specific about the scenarios they are facing in the field as it helps the Bureau create better and more meaningful guidance documents.