NYS DOH Bureau of EMS & Trauma Services
Briefing for EMS Agency Leadership and Providers
Thursday 2/25/21, 4:02 PM to 4:27 PM

Unofficial Notes
This is not verbatim transcript of the call. Notes were typed during the call and reviewed and added to afterward. There was no prepared agenda distributed before the call. Questions and/or comments from providers were submitted before and during the call.

“This meeting is being recorded” announcement played at the start of the briefing. Some of the past briefings have been posted to the Archived Webcasts section of the NYS DOH website.

Panelists:
Ryan Greenberg, Director, Bureau of EMS & Trauma Services
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Jean Taylor
• No new reports.

Valerie Ozga
• Vital Signs Conference is going forward as in-person event with the hope that attendance restrictions will be lifted by the time of the conference. If there are restrictions for on-site attendance there will also be a virtual component option. Have been diligently working on educational tract. Also working on vendor applications and they should be out in next couple of weeks. Finalizing hotel accommodations in Saratoga and that should be up 4/1/21.
• Vital Signs Academy is going strong and attendance numbers have been phenomenal.
• EMS Memorial Service is being changed this year from May to September. Awaiting confirmation from NYS Office of General Services. 17 names to be added to the memorial. There are 3 from the 2020 service that was not held and the rest are 14 new names from this past year.

Richard Robinson
• Staff is engaged in vaccine PODs at the Westchester County Center and the new FEMA site at York College in Queens.
• Send in agency renewals electronically to regional offices.
• Staff is doing normal daily activities plus work at the PODs.
• Question: When and where will Metropolitan Area Regional Office be moving to in Westchester: Answer: Moving to 145 Huguenot Street, New Rochelle, NY 10801. Awaiting Certificate of Occupancy but some staff have moved in and more will move next week.

Edward Mager
• EMS agency renewals notices are being distributed by e-mails to EMS agency leadership contacts in the database. This includes agency and Controlled Substance renewals up until the end of March. If renewal application has not been received in next 2 weeks reach out to Deputy Chief or District Chief assigned to geographic area. Ensure renewal applications are submitted timely, complete and accurate and it will be processed appropriately.
• Western Region staff will be at the new FEMA vaccination POD site in Buffalo on Monday. It will be operating a few days a week. They will be supporting DOH and National Guard with POD activities.
• Staff is engaged in multiple investigations and general work in progress.

Michael Linehan (Report presented by Amy Eisenhauer)
• Unable to attend this call because of work at a FEMA site.
• We continue to support and send ambulances to vaccination and testing sites.
• Several strike teams of EMS vaccinators sent to sites to assist with vaccinations.
• Each agency should continue to follow COVID-19 protocols and guidelines.

Peter Brodie (Report presented by Amy Eisenhauer)
• Information and demonstration sessions on PCRs begin next week. Agency leadership should sign up for session(s) that would be applicable to their agency.
• If there are questions send e-mail to EMSdata@health.ny.gov

Amy Eisenhauer
• EMS for Children survey will run through 3/17/21. It was sent out in early January. If link to survey is needed send e-mail.
• Vital Signs Academy presentation on Tuesday 3/2/21 will be on Pediatric Burns. Presenter is Doug Sandbrook.
• Still looking for more people interested in being a Pediatric Emergency Care Coordinator (PECC) for their agency or region. For more information and a link to the application go to https://www.nyspecc.org/

Ryan Greenberg
• Calling in from Javits Center in NYC.
• Expressed thanks to everyone on the call. This has been an unexpected year particularly in the EMS world as we have adapted and moved on so many things. Some things have changed because of COVID-19 but seem to be now staying in place even as COVID-19 is showing lower numbers.
• 5,000 EMS providers have taken the initial on-line vaccinator training on Vital Signs Academy. About 2,000 have completed the skills assessment & attestation to enable them to actually vaccinate at PODs.
• RNs can sign off on a vaccinator candidate’s skills assessment. This has finally been confirmed. The assessment can also be signed off by an MD, PA or NP. In addition an MD, PA or NP can sign off on an EMT-P who is instructor type or training officer who can then sign off on others to vacinate.
• Several federal based vaccination sites are coming on-line.
• There has been increased state mobilization with strike teams and EMS resources sent around the state.
• There have been questions about if this has affected the EMS system at all, has it or hasn’t? Have day to day operation needs been met?
• Good things are happening such as recertification cards are to be issued as well as a digital option for cards.
• Additional guidance documents are in the pipeline, hopefully more information on that will be coming in next couple of weeks.
• Question: Have quarantine guidelines for essential employees changed if they have been vaccinated? Answer: Do not know, nothing has passed his desk. Will look into it for next week’s call.

• Question: Have travel restrictions been changed for those who have been vaccinated? Answer: There have been some discussions that have changed on the CDC side but have not changed on the NYS side yet. Will continue to monitor and get it out when we see policy guidance.

• Question: We have had several people in our agency complete the vaccinator training program and applied through the temp agencies, however, no one has been hired as of yet. Will any local providers be offered these paying jobs? Answer: Do not have any input to that. The only thing we do is offer the sites we put out there. Private companies hire staff and we do not know anything beyond the application process. Most of the NYS sites are filled by the temp agencies and are meeting their staffing requirements. Apologized for lack of more information. Encouraged to follow-up with the staffing companies.

• Question: Are masks are still required when at bases and in ambulances even when both providers are vaccinated? Could DOH issue a memo regarding this? Answer: We have not put out a memo regarding that and there has not been an update to that. Current guidance and restrictions are still in place whether vaccinated or not. There have been some discussions regarding if in a station and social distancing or in separate rooms or in own work stations if masks can come off. Look for guidance from agency Medical Director. BEMS&TS encourages everybody to try and stay with masks as often as possible. With meal time not everybody should come to the same table to eat and be in close proximity. Try and protect the department.

• Question: ePCR? Answer: There will be additional guidance on the transition to ePCRs or the way paper PCRs are handled. The deadline for paper PCR submission is being extended to end of June 2021. Agencies are asked to make a decision on how to handle PCRs by 3/31/21. Information sessions will be held. Look at the different platforms and decide which works best for the agency. Send e-mail to EMSdata@health.ny.gov if agency has not received schedule of the presentations.

• Question: Can EMS vaccinators work in pharmacies? Answer: Current Executive Order requires that EMT vaccinators must work in PODs under supervision of an MD, PA or NP. Looking at some expansions to that but currently they are not in place. There are EMT-Ps working in BEMS&TS approved Community Paramedicine programs. Contact Richard Bagozzi if there are questions.