



EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMITTEE



Regular Meeting

Friday, October 7, 2016 – 9:00 am

*Location: Hall of Administration: Board Hearing Room
333 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana, California 92701*

MINUTES

MEMBERSHIP / ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS

- Ron Blaul (excused) - Board of Supervisors, First District
- Jinha M. Park, MD, Ph.D. (exc) - Board of Supervisors, Second District
- Nick Anas, MD - Board of Supervisors, Third District
- Timothy Greco, MD - Board of Supervisors, Fourth District
- Michael Ritter, MD - Board of Supervisors, Fifth District
- James Karras - Ambulance Association of OC
- Virg Narbutas - Hospital Association of Southern California
- Dean Grose - League of California Cities
- Trez Gutierrez, RN (excused) - Orange Coast Emergency Nurses Assn.
- Lindley Garcia, RN - Orange County Business Council
- Chief Wolfgang Knabe (exc.) - Orange County Fire Chiefs Association
- Bryan Hoynak, MD (excused) - Orange County Medical Association
- Rebecca Gomez (excused) - Orange County Senior Citizens Advisory Council
- Vacant - American Red Cross, OC Chapter
- Vacant - OC City Managers Association
- Vacant - Orange County Police Chiefs/Sheriffs Assn.
- Vacant - Society of OC Emergency Physicians

CATEGORY REPRESENTED

HEALTH CARE AGENCY STAFF

- Sam Stratton, MD - EMS Medical Director
- Tammi McConnell, MSN, RN - EMS Administrator
- Steve Thronson - Deputy Agency Director, Regulatory/MS
- Denise Fennessy - Chief of Operations, Regulatory/MS
- Laurent Repass, NRP - EMS Information Systems Chief
- Vicki Sweet, RN - ALS/CQI Coordinator
- David Johnson, RN - Facilities Coordinator
- Jason Azuma, EMT-P - OC-MEDS Coordinator
- Juan Alvarez - EMS Specialist
- Andrew Roberts - EMS Specialist
- Kirsten Wong - EMS Specialist
- Erica Moojen - EMS Office Supervisor
- Eileen Endo - Office Specialist

- BC Robert Acosta - Orange County Fire Authority
- Ruth Clark, RN - Orange County Global Medical Center
- Chad Druten - Emergency Ambulance Service
- Sheryl Gradney, RN - St. Jude Medical Center
- Tina Heinemann, RN - Lynch Ambulance Service
- Maryle Olivier, RN - UCI Medical Center
- Aaron Oshima - Mercy Air Service
- Jana Swauger, RN - Saddleback Memorial Medical Center
- Chris Waddell, RN - Huntington Beach Hospital
- Ian Wilson - PRN Ambulance Service
- Stephen Wontrobski - Resident of Mission Viejo

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair, Dr. Michael Ritter, acting as Chair.

II. INTRODUCTIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Orange County EMS is pleased to announce the addition of David Johnson, RN, the new EMS Facilities Coordinator. David previously served as EMS' Quality Assurance Coordinator for five years. He has worked in the emergency departments at Mission Hospital and Saddleback Memorial Medical Center. A copy of the formal announcement distributed is included in the agenda packet (see Attachment #6).

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MSC: Minutes from the July 29, 2016 Emergency Medical Care Committee were approved as submitted.

IV. OCEMS REPORT / CORRESPONDENCE

- **Medical Director's Report:** – Dr. Stratton reporting:
 - **Pediatric Readiness Survey:** Orange County EMS released the survey to assess hospital resources in caring for pediatric patients in the emergency department. The survey is a

national survey used in assessing the system. Ten of twenty-four hospitals have responded to the survey.

- **Hospital Diversion Report (January 1 to September 30, 2016):** Mike Delaby reported on hospital diversion for the period of January 1 to September 30, 2016 (Attachment #2). This report has also been posted to the OCEMS website under EMS System Reports.
- **Emergency Ambulance Transportation Contract Performance Report: Fiscal Year 2015-16:** Tammi McConnell reported that the Fiscal Year 2015-16 Emergency Ambulance Contract Performance Report is included in today's agenda packet (Attachment #3). It has been posted online and sent to city managers in the affected areas.
- **EMS Plan Annual Update:** Ms. McConnell reported that a copy of the 2016 annual update to the 2014 EMS Plan is attached to the agenda packet (See Attachment #4).
- **OCEMS Annual Report:** Attached to today's agenda packet is a copy of the 2015/16 Emergency Medical Care Committee Annual Report (Attachment #5). This report is required under Section 1797.276 of the California Health and Safety Code.
- **EMCC Correspondence:** Attached to today's agenda packet are a number of memos distributed system-wide. These include the addition of David Johnson, RN, as the new EMS Facilities Coordinator; the risk of carfentanil exposure to first responders; the approval of the Orange County Sheriff's Department to administer intranasal naloxone to victims of a suspected opioid overdose; and the release of Orange County EMS Policy/Procedure #300.31 (OC-MEDS Data Dictionary).

V. **EMCC ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE AND ADVISORY GROUP REPORTS**

Dr. Stratton reported on items discussed at the Education & Training Advisory, Facilities Advisory and County Paramedic Advisory Committees.

VI. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. **Data System Compliance**

Tammi McConnell reported that State law will require all emergency and non-emergency providers to use an electronic patient care reporting system meeting national standards (NEMESIS 3.4) by January 1, 2017. Committee members were provided with a status report on the transition of BLS and ALS providers who meet the standards. This chart will be provided on a monthly basis until the end of the year.

VII. **NEW BUSINESS**

Informational Item Only:

A. **ALS Provider Approval**

Dr. Stratton announced that the Orange County Sheriff's Department has been approved as an Advanced Life Support (ALS) Provider as a paramedic provider in Orange County. They have met all ALS paramedic provider requirements.

Action Item:

B. **Proposed EMS Provider Fees**

Attached to today's agenda packet is background information on the EMS Provider fees that Orange County EMS is proposing to bring before the Orange County Board of Supervisors on November 22, 2016. Ms. McConnell presented statistics on the EMS System; its responsibilities as mandated under state and local laws and policies. Currently, the EMS System provided services for over 190,000 9-1-1 responses using 900 accredited paramedics by 13 advanced life support (ALS) provider agencies. It has 3,400 certified emergency medical technicians; 3,200 accredited EMTs who work on ambulances; and 190 mobile intensive care nurses who oversee the base hospital radios at the six base hospitals.

Twenty-nine ambulance companies are currently licensed with over 460 individually licensed ambulances, 24 hospitals, six base hospitals, four trauma centers, fourteen cardiac centers, nine stroke centers and one pediatric receiving center.

In 1982, the Orange County Board of Supervisors designated the Health Care Agency as the local EMS agency. While fee studies had been conducted on a more frequent basis in the past, over the past few years, fee studies have been conducted but have not been brought forth to the Emergency Medical Care Committee and then forwarded to the Board of Supervisors. The last fee study that was brought forth was in 2005.

Christy Preble, Program Support Analyst for the Health Care Agency made a presentation on how the proposed fees were calculated; the fees proposed for the next three years; and the methodology to be used for future fee increases. She indicated that fees currently charged for EMT certification (excluding the pass through to the State) and an EMT replacement card are at a lower rate than full cost recovery. Fees charged by surrounding counties were taken into consideration when making a determination on the proposed fees for these two categories. The trauma center fees required restructuring due to a change in the American College of Surgeons (ACS) fees charged for their verification process. New fees being proposed are for fees for services currently paid for by the County and providers are now being asked to pay for these services.

Health Care Agency staff addressed questions and concerns expressed by Committee members.

Dr. Ritter: Asked about the frequency that trauma centers are charged. Currently trauma center fees are charged every three years, however, this is being changed due to a fee restructuring by the ACS.

Dr. Greco: Asked about any comparison data from surrounding counties. Comparison data is included as an attachment in the packet.

Jim Karras: Asked about the paramedic accreditation fee and the reasons why the fee is variable. Ms. McConnell responded that under regulation, public safety paramedics may not be charged an accreditation fee more than once. Currently County Counsel is being asked to determine if this also includes flight and IFT-ALS paramedics.

Dean Grose: Asked how the \$104 rate used in the methodology calculated. Not supportive of fees that are above recovery costs. However, when comparing fees to those charged in surrounding areas, he feels the system is not equitable to those in lower paying positions and felt that he could not support the fees.

Dr. Anas: Asked about the number of specialty center fees, what is included in the costs for the specialty centers, and what type of services are provided to both stroke neurology and cardiovascular receiving centers. Ms. McConnell indicated that a site survey is performed every three years, and data from these specialty centers is monitored to ensure that these facilities are accepting stroke patients as required from spoke hospitals.

Jim Karras: Thanked Dean Grose for his comments. The ambulance association concurs with the majority of his comments. The organization has not come to a position of support on the increase in EMT certification fees. They are not opposed to the ambulance provider fees for company and vehicle licensure, given the fact that the last fee increase occurred in 2005. However, they believe there is some duplication in the processes to the certification of EMTs concurrently with an ambulance license. Orange County is the only county which issues a separate license for an ambulance attendant. In addition, the AAOC feels there is an inequity in the accreditation process between public and private EMTs.

Dean Grose: The fees indicate that an EMT training program would be charged \$874 every four years. Have the training programs been consulted about this fee? Ms. McConnell responded that no feedback has been received from the training programs regarding this fee. Mr. Grose indicated that finding an EMT training program for certification or recertification has been difficult. Community colleges are offering few training programs while the regional occupational programs (ROP) have increased which charge a fee. Fees charged by the ROP programs will recover their costs by increasing the fees charged to students. He doesn't believe that the fee increases have been vetted enough to make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors in

support of the proposed fees. The EMT certification is done through the State, so the cost to the individual County has had to have dropped. He expressed concerns regarding on the fees being charged.

Virg Narbutas, representing the Hospital Association of Southern California: On behalf of the member hospitals of Orange County, we appreciate the ability to provide comment today and we appreciate the professionalism, the agency has done in presenting this to us. However, we cannot support the fees being proposed. Hospitals already subsidize much of the cost in the EMS system and are already paying fees to third party accreditation agencies. With regard to the third party accreditation agencies, we understand that Orange County EMS is the local designated authority but its costs are tied to other organizations already validating the designating services. Specifically for the trauma centers, the ACS has a vigorous process for the trauma centers. Joint Commission and DNV also provide certification for cardiac and stroke centers. Joint Commission and DNV are deemed agencies for CMS so the surveys are very thorough. The EMS policy largely mirrors those surveys already so essentially the EMS survey is a validation than a certification itself. So we believe there are cost saving opportunities because there is a duplicate process in place. There are a lot of fees that hospitals pay to these third party agencies for these surveys. In addition, the hospitals who elect to have these designations (14 cardiovascular centers; 9 stroke neurology centers and four trauma centers) provide significant investment in providing these services. There is equipment, staffing with people on call 24/7, etc). The six base hospitals are required to provide 24/7 coverage for nursing and physician services. Conservatively, this is approximately \$250,000 annually per hospital. For example, St. Jude Medical Center has 11 nurses and two administrative staff in addition to the physicians there. Hospital members are unable to support these designation fees in recognition of the current level of subsidy they are currently paying in addition to fees paid to third party agencies. We believe there are way that the designation process could be streamlined to reduce costs and regulatory impact to the hospitals that make these significant investments for specialty designations.

Dr. Stratton responded that he completely agrees with the statements made in regard to the services provided by the base hospitals. However, under State law, Orange County EMS holds the responsibility of designating the specialty centers. State law does not recognize designations conducted by Joint Commission, DNV, or other third party services recognized by CMS as they are not required under State law or County policy. Trauma centers are verified by an outside party as well as EMS.

Dr. Anas: Suggested that Orange County EMS continue discussions with both the hospitals and the ambulance service providers.

Public Comments:

Chad Druten, President of the Ambulance Association of Orange County: The Ambulance Association of Orange County is unable to provide a letter of support to Orange County EMS with regard to the fees. Members do not object to the licensure fees affecting the ambulance providers. However, they are concerned about the proposed fee increase for EMT certification. The AAOC feels that this is a significant increase and asks the Health Care Agency to review the costs and reconsider the increase in the certification fees.

MSC: The Emergency Medical Care Committee support the recommendation of the proposed fees for ambulance company license, ambulance company unit inspection/per vehicle; ambulance company re-inspection /vehicle; the ambulance driver/attendant license, and the EMT lost card replacement to the Orange County Board of Supervisors. In addition, recommend that Orange County EMS return to the Emergency Medical Care Committee with further justification of the other fees proposed after continuing discussions with the stakeholders.

(Motion: D. Grose; Seconded by: Jim Karras)

VIII. **MEMBER COMMENTS**

Dr. Ritter: 1) Stated that he had worked with David Johnson many years ago at Mission Hospital and welcomed him back to the EMS System. 2) Asked about the EMT Expanded Scope of Practice.

Dr. Anas: Asked about the next steps to be taken once all survey results have been compiled. Dr. Stratton replied that OCEMS would address any gaps found in the system.

Dean Grose: Requested that an item #9 be added on written correspondence and clarification on how to submit written comments.

IX. **PUBLIC FORUM**

Stephen Wontrobski: Request that his correspondence from October 6, 2016 be attached to the EMS Annual plan. Expressed concerns on member cities of the Orange County Fire Authority studying the potential possibility of withdrawing from the Fire Authority.

X. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 6, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

XI. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.