

EMS Leadership Call Summary

November 5, 2020

COVID-19 Update (Dan Batsie)

Transmission rates are up significantly: 2,267 today. Increase of 30 in the last day. High daily rates in the 20s, but 30 is the highest since March. 109 cases in the last week; 489 in the last month. Nowhere near similar states like Idaho and Montana. No deaths since July. Slight uptick in hospitalizations: 6 today. Slight uptick in ICU cases: 4 today. Highest in a while. No patients on ventilators, however. 115 patients associated with ice arena, and folks on municipal call will talk more about this. It's about social gatherings around the arena, not about sports itself. Folks didn't follow the guidance. 4 sub-outbreaks (a school, a city office building, Saint Michael's College (65 cases), and at a workplace).

Recently a baby shower resulted in 11 cases, and that outbreak is just beginning.

Still many concerns around COVID-19 with EMS. Please make sure you're taking care of yourself, wearing PPE, managing patients appropriately and doing your best to keep your guard up.

EMSC – (Merrill)

No big updates. Just continuing Pedi HP CPR. Pedi session for conference on 11/19.

CARES/Med Director – (Dr. Wolfson)

Protocols fully live. Heard pretty good things. Started working on 2022 protocols. Reconstituted the workgroup, and they have already started to meet. Call or email with ideas, suggestions, comments.

Stroke – now using the stroke severity score. After regular stroke assessment, if they screen positive, do the FAST-ED stroke severity score. When you call an alert, give time last known well and FAST-ED score. You can calculate it on paper using the chart in the protocol or download the JoinTriage app and use that. Miles Kittell, stroke research coordinator, will get in touch with all EMS agencies across the state to help them get signed up for the free app if you'd like to. He's a helpful resource.

Surgical cricothyrotomy course – taught by DMAs only currently, but there will be opportunity for paramedics to be trained to teach it in the next few months.

VTACHR – If an agency hasn't done HP CPR training, please contact VTEMS or Chris McCarthy. If you haven't done Pedi HP CPR, contact Merrill. Just got another 2-year grant so we can continue participating in CARES database where we measure all of our metrics.

Licensing (Ray)

All but a few service license renewals have been received and you know who you are. Licenses will be out the door by 11/30. Legislature changed the duration of licenses—now good for 3 years.

Are we going to stagger licensing renewal dates? No, just with a 3-year deadline.

EMS updates (Dan Batsie)

- a. Finished first round of Chief interviews. Identified a great candidate and hope for positive word very soon. Beginning Training Administrator interviews which also contain one very good candidate we like. More interviews next week.
- b. Education guidelines have not changed but recognize there's more community transmission. Let's be sure we're not spreading it due to our efforts to educate.
- c. Voucher program going well; now finalizing grant contracts. This will give us a better idea of students vs. what was applied for. Little wiggle room, but not much. Any outstanding vouchers should get in asap.
- d. EMS Stabilization grant is 1 of 2 grants given to us. This one should go out the door very soon. Designed to be awarded to agencies that lost revenues during the COVID-19 response. There are roughly 50 services that lost call volume between March and September of this year. You'll get a letter, have to submit a W-9 if you want the grant, and then we'll send a check. Very streamlined.
- e. Workforce Stabilization grant is the second grant and is being awarded to give stimulus to responders who responded during the COVID-19 pandemic. Not finalized and still negotiations ongoing. Looking at agencies' rosters of their active providers and giving out awards based on folks to that agencies to be divided to active members. Agencies will cut checks to providers and providers will be taxed (1099) on monies received.
- f. Scott Moore from AAA and Ben Rose talking about relief funding. The link to the session is posted on our website under "Financial Relief for EMS Agencies," including the power points. Title of the course is "Financial Resources for EMS Agencies" and was held October 30, 2020. The passcode for the session is also posted on the website at www.vermontems.org. As part of the presentation, there is the phone number and the address of McSorley and McCoy, the agency that's been awarded the vendor contract to assist agencies with COVID 19 relief funding and record keeping. They'll be assisting us with distribution of grant funds also. They are a free resource to you and we recommend you use them to help straighten out your finances during this confusing and complicated time.
- g. Virtual EMS Conference airs 2 sessions per month: 1st on preparedness, 2nd on EMS. Coming up on 11/19 at 6 p.m. will be an EMS Pedi topic. The website to head to for a schedule of future conference topics is www.vtemsconference.com. This will redirect you to the Coalition website. Once the presentations have aired on their scheduled date, the lecture is posted to the Home Tab of CentreLearn. Scroll way down and there's a catalog of Virtual EMS Conference topics. Spread the word. The education is true quality.

Dr. Niki Thran asked about vaccine plans. Dan Batsie explained that VDH is being purposely careful because we don't know a lot. We submitted the CDC plan 2 weeks ago, but it was a very broad, standardized process. Operations team working now to see what it'll look like once we get vaccines. First responders will be in the 1A category. That's one reason we asked service chiefs asking them to submit their active roster. Only about 100 of 180 agencies gave us that list. We'll likely create distribution points within districts and we'll also likely look to providers to assist with vaccination. We don't have a great sense of what will happen yet. Lots of details...one of the vaccines requires ultra-cold storage, so lots of moving parts. Tons of money attached to this (Feds/CDC) and we're partnering with UVM to obtain cold storage. Just logistics but lots of support.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:24 a.m.