



EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMITTEE (EMCC)

MINUTES

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Regional Operations Center

501 Winslow Street

Redwood City, CA 94063

ATTENDANCE			
NAME	MEMBER POSITION/ORGANIZATION	MEMBER TYPE	ATTENDING
Tom Cuschieri	Fire Service (San Mateo County Fire Chiefs)	Regular	Yes
Shawni Goudarzi	American Heart Association	Regular	No
Gale Carli	American Red Cross	Regular	Yes
Stephen (Charlie) Skourtis	Paramedic	Regular	Yes
Sunil Bhopale	Emergency Physician	Regular	Yes
Patrice Callagy	Emergency Nurse	Regular	Yes
Joe DeSousa	California Highway Patrol	Regular	Yes
David Goldschmid	San Mateo County Medical Association	Regular	Yes
Jeff Thorne	Fire Service	Regular	Yes
David Norris	San Mateo County Police Chiefs and Sheriff Association	Regular	Yes
Benjamin Martin	Consumer	Regular	No
Jody Greenhalgh	Consumer	Regular	Yes
Jenel Lim (Co-chair)	Consumer	Regular	Yes
Robert Nice	Consumer	Regular	Yes
Veena Vangari	Consumer	Regular	Yes
Kismet Baldwin-Santana	County Health Officer	Categorical	Yes
Jo Coffaro	Exec. Leader of Hospital Association Northern CA	Categorical	Yes
Natasha Claire-Espino	County Director of Public Safety Communications	Categorical	Yes
Rick Reed*	County Area Coordinator of the Office of Emergency Services (*Designee)	Categorical	Yes
Rick Ornelas	Executive Leader of the County-wide Exclusive Emergency Ambulance Contractor	Categorical	Yes
COUNTY EMS AGENCY			
Travis Kusman	EMS Director	NA	Yes
Gregory Gilbert	EMS Medical Director	NA	Yes

Chad Henry	EMS System Manager	NA	Yes
Kelly McGinty	EMS Clinical Nurse	NA	Yes
Garrett Fahey	EMS Management Analyst	NA	Yes

Welcome and Introductions

Jenel Lim

5 min

- Verification of Quorum.

The standard for a quorum is fifty percent (50%) of the current membership, plus one (1). A quorum was established with 19 active members in attendance.

Announcements/Public Comments

All

10 min

Travis Kusman provided a brief overview of room safety procedures, including information on the exits, and thanked Rick Reed and the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) for facilitating the use of the meeting space and for providing audio/video support.

Approval of Minutes

Jenel Lim

5 min

- December 6, 2023
- June 20, 2023

A motion was made by Jenel Lim to approve the minutes for both dates. The motion was seconded by Dr. Bhopale and passed unanimously.

Old Business

Membership/Vacancies/Recruitment

Garrett Fahey

10 min

Membership Update

- All Emergency Medical Care Committee (EMCC) membership positions are filled.

New Member Introduction

- Chief Tom Cuschieri, the newly promoted Fire Chief of Woodside Fire Protection District representing the County Fire Chiefs Association was introduced. He replaces Rob Lindner, who retired in June.

Term Expirations

- Two members, Dr. Goldschmid (Medical Association) and Jody Greenhalgh (Consumer), were informed of their upcoming term expirations and were advised to contact EMS Agency staff for information on renewing their memberships if they wish to continue to serve.

New Business

Officer Elections

Jenel Lim

10 min

Chair Election

- Rick Ornelas was nominated for the chair position at the previous EMCC meeting though he was not present to formally accept the nomination. At this meeting, Ornelas accepted the nomination, and the committee unanimously voted to appoint him as chair.

Secretary Election

- Veena Vangari was nominated for the secretary position at the previous EMCC meeting. Her nomination was approved by the committee with no objections or abstentions.

Fire JPA Emergency Medical First Response Performance – Year 4

Travis Kusman

10 min

Travis Kusman, Director of San Mateo County EMS, presented the Year Four Fire JPA Emergency Medical First Responder performance report.

Performance Overview

- The Fire EMS JPA, comprising all fire agencies across San Mateo County, was reported to have met or exceeded the performance standards outlined in the agreement with the county.
- Compliance and Inspections: Randomized inspections were conducted on 31 ALS first responder vehicles across 19 stations. All pre-hospital provider credentials were audited and found to comply. Minor deficiencies were corrected on the spot without imposing significant risks to patients.

Response Time Compliance

- The County is divided into five geographic zones, each with specific response time standards. Travis explained that this zoning promotes access and equitable service delivery.
- Zone 3 Challenges: During the winter months, response times in Zone 3 fell below the 90% standard due to the flooding of Fire Station 18 in the Cordileras area, which disrupted operations. The primary first responder unit was repositioned during the cleanup and renovation period.

Community Engagement

- Fire service personnel were heavily involved in community engagement activities, including "Stop the Bleed" training, hands-on CPR training, and public safety training.
- Various community events throughout the year were supported by the Fire EMS JPA, contributing significantly to public education and safety awareness.

AMR Emergency Ambulance Services Performance – Year 4

Travis Kusman/Rick Ornelas 30 min

Response Time Standards

Travis Kusman 10 min

- AMR is required to meet response times for both priority one (life-threatening) and priority three (non-life-threatening) calls 90% of the time in each zone.
- Specifics:
 - For urban areas, the response time standard for priority one calls is 12 minutes and 59 seconds, and for first responders (fire), it is 6 minutes and 59 seconds.
 - For priority three calls, the response time standard for ambulances is 22 minutes and 59 seconds, and for first responders, it is 14 minutes and 59 seconds.

Code	Area	Emergency Ambulance	Requirement
3	Urban/ Suburban	12:59 Minutes	90%
3	Rural	19:59 Minutes	90%
3	Remote	39:59 Minutes	90%
2	Urban/ Suburban	22:59 Minutes	90%
2	Rural	59:59 Minutes	90%
2	Remote	59:59 Minutes	90%

Area	Definition
Urban/ Suburban	Population density of 50 persons or more per square mile
Rural	Population density of 7 to 50 persons per square mile
Remote	Population density of less than 7 persons per square mile

- Performance Review: AMR met or exceeded these standards in most months, with only minor deviations in September 2022. Corrective actions were taken, and performance returned to compliance by October.

Quality of Care

Travis Kusman 5 min

- Emphasis was placed on the importance of clinical outcomes, not just response times.
- Training Initiatives: To address under-triage and improve care to the most frequently encountered type of patient locally, over the course of the next 18 months, the EMS system is reinstating the specific requirement that all accredited paramedics be actively credentialed via the Pre Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) curriculum.

Customer Satisfaction

Rick Ornelas

5 min

- Surveys conducted by a third-party vendor indicated that over 95% of patients were very satisfied with the care received. Common areas of concern included billing issues and pain management.
- Follow-Up on Concerns: Rick mentioned that all concerns, especially those related to billing and patient care, are investigated thoroughly, with an emphasis on resolving issues promptly.

Community Engagement

Travis Kusman

5 min

- AMR participated in a wide range of community events and public education initiatives, similar to the Fire-EMS JPA, including "Stop the Bleed" training, public safety events, and holiday toy drives.

Financial Performance

Travis Kusman/Rick Ornelas

5 min

- AMR's financial performance over the past few years showed challenges due to increased operating expenses related to the pandemic. Despite this, the long-term outlook remains positive, with expectations of recovery as pandemic-related expenses decrease.

EMS Agency Report

EMS Staff

20 min

Personnel Changes

- Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar former Manager of the San Mateo County EMS Health Emergency Preparedness unit (HEP) was promoted to Director of the County Department of Emergency Management (DEM).
- Karishma Kumar was appointed as the interim Health Emergency Preparedness Manager, replacing Dr. Dhapodkar. The recruitment process for a permanent replacement is nearing completion, with an announcement expected by year-end.

Retirement Announcement

- Linda Allington, the EMS Clinical Services Manager since 2016, announced her retirement, effective at the end of the year. Linda's contributions to EMS, particularly in advancing the role of women in the field were highlighted. Linda was instrumental in recruiting and training her successor, Kelly McGinty – EMS Clinical Nurse.

Cardiac Resuscitation

- The EMS agency is continuing its focus on high-performance CPR and maintaining endotracheal intubation as the gold standard for airway management.
- New Protocols: Changes were introduced for the placement of defibrillation pads to support vector change to improve outcomes for patients with persistent shockable rhythms.
- Cold Water Resuscitation: Cardiac arrest protocol has been updated including changes focused on patients pulled from cold water. Paramedics are instructed to continue resuscitation efforts until the patient is delivered to a hospital.

Pain Management

- Current Situation: Fentanyl is currently the only pain management option available to paramedics. The EMS Agency has recognized the need for a non-opioid alternative.
- Introduction of IV Acetaminophen: The EMS Agency has applied to the state for approval to add IV acetaminophen to the formulary, aiming for implementation in April 2024. This will provide an alternative for adult patients with moderate pain and reduce reliance on opioids.

Opioid Crisis and Medication-Assisted Therapy

- Overview of the Crisis:
 - The ongoing opioid crisis was discussed, with a particular focus on the rise of fentanyl use in San Mateo County. Fentanyl-related deaths have been increasing, particularly among Black Americans, reflecting a national trend.
- Naloxone Administration Data:

- Statistics: Over one year, there were 149 administrations of Naloxone (Narcan) by pre-hospital providers in San Mateo County, double the number from the previous year.
- Challenges in Data Collection: It was noted that data on Naloxone administration is limited, as it relies on pre-hospital documentation and reports from law enforcement, which are not always submitted.
- Medication-Assisted Therapy (MAT):
 - Introduction of Suboxone: The EMS agency is preparing to implement a program where paramedics can administer Suboxone in the field for patients experiencing opioid withdrawal. The program is set to begin in April 2024.
 - Program Details: Paramedics will need to consult with a base hospital physician before administering the medication. Patients receiving Suboxone will be transported to local hospitals for ongoing care.
 - Warm Handoff and Follow-Up: Efforts will be made to facilitate a warm handoff to substance use counselors at hospitals, though this is not guaranteed. Educational materials including how to access follow-up, and continued therapy will be provided to patients and their families. The program is being offered and implemented in conjunction with County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS).

EMCC Observations / Recommendations

All

15 min

- The committee members expressed support for the new EMS initiatives, particularly the introduction of IV acetaminophen and the MAT program.
- Members raised questions about the implementation of the MAT program and the role of insurance in determining hospital transport destinations.
- Several commented on the challenges in collecting comprehensive data on opioid use and overdose cases, particularly in the determination of whether a patient used prescribed or street-use fentanyl. Some hospitals are testing in this regard. Knowing the distinction could help public health agencies in their efforts to address the issue in the community.

Meeting Recap/Next Steps

Chair

5 min

- The meeting concluded with no further questions or comments, and the next steps for implementing the discussed initiatives were outlined.

Next Meeting

Summer 2024 – Date TBD