

**EMS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES  
January 20, 2022  
Virtual Attendance Lifesize**

**Members Present:** Tim Meyer, Kelly Dollinger, Curt Halmrast, RJ Benth, Kari Enget, Adam Parker, Kylie Nissen, Bert Anderson, PJ Ringdahl

**Members Not Present:** Karin Mongeon, Theo Stoller, Tim Blasl,

**DoH Representation:** Christine Greff, Kerry Krikava, Chris Price, Deb Dutchuk, Rocksanne Peterson

**Others Present:** Lindsey Narloch, Corrie Geurts, Ron Lawler, Lynn Hartman, Ed Gregoire, Cheryl Flick, Joe Lies, Jeff Sather

**Welcome and Introductions**

Welcome and introductions were made for all present via Lifesize.

**Approval of Minutes: July 15, 2021**

*Motion was made:* Approve minutes from July 15, 2021, as written.

Motion made by Kelly Dollinger; second by PJ Ringdahl.

No further discussion: Motion carried.

**Council Membership**

*Discussion/Update:* The council had a discussion regarding Karin Mongeon being released of her membership. There was also a discussion regarding grants and programs no longer funded by the DOT. The council also discussed looking at adding someone from another agency. Tim Meyer likes that our council has EMS members on it. One recommendation was to have an educator as a member of the council. State health officer makes the appointment, but the council makes the recommendation to him. Kelly Dollinger likes the idea of having an educator to the council.

*Action:*

*Motion was made:* To add an educator to the council.

Motion by PJ Ringdahl; second by Kelly Dollinger. Motion carried.

*Discussion/Update:* The council discussed the educator position on the council be recommended by the NDEMS association.

*Action:* Kelly Dollinger will have the associations recommendations by next meeting.

*Motion was made:* The NDEMS would recommend the educator position on the council.

Motion by Curt Halmrast; second by Kari Enget. Motion carried.

*Discussion/Update:* The councils also discussed the physician position on the council, Dr. Kaden Hinz declined the position. Adam Parker will send an email out to see if anyone would be interested in being on the council. They also discussed the reaching out to Dr. English to be on the council even though he is being deployed. It was felt being deployed should not be an issue.

*Action:* PJ Ringdahl will reach out to Dr. English to see if he would be interest.

*Discussion/Update:* The council discussed voting in a chair and vice chair for the remainder of 2022.

*Action:* Nominations for the Chair position for the remainder of 2022; Adam Parker made the motion that Tim continue as chair for 2022. Nominations were closed, unanimous ballot was cast for Tim Meyer as Chair for the remainder of 2022.

Vice Chair for remainder of 2022 nominations; nomination for Curt Halmrast for vice chair. Unanimous ballast was cast for Curt Halmrast for Vice Chair for the remainder of 2022.

### **EMSAC Bylaws**

*Discussion/Update:* Approved one year ago and became effective July 1, 2021.

### **NDEMSA Legislative Overview**

*Discussion/Update:* Adam Parker gave a legislative update. He stated the EMS advocacy committee as met a couple of times. He spoke about reimbursements, the call rate increase and funding formula. If anyone has any ideas for the funding formula, taxing districts, etc. please let him know. Adam also talked about essential EMS and funding the operations; as well as including EMS in NDPERS. He would have to submit information to the legislative committee so he could take the suggestions to forward for the next legislative session.

### **Rules**

*Discussion/Update:* The rules were submitted last year to the Attorney General's (AG) office. Unfortunately, the legal counsel did not do anything with the EMS or Trauma rules before she left her position. Allyson Hicks is our current Assistant Attorney General. Chris is confident that she will be able to move forward with the process. The AG's office is trying to rectify the problem. If we don't have some completed steps by next meeting, a follow up will be done to move forward. Tim Meyer felt that some of the steps can be done prior to moving to AG's office for approval.

### **Rural EMS Counts – Lindsey Narloch**

Lindsey gave an update on the ESO measures: cardiac, stroke, vital signs, pain, safety, response times, and going away from using lights and sirens. Chris Price stated the rules were updated regarding the use of lights and sirens during response to a scene. She stated that she will be applying for this grant again. It is a two year grant and she would be working with five agencies. Jamestown Regional Medical Center and Dr. English have agreed to work with ESO. Lindsey has discovered through this project there is a problem with filtering the data through ESO. She is trying to work with ESO for a resolution. Lindsey stated it is hard when you don't have direct access to the raw data.

### **Responder Mental Health – Curt Halmrast**

*Discussion/Update:* In July, Curt Halmrast talked about responder mental health. Today, he talked about possible funding and projects, the development of handbooks and courses on responder mental health. Team members will be able to go out and provide education to responders on their health and well-being. Curt also spoke about providing resources and support for EMS providers, as well as psychologist or psychiatrist. He talked about interfacing with the CISM team.

### **HRR/DEMS Update – DEMS Staff**

*DEMS Update:* Kerry Krikava reported the division just finished licensed plate renewal. Work continues on QRUs recertification. 2022 personnel licensure begins next quarter and ambulance service relicensure is due October 31, 2022. There are currently 662 paramedics, 98 AEMTs, 1651 EMTs, 1734 EMRs, 2 FAAs.

There will be changes on the national registry in June. Ron Lawler spoke about the issues with the national registry especially where certificates won't upload to the registry.

Education committee met on January 13, 2022.

*Stroke and Cardiac Task Force Update:* Christine Greff gave an update on the Cardiac and Stroke Task Forces. She spoke about acute cardiac designation for critical access hospitals being completed and working on a new designation. ND Cardiac guidelines have been updated and revised.

Acute Cardiac Ready Hospital Webinar will be held January 26, 2022.

We do have a robust stroke system in the state of ND. Performance improvement projects for Stroke System of Care include BEFAST/FAST-algorithm and developing dysphagia screening education/training. Helmsley funds have distributed 1,560 AEDs. She also spoke about getting the AEDs in the hands of the rural fire districts.

#### *EMS Children:*

Mary Waldo is the interim EMSC coordinator. Sam Harrison left to take another position within state government. This position is not a permanent FTE with no benefits, came close the last legislative session to making it a FTE position. There is a need to have consistency in the position. Chris will pursue this becoming a permanent FTE. But he will have to wait and see what happens with the merger with DHS. It is a federally funded position, there is zero cost to the state.

2022 EMS for Children survey has been distributed to all EMS agencies in ND, 80% has responded.

Funds were used for Ferno PEDI-Mates. We have received them; distribution planning is in progress.

PEPP Course will be held on January 27, 2022.

*Trauma Update:* Planning for the 2022 State Trauma Conference has begun. The conference will be held in Fargo, September 27 – 29, 2022. The trauma program focuses on performance improvement. Dr. Sather stated at the State Trauma Committee that his job has changed because of COVID. A lot of impact on committee attendance is because of COVID.

Chris spoke about the rules being a priority, some effort has been made but it will be a delay. Community Health Workers - DHS was wondering about integrating rules about community paramedics. It has been an ongoing negotiation with DHS. There are opportunities for integration. There is some potential funding for community paramedic training. Chris will have more information at our next meeting.

Chris spoke about exclusive operation areas, an emerging issue regarding transferring patients regardless of the facility i.e., nursing home, hospital, etc. and an ambulance service

Chris also spoke about the staffing issues because COVID. If you are impacted because of COVID please let our office know and we will help if necessary.

Chris reported we are in the final stages of revamping Big Picture and licensing, this will be a robust database. This will strengthen our programs and customer service. Look for that approximately July 1, 2022. Lindsey Narloch asked if ambulance or EMS services will be able to look up their information. They should be able to look it up.

#### **Human Services Merger**

Chris gave an update regarding integration of the DoH and DHS. None of the initiatives impact the Division of Emergency Medical Services. EMS and Tim have not been included in the certification and licensure initiatives. Budget wise until the next biennium we will be operating as a separate department and/or program. It doesn't appear this merger will affect EMS we will continue as it.

#### **Workforce**

Several service areas are having workforce challenges, emergency personnel are numbers dwindling every year. Recruitment and retention are not easy. COVID is having an impact on the workforce, staff are getting burnt out. PJ spoke about the possibility of doing some statewide advertisement for staff.

#### **Grant Update – Chris Price/Deb Dutchuk**

*Rural EMS Assistance Grant:* Calculations for the Rural EMS Assistant Grant went to the county auditors. Seventy-five percent have submitted their information by the set deadline. The deadline has been extended. We elected to do biennium grant instead of annually grant, most services have submitted their grant information. The online process has caused a delay. Adam Parker did identify a problem with the formula. The formula does favor services with a higher volume. If we don't change the formula everyone will receive a smaller grant. It could use some tweaking, lucky to have a legislature that is generous with the grants. Out of 84 ambulances, 52 fully reimbursed, 32 have not been reimbursed. This year a survey link was include in the letter. This survey asked if they were reimbursed or not. Deb sent out a notification to the 32 ambulances that have not been reimbursed, 11 still have not responded. Deb will reach out to the agencies to remind them to submit the survey. Lindsey asked what email was being used for the grant email. Kelly Dollinger stated they could make an announcement at the conference to check their emails for grant information. Corrie Geurts stated she could put a notification on Facebook.

*Training Grant:* Deb gave an update on the Training grant. There are funds that are not being used. The committee discussed turning back the distribution of the training grant. Chris mentioned we do not want to turn back the funds. Curt talked about forming a committee about using the training grant so the funds to do not get turned back. If you are interested in being on the committee, please email Curt.

*46<sup>th</sup> NDEMS Conference, April 8-9, 2022*  
*Medical Director Conference*

#### **Other Business**

*Discussion/Update:* .

*Action:* The council next meeting is April 21, 2022, at 10:00 – 1:00 pm. In person and via Lifesize.

#### **Adjourn**

Motion was made: to adjourn the meeting at 12:42 pm.