

NASEMSO Convenes National Stakeholder Meeting on Implementing the EMS Education Agenda

Following several years' development intended to move the nation's EMS community toward the implementation of the *National EMS Agenda for the Future* and the *National EMS Education Agenda for the Future*, the National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO) announces plans to take a lead role in moving forward with efforts to assist states implement the concepts of these renowned consensus documents. Implementation strategies centered on EMS education and certification efforts were the focus of a National EMS Stakeholders meeting convened by NASEMSO in Washington, DC on December 17, 2007. Representatives from 15 national EMS, fire, and patient transportation organizations were on hand to discuss the opportunities and challenges of implementation. This meeting follows regional conference calls with individual states, a state survey, and several panel presentations at the NASEMSO Annual Meeting held in October 2007.

The NASEMSO Education Agenda Implementation Team is chaired by Dan Manz, Vermont State EMS Director who was instrumental in the development of the national documents. Other committee members include state EMS directors Fergus Laughridge (NV)—current NASEMSO President, Shawn Rogers (OK), David Taylor (AR), Medical Director representative Dr. Carol Cunningham (OH), and NASEMSO Training Coordinators Council Chair Tawni Newton (ID).

Background

In February 2007, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration released the *National EMS Scope of Practice* guidance document. The *Agendas* and the *SOP* documents outline the vision for nationally consistent EMS education standards and credentialing services across the U.S. The final cornerstone document, *National EMS Education Standards*, is presently under development and should become available to the national EMS community in mid to late 2008. Collectively, these four documents combine to describe the necessary components of our nation's EMS system, methods and content for delivering EMS education to care givers, and outline the scopes of practice for each identified level of prehospital care provider.

Individual states have the latitude to determine how they choose to implement these national recommendations. It is clear that the national disaster response and credentialing systems, vendors that provide EMS educational material and equipment, the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians, and other participants in the national EMS support system, will ultimately follow these collective national EMS recommendations in terms of material, products and services made available to the U.S. prehospital care system.

Summary of Stakeholder Recommendations

National stakeholders were conceptually supportive of the National EMS Education Agenda and provided the following proposed strategies for moving forward with its Implementation:

1. NASEMSO leadership should establish a marketing plan or white paper that emphasizes the positive aspects of the national model, reinforces the benefit of national reciprocity, and explains the value of the National EMS Education Agenda in simple terms.

2. NASEMSO and other national EMS organizations should work together to provide a unified message in promoting EMS professions through the Implementation of the National EMS Education Agenda.

3. Slide sets, talking points, FAQs, and press releases should be provided to national EMS stakeholders for use in publications and other materials so that they can assist in educating their constituents about the National EMS Education Agenda. Information must appear in all media at the same time and should include clarification about course time, self-directed study methods, transition materials, and a projection of what the future of EMS education is going to look like.

4. NASEMSO should consider the development of a compendium or scorecard that describes the state-by-state targets necessary to implement the National EMS Education Agenda.

Based on feedback from national stakeholders, the Implementation Team will reconvene to develop initial informational materials to support and explain implementation of the Education Agenda then over the next several months, the group will develop additional “toolkit” materials and provide technical assistance support to interested states. While the implementation process is expected to take several years, NASEMSO expects that implementation of the national agenda will enhance the care of patients, increase professionalism, and support the ability of career-oriented EMS providers to be recognized throughout the US by promoting consistent education and certification practices.