



Jeb Bush
Governor

M. Rony François, M.D., M.S.P.H., Ph.D.
Secretary

FLORIDA EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) ADVISORY COUNCIL

Proceedings from the meeting of July 7, 2005

The Rosen Centre Hotel
9840 International Drive
Orlando, Florida

Members Present

Linda Swisher, R.N., Ed.D., Chairperson
Don Bennett, Chief, Bureau of EMS
Joe Nelson, M.D., State EMS Medical Director
David V. Shatz, M.D., Vice-Chair
John Scott, Air Ambulance Operator
Greg Rubin, EMT, Fire
Chuck Kearns, M.B.A.
Pat Pieratte, Department of Transportation
Judy Conlin, Department of Education
Randy Pierce, Department of Management Services
William Bingham, EMS Administrator Non-Fire
Jaime Caldwell, Commercial Ambulance Operator
Craig Fugate, Department of Community Affairs
Michael Patterson, EMS Administrator, Non-Fire
Amy Paratore, Emergency Nurse
Salvatore Silvestri, M.D., Physician
Ferne G. Moore, M.D., M.P.H., Lay Elderly
Sharon Roush, Hospital Administrator Capital Regional Medical
Dave Casey, Department of Insurance

Note: A verbatim transcript of the entire meeting is available for review at the State Bureau of EMS

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Linda Swisher called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. Chairperson Swisher opened the meeting with a moment of reflection and direction by observing a moment of silence to prepare themselves for the discussions and decisions that they needed to make during the meeting. Following the moment of silence, Mr. John Scott directed the audience and council members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairperson Swisher then made a motion to accept the minutes from the April meeting. The motion was seconded.

STATE EMS BUREAU REPORT

Mr. Bennett began his report by announcing that the next EMS Advisory Council will be held November 2-4, 2005, in St. Petersburg, FL, reminding audience members to make their reservations by October 1st. He further shared that the Advisory Council meeting was changed from October to November as a result of the National EMS Director's Meeting being held in Orlando in October.

Mr. Bennett then recognized the new members of the council; Mr., Jeff Lindsey, Paramedic (Fire) and Dr. Bradley Elias, Physician. He reported that the Department awarded \$4.4 million in grants. Also, the stroke legislation form that Dr. Shatz worked on should now be available in all vehicles, and will be monitored through the inspections process.

He also announced that certification and recertification has moved to Medical Quality Assurance (MQA) effective today, July 7, 2005. Mr. Bennett announced that on the 14th of July that there would be a hearing in Tallahassee on the last rule package. Furthermore, Mr. Bennett mentioned that the rule package Dr. Shatz worked so diligently on for two years will be distributed for review.

Chairperson Swisher the Medical Director, Dr. Nelson, to give his report.

STATE EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR REPORT

Dr. Nelson began his report by stating that he has been extremely busy and involved with meetings concerning data, injury prevention and the disciplinary process. He attended the Florida Air Medical Associations' Helicopter Safety roundtable. He reported that the medical directors and EMS Quality Managers met to help define the data set that they would like to see in the eventual NEMSIS implementation.

Dr. Nelson further reported that Kim Strait with the Florida Hospital Association gave an update on the State Disaster Response Planning. Also, Dr. Charles Sand gave a presentation regarding strokes and the new treatments available.

Dr. Nelson further stated that the EMS medical directors adopted a position paper on the job qualifications for an EMS medical director and as soon as the final touches on that paper are completed, they will be presenting it to the council. Lastly, Dr. Nelson shared that the EMS medical directors recommended some changes in Chapter 401 concerning the Scope of Practice. Those recommendations will be forwarded to the Bureau of EMS for their considerations.

Chairperson Swisher then gave a brief report of things that have evolved in her tenure as Chairperson. She stated that it has been a period of change, challenges, and crisis. She mentioned that she has witnessed tremendous change in governments, beginning with the transfer of certification to the quality assurance division, the change in our Bureau Chief leadership, Deputy Secretary, division direction, personnel changes, a new Medical Director and a general restructuring of the organization chart for the EMS Bureau. In addition, she reported that the EMS community was advised with little to no warning that the method of testing in credentialing of EMS graduates is being changed without input from the constituency groups and with no clear plan for implementation. She further stated proudly that EMS was up to the challenge and they made their voices known, and have worked vigorously to assure that the testing and credentialing was appropriate and fair.

Chairperson Swisher went on to say that among the changes that were made from the proposed implementation, was the removal of the practical exams as part of the criteria and the reestablishment of the State of Florida exam used for the paramedic credentialing. Further detailing that the survival of a record four hurricanes was phenomenal within itself, however again she reported that EMS responded and were a model for the nation in just how efficient and effective EMS responds to crisis and how well-educated and trained our EMS personnel are for any emergency. In addition to these obvious achievements, Dr. Swisher stated that the Council was very instrumental in reviewing and revising 64E-2. Dr. Swisher reported that Dr. Shatz and his Medical Care Committee worked within the legislative constraints to revise 64E language, equipment, supplies and the capnography requirement. Additionally, she reported that the Council was instrumental in recommending a "stroke triage tools" to the State; for assuring that the state had one standardized patch for both EMT and paramedic, also changing the Injury Prevention and Public Relations Committee to Public Information, Education, and Relations Committee. The council also established an Ad Hoc Committee to make recommendations regarding access to care, and exempting background screening as a condition of employment or a condition of certification for those who have already submitted to the screening and have evidence of such. The Council was also instrumental in creating a committee to review the policies and procedures of the Advisory Council and to make appropriate recommendations to the Council to keep them current and appropriate. Chairperson Swisher pointed out a variety of roles that the Council has played. She further expressed appreciation to each and every one on the Council who has contributed to her successful and positive experience serving as Chair. Following, Dr. Swisher passed the gavel to Dr. David Shatz to serve as the new Chair.

After receiving the gavel, Dr. Shatz opened his comments with thanks and acceptance to fill this new role.

Following, the outgoing and incoming members were recognized and honored.

Chief Bennett then proceeded to present the 2005 State EMS awards; which are designed to honor the outstanding EMS organizations and individuals across the state. Also, the bureau of EMS staff prepared a film presentation to honor fallen EMS comrades.

BREAK

COUNCIL MEMBERS REPORT

Cindy Garlesky, EMSC

Ms. Garlesky reported that EMSC is continuing their Emergency Department Pediatric Preparedness Program, in which they provide educational opportunities for local EMS and Emergency Department staff. Ms. Garlesky stated that the EMSC committee is in the process of organizing some Pediatric Education for Prehospital Professionals (PEPP) courses throughout the rural parts of the state. Garlesky also stated that they are working with their medical advisor, Dr. Lou Romig on new pediatric preparedness training activities. Finally Ms. Garlesky reported that EMSC has program performance measures which were set by the National EMSC program. The EMSC Program is assessing and identifying how they currently meet those performance measures and then will implement a plan to meet all measures.

Salvatore Silvestri, M.D.

Dr. Silvestri reported that since the last meeting where the discussion on capnography came up, the reference was published and distributed to the Advisory Council members. Lastly, Dr. Silvestri recognized the Orange County Fire Rescue Department as being instrumental in implementing.

Pat Pieratte, Department of Transportation

Ms. Pieratte reported that it's been a very busy year for the DOT safety office. She reported that they have been in the bicycle/pedestrian area and have had several major projects going on, several of which are with the Florida State University. Further mentioning that they have been working on pulling together a Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee for the state, while also working on the Safe Ways to School Task Force.

Ms. Pieratte announced to the council members that International Walk Your Child to School Day will be held on October 6, 2005. She stated that there are many counties throughout the state that are participating and that you can contact your local safe kid's coalition. She further detailed that they are expecting anywhere between 10,000 and 20,000 children to walk to school on that day, just in Orange County.

Next, Ms. Pieratte reported that they are working with Florida State University (FSU) to come up with a statewide Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety Plan, and a series of livable community workshops. The pilot was June 29th in Tallahassee. Courses in Jacksonville, Daytona, and Gainesville are set for July 27, 28, and 29. West Palm Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, and Miami classes are set for August 10, 11, and 12. Lastly, Ms. Pieratte reported that they are starting to work with the Florida Highway Patrol on getting the Pedestrian/Bicycle Law Enforcement course taught to all of their troopers. She mentioned that they are working to possibly shorten what is now a two-day course into something much more manageable when it comes to educating a large group of people.

Judy Conlin, Department of Education

Ms. Conlin reported about the National Health Occupation Conference, which was held in Nashville, TN in June and that Florida had 56 students who placed in the top ten. They brought home eight gold medals, ten silver medals and eight bronze medals.

They also placed third in the nation in EMT at the secondary level. Florida also placed, first and second in CPR first-aid, at the secondary level, and first in the nation in CPR.

William Bingham, EMS Administrator Fire

Mr. Bingham reported that while reviewing some of the rules that are coming up for hearing on July 14th, at some point throughout the agenda, he would welcome the opportunity to open up some dialogue in regards to the rule changes.

Michael Patterson, EMS Administrator Non-Fire

Mr. Patterson opted to save his report for the Ad Hoc Committee report.

Walter Ladell, Florida Highway Patrol

Mr. Ladell stated that he was glad and honored to be in attendance for the meeting.

C.T. Chuck Kearns, Paramedic Non-Fire

Mr. Kearns opened his report with recognizing the Department of Health, EMS Bureau and Dr. Shatz for a very fast, efficient, and full implementation of the Stroke Act. He further stated that it's going to make a tremendous impact on the future of stroke patient care in this state and give people a much better chance at survival and return to the workforce and a full life.

John Scott, Air Ambulance Operator

Mr. Scott opened his report by congratulating Chief Bennett and the Advisory Council for recognizing those fallen comrades over the last year. He stated that there have been 27 air accidents through the nation this year with 22 fatalities. He further reported that there's a national push from the Air Medical Organizations and various other organizations trying to find something to put into our FAA safety standards to re-write the 135 to enhance safety.

Mr. Scott stated that the State of Florida decided to take a proactive approach and have established a safety day. Within this safety day was a roundtable of dispatchers, program managers, pilots, and various folk contributing information which has been put together in a manual. This manual was presented at the June 12th National meeting in Washington. He further detailed that as a result of this presentation, it's been recognized and is being reviewed further to see what they can take out to add to their national standards. Mr. Scott also wanted to recognize the AIMS organization, which he noted is a national organization that represents the aero medical industry. This organization has come up with a vision of zero tolerance. In zero tolerance the objective is zero risk, and zero accidents. Mr. Scott reported that this vision will be presented again at the national conference in October in Austin, TX. He pointed out that they are taking a very strong approach to try and turn around the industry's unfortunate history and make it a better and safer place for all.

Additionally, Chairman Shatz stated that he has a particular interest in aviation and that his plan is to vigorously support everything that they're doing in this state to try and correct the problems and also have zero accidents.

Jeff Lindsey, Paramedic (Fire)

Mr. Lindsey reminded everyone to continue to monitor at the national level the National EMS Scope of Practice. Secondly, he stated that the International Association of Firefighters and International Association of Fire Chiefs opposed the current move of the EMS national office from NSTSA to DHS.

Lastly, Mr. Lindsey stated his concerns for the continuation of short time spans in dealing with the 401 re-write, and that they do have a longer opportunity to be able to provide input.

Ferne G. Moore, M.D., M.P.H., Lay Elderly

Dr. Moore reported that the steering committee continues to provide education and support to senior injury prevention activities throughout the state.

Jaime Caldwell, Commercial Ambulance Operator

Mr. Caldwell reported that the Florida Ambulance Association is in support of changing the Scope of Practice for EMTs but will not support until further justification, the proposal for drivers. Furthermore, Mr. Caldwell stated that the new issues are making Q/A the responsibility of the Service Director, with the documented involvement of the Medical Director; that is making Q/A the responsibility of the service as opposed to the contracted Medical Director.

Lastly, Mr. Caldwell reported that they're hearing more and more issues with respect to non-medical stretchers, transporting medical patients on oxygen and other advanced medical pieces of equipment. Mr. Caldwell stated they will be proposing language to address the issue.

Amy Paratore, Emergency Nurse

Ms. Paratore reported that ENA is one of the largest groups nationally and they have the chore of choosing their 30 delegates to send to the national meeting in August. Furthermore, she detailed that they have good candidates and they also did nominations for their president and treasurer and will be voting on those positions at their next meeting in October.

She reported that Johnny Delgado from Air Medical discussed issues relating to "helicopter shopping" as it relates to patients.

She then reported that ENA will be working very closely with the Florida Hospital Association on overcrowding in the emergency room.

Jim Bomford, Layperson

Mr. Bomford opened his report by congratulating the award winners and outgoing Chairperson Swisher for their contributions and outstanding service. He also thanked the Department of Health and Dr. Agwunobi for the grant that they received for the first EMT/Paramedic Program, high school to college, which was developed to address the shortage of paramedics in Seminole County.

Randy Pierce, Department of Management Services

Mr. Pierce reported about the Article IV and the narrow banding, the re-banding, the 800, and things of that nature and that the legislature in the last session did approve third-party users on the statewide law enforcement system.

He further detailed that we have 17 statewide law enforcement systems that are to bring on a county and/or a city in that system, loading issues and things of that nature. Lastly, Mr. Pierce reported that during hurricane season his major priority is to re-establish communications in the impacted area. He further noted that first priority is for those who request to send in units, to first establish the statewide MED8 and ensure it is functioning. Mr. Pierce stated that this year one thing that he won't spend much time on is re-establishing the Nextels. He noted that he spent all of 700 hrs in last year's impacted season and half or better of that with re-establishing Nextel communications that have been utilized by public officials. Additionally he reported that the Nextel systems or the cellular systems at large, utilize the infrastructure of the local telephone company to provide their connectivity, and that the phone company is already impacted to a point where they've got people working 24/7 just to re-establish the local area coms, not working about the Verizons, the Nextels, the Sprints and the aforementioned. Mr. Pierce continued to note that if you're working in a public safety system and you're relying on Nextels to do your day-to-day operations, more than likely it's not going to work for you when this happens.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW DIVISION DIRECTOR

Dr. Jennifer Bencie-Fairburn, Director, Division of Emergency Medical Operations, then stated she was quite impressed by the accomplishments that were recognized during the council. She stated that her goal was to improve the system, as it relates to the overall health care system and the EMS system. Dr. Bencie continued to state that the division of Emergency Medical Operations includes the Bureau of EMS, the office of Trauma, the office of Public Health Preparedness, and the office of Emergency Operations. Furthermore, that her goal is to integrate those further, so that the goals of the council can be assisted effectively.

Ms. Betsy Hines, Executive Director of EMT/Paramedic/Radiological Technologist Office reported that as of Friday, July 1st, she resumed the position as director over this office. She further mentioned about the transition and that she has addressed several groups about the confidentiality of addresses. Ms. Hines also mentioned that she is looking forward to working with this group.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Education Committee, Dr. Salvatore Silvestri, M.D., Physician

Dr. Silvestri reported that at the Education Committee meeting, Ms. Betsy Hines addressed the group on Q/A issues and trying to improve the turn-around time from the current 30-day testing process to 15 days. Additionally he reported that Mr. Bennett addressed the considerations and changes to Chapter 401 which created extensive discussion on a number of items. Furthermore Dr. Silvestri reported that the next topic their committee discussed was the item of paramedic and EMT instructor minimum qualifications. They opted to defer that discussion to the EMS educators group.

Medical Care Committee, Dr. David Shatz

Dr. Shatz reported that the Medical care group had a variety of discussions, one of which was the stroke triage. He mentioned that the first version came out on the website and it read, "take to the appropriate stroke center", however they are not meeting many assigned stroke centers across the state. Therefore, as Dr. Shatz continued, that statement has been changed and now reads, "take to the nearest appropriate hospital", which is actually the language of the law. Dr. Shatz further detailed that the intent is to take to the most appropriate hospital that has stroke capability.

Dr. Shatz further detailed the disaster tag that was adopted through the council and the committees over the course of the last couple of years are printed, including the State of Florida emblem on it. Dr. Shatz reported that he was asked by the Dade County Medical Examiner to see if there is something in the EMS community that could be done to potentially circumvent the deaths of people who have been tasered, who are also cocaine toxic. He stated that these people don't die instantaneously of their taser insult, but they actually die about an hour later and the examiner is not entirely clear why.

Lastly, Dr. Shatz stated that he is going to step aside as the Chair of the Medical Care Committee and that he has asked John Scott to take over, who was the Vice Chair and that Dr. Kathy Shrank will take the Vice Chair role. Dr. Kathy Shrank is the City of Miami's Medical Director, an Emergency Medicine doctor at the University of Miami, Jackson Memorial and has been on the committee since its inception.

Injury Prevention & Public Safety, Ferne G. Moore, M.D.

Dr. Moore reported that Frieda Travis informed the committee on the State Intervention activities. Ms. Travis noted that they will be awarded \$600,000 over a five year period to create injury prevention programs throughout the State.

Next, Dr. Moore stated that Paula Richie who is the public information officer at Seminole County Public Safety Department gave a presentation on activities supported by grants in her county.

Lastly, the group discussed the future of PIER training after the grant has ended.

EMS Futures Forum, Jim Bomford

Mr. Bomford reported that he is working on a list of possible solutions for the recruitment and retention issues that parts of the state are faced with. Some examples may be offering signing and retention bonuses, scholarships for tuition, or allowing grant money to be used for supplementing tuition. Mr. Bomford stated that during the next meeting he would be able to provide some type of questions that the community would be able to help assist with enhancing the ability to recruit and retain paramedics.

Regulatory Review, C.T. Chuck Kearns

Mr. Kearns reported that the committee will be suggesting some changes to the EMS Advisory Council bylaws. He reported that the committee has numerous other changes and would be moving forward with those suggested changes.

Access to Care, Michael Patterson

Mr. Patterson reported that during his meeting he had a cross-section of representation from EMS, Emergency nurses, air medical, educators, etc. He stated that emergency department overcrowding was the main topic of discussion and that several attendees will be forwarding their best practices recommendations to him. He plans to combine those into one document that all parties may review and possibly adapt locally.

Lastly, he reported that he will be meeting with Dr. Nelson and the Florida Hospital Association on some of the recommendations that are common with the areas of hospital diversion status, community-based communication at the state level.

William Bingham, Paramedic Shortage Committee

Mr. Bingham reported that due to the scheduling changes that the committee didn't hold a meeting. However, he stated that he got an opportunity to get with some constituency groups and discuss the Paramedic shortage issue. Mr. Bingham stated that within the next four to six weeks that he will touch base with other representatives from various constituencies that have an interest in this issue as well as sending out a survey.

Dr. Lottenberg, Office of Trauma

Dr. Lottenberg announced that as of July 1st Shands, University of Florida, is a fully designed level one trauma center.

Dr. Lottenberg then reported that monies have been distributed for 04/05 for burn centers and non-trauma centers as well as money allocated for 05/06 from HRSA. He then stated that House Bill 497 and House Bill 1697 were signed into law during the 205 Legislative Session and will go effect October 1, 2005. These laws will generate funding for at least \$7.5 million for the 05/06 year.

Next, Dr. Lottenberg announced that on August 12 a rule development workshop will be held in Tallahassee and the second workshop will be on August 10 in Tampa. He then stated that on August 12 the University of Florida will host the colloquium meeting looking at traumatic brain injury patients and spinal cord injury patients.

Lastly, Dr. Lottenberg reported that on August 15 a meeting will be held with the University of North Carolina and the Office of Trauma to discuss their data collection system methodology.

A motion was then made and seconded that Dr. Lottenberg will give a report to the council each quarter and sit at the head table.

COMMENTS

Mr. Scott wanted to urge Mr. Bennett that he proceeds with caution regarding the re-write of Chapter 401. He feels that with having such a short timeframe to re-word the language that constituency groups may not have adequate time for input. He wanted to go on record stating that he opposes that pilots have any sort of EMT or medical credentialing, except for the individuals in the back of the aircraft.

Lastly, he mentioned that there are a lot of nurses that work in the three hospital arena and there are not a lot of nurses to challenge the paramedic exam. He feels that by changing this requirement would have a significant impact on hiring nurses and them meeting the current qualifications that are in place.

Chairman Shatz then commented that with such a short time frame to rewrite Chapter 401 many constituencies may not have ample opportunity to revise the language.

Chief Bennett stated that the bureau has to open up Chapter 401 this year, because of the Medical Quality Assurance (MQA) changes. He further detailed that he informed everyone in April of the rewrite and that he received no comments from constituency groups.

After no further business of the council, Chairman Shatz called for a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and the meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Dennard', written in a cursive style.

Tisa D. Dennard