

National Pediatric Readiness Project needs participation

In January the Texas EMSC State Partnership at Baylor College of Medicine began coordinating the National Pediatric Readiness Project, a multi-phase quality-improvement initiative aiming to ensure that all U. S. emergency departments have essential guidelines and resources in place to provide effective emergency care to children. The primary purpose of the National Pediatric Readiness Project (NPRP) is to establish a composite baseline of the nation's capacity to provide care to children in the ED, create a foundation for EDs to engage in an ongoing quality improvement process that includes implementation of the *Guidelines for Care of Children in the Emergency Department*, and establish a benchmark that measures an ED's improvement over time. The assessment phase of the project is expected to continue through March.

This project is a partnership between the National Emergency Medical Services for Children Program, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Emergency Physicians and the Emergency Nurses Association. Nationally, NPRP has also received the support of the Joint Commission and the Healthcare Corporation of America. In Texas, the project has received the endorsement of the Children's Hospital Association of Texas, Texas College of Emergency Physicians, Texas Emergency Nurses Association, Texas Hospital Association and Texas Pediatric Society.

Approximately 5000 U.S. hospitals will be included in the assessment, making it the largest collaborative effort to date to benchmark pediatric readiness in emergency departments. With about



450 hospitals, Texas has the most hospitals of any state in the nation, including 78 critical access hospitals and hundreds of rural and community hospitals. Military-based hospitals and free-standing emergency departments will also be included in the project. Assuring that every hospital with an emergency department participates in the project is important because, in an emergency, most children will be brought to the closest facility in their community.

Participation in the NPRP assessment will have several advantages for hospitals. Facilities will receive immediate feedback on their current capacity to provide emergency care for children in the form of a pediatric

readiness score that they can compare to the average scores of other hospitals with similar pediatric volume and all hospitals nationwide. The readiness score is based on a scale from 0–100 and reflects six key areas of the *Joint Policy Statement: Guidelines for Care of Children in the Emergency Department*, including (1) administration and coordination, (2) physicians, nurses and other ED staff, (3) quality/performance improvement in the ED, (4) pediatric patient safety, (5) policies, procedures and protocols, (6) equipment, supplies and medications. Participants will also receive an immediate “Pediatric Readiness Gap Analysis Report” that summarizes the facilities strengths and weaknesses within the key areas of the assessment and will direct facility staff to specific components of the Pediatric Readiness Toolkit, which the NPRP has created to provide the most up-to-date information and resources to help facilities improve their capabilities to provide appropriate pediatric emergency care. Additionally, each facility completing the assessment will receive a free one-year subscription to PEMSsoft, an online pediatric decision support tool designed for rapid clinical decision making at the point-of-care.

For more information or to help with NPRP in your community or hospital, contact the EMSC State Partnership office at (832) 824-6028 or email Tony Gilchrest at anthony.gilchrest@bcm.edu.

Interested in participating in the National Pediatric Readiness Project? Contact the Texas EMSC State Partnership at Baylor College (832) 824-6028 or email Tony Gilchrest at anthony.gilchrest@bcm.edu.