



Legislation brings new rules

Texas EMS Magazine ran a description of the bills passed in the last legislative session affecting EMS/trauma systems. Rules are being written now to implement those bills, and a couple of these rules are going to bring some pretty big changes to the EMS community. The laws become effective September 1, 2009; rules should be published by January 1, 2009. The new and updated rules were presented to GETAC in August. HB 846 limits the information an EMS certification/licensure candidate is required to submit regarding unchanged crime history information previously provided and evaluated by the department on an earlier application. This applies only to criminal history already disclosed, not criminal history that was omitted from the application and not discovered. Any new criminal history since the last certification application still must be reported.

HB 2846 introduces several changes, including prohibiting applicants with certain criminal histories from becoming certified or licensed in EMS. Those violations include murder, capital murder, indecency with a child, aggravated kidnapping, aggravated sexual assault, aggravated robbery, some substance abuse offenses, sexual assault and any offense that requires the offender to register as a sex offender. EMS Rule 157.37 will reflect the changes in the statute. In addition, the rule will allow DSHS to revoke and deny certifications if certificants fail to notify DSHS about sentencing of any offense, including deferred adjudication, community supervision, deferred disposition or pre-trial diversion. The new rules will also allow DSHS to prescreen people with criminal histories to see whether they meet the requirements for certification (barring any further criminal conduct). A process to implement the prescreening petition is being developed.

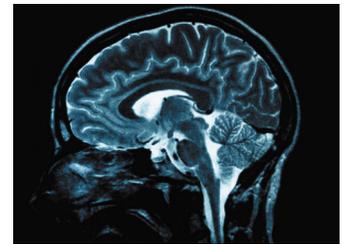
DNR form changing—a lot

You may not recognize the Out-of-Hospital Do-Not-Resuscitate form you'll be seeing early in 2010. The form will still carry the Texas graphic with the words "Stop" and "Do Not Resuscitate." But recent legislation adds the option of electronic, digital or notary signatures on some places on the form. In addition, the form is being redesigned to better address parts of the original statute. As the rules go forward, we'll publish what the new form will look like. And remember: Any form, no matter which version or when it was signed, is still in force until it is revoked or the patient dies. This will be the third revision of the form since the law went into effect in 1995. DNR information is at www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/dnr.



Stroke designation for hospitals coming soon

We have designated trauma centers in Texas; soon hospitals will have the opportunity to become designated stroke centers. GETAC's stroke committee



and DSHS have been working on rules to implement a stroke designation process. GETAC approved the rules in November 2008, and they were then sent to the State Health Services Council and HHSC for final approval. The rules became effective August 31, 2009. They outline the requirement for hospitals to qualify for stroke facility designation after they have been certified by The Joint Commission. (Certification is a Joint Commission process; designation is a DSHS process). DSHS designation requires a \$100 nonrefundable application fee for each hospital seeking stroke designation. Applications forms for primary stroke designation will be available on the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems website on October 1. The rule also states that the 22 regional advisory councils (RACs) should develop regional stroke system plans based on standard guidelines for comprehensive system development. Watch our website and this magazine for more information about stroke designation or contact Emily Parsons at emily.parsons@dshs.state.tx.us.

Child Passenger Safety Week in September



The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has set Child Passenger Safety Week for September 12–18. This might be a perfect time to start educating your community about the new law that requires that children younger than eight years and shorter than

four feet, nine inches to ride in a child passenger safety system. The bill also sets fines and court costs for the offense and directs that any money collected must be sent to the Texas Department of Transportation and used to purchase and distribute child passenger safety seat systems to low-income families. That collection process has not yet been developed. NHTSA has a website set up with sample news releases and talking points, as well as posters and brochures. Go to <http://204.68.195.250/childps/planner2009>. Boost Texas, an advocacy group promoting booster seat use, has plenty of information on booster seats at www.boosttexas.org.

Editorial board applications open

First things first: We want to thank the dedicated folks who have served on the editorial board for the last two years. Texas EMS Magazine is now accepting new applications for the next editorial board. Current members are welcome to re-apply. The editorial board will continue to give us feedback on what folks would like to see in the magazine and occasionally provide technical expertise. We know how busy everyone is, so we're revamping the way we meet. Instead of meeting twice a year, in February and August during GETAC, we'll be going virtual with a listserv that allows for discussion and comment any time. Magazine staff will still be available to meet informally during GETAC meeting weeks. The applications close September 30, 2009. Board terms are two years. For more information, go to www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems. Click on "Editorial Board" under News/Features.



Federal checks now required

Beginning January 1, 2010, initial applicants will be required to undergo an FBI fingerprint criminal history check. L-1 Identity Solutions (www.L1id.com) is the contracted provider for the federal background checks. The FAST Pass form from L1 Identity Solutions will be attached to the initial application. Any fees associated with the process will be the applicant's responsibility. Please note, this new step will increase application processing time.

Local Projects Grant update

As of press time, the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems Coordination (OEMS/TS) has made recommendations for the Local Projects Grants to the DSHS contract office for final approval. As soon as the contract office approves the grants, we'll notify the recipients and announce the awards on our website. Each year, OEMS/TS awards about \$1 million in funding for EMS projects through a competitive application process. For more information, go to www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems and click on Funding Sources in the left column.



2009 award nominations due October 6



The awards luncheon is right around the corner. Do you know people or organizations who might deserve a Texas EMS and trauma award? If you've been nominated or done the nominating, you know just how exciting it is when the awards are announced at Texas EMS Conference. The deadline for nominations is October 6, 2009.

Each category honors a person or organization that exemplifies the best that EMS/trauma systems has to offer. It's quite an honor to be nominated and to win. The categories and the explanations are listed below and on the nomination form. Once you've chosen the correct category, the rest is pretty easy. For more information, go to www.dshs.state.tx.us/emtraumasystems/09AwardsIntroduction.shtm.

Award Categories 2009

EMS Educator Award honors a state-certified EMS instructor or course coordinator who offers advanced EMS education in Texas.

EMS Medical Director Award honors a physician who has served as a medical director, on-line or off-line, for an EMS organization.

EMS Administrator Award honors an administrator, researcher or manager at the local, city, county, regional or state level who has made a positive contribution to EMS.

Public Information/Injury Prevention Award honors an EMS group or individual for outstanding achievement in public education or injury prevention.

Citizen Award honors a private citizen for a heroic lifesaving act or unique advocacy of EMS.

Private/Public Provider Award honors a ground or air organization that demonstrated a leadership role in EMS by achievement in areas of patient care, public access, medical control, disaster preparedness, public education and training.

Volunteer Provider Award honors an organization staffed by volunteers that assumed a leadership role in EMS by achievement in areas of patient care, public access, medical control, disaster preparedness, public education and training.

First Responder Award honors a first responder organization that assumed a leadership role in EMS by achievement in areas of patient care, public access, medical control, disaster preparedness, public education and training.

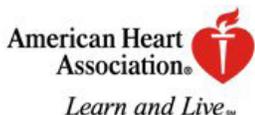
Air Medical Service Award honors a public or private air medical service in Texas, a leader in the field, that has demonstrated the highest standards in providing patient care to the citizens of Texas.

Outstanding EMS Person of the Year honors an EMS-certified person who has demonstrated uncommon leadership and courage in providing emergency medical service to the citizens of Texas.

Telecommunicator of the Year honors a person or team who handles a call or system event with a professionalism and efficiency that allowed the first responders on the scene to give the patients the best patient care possible. An individual or a team is eligible for the award.

Trauma Center Award honors a designated trauma facility in Texas that has demonstrated leadership and high standards in implementing injury prevention programs and providing trauma patient care to the citizens and visitors of Texas.

Regional Advisory Council Award honors a regional advisory council in Texas that has demonstrated leadership and high standards in improving emergency medical service to the citizens of Texas.



American Heart FR no longer equivalent

The American Heart Association's First Responder Course will no longer be considered equivalent to an ECA course. Candidates who complete that course will not be eligible to take the National Registry's First Responder exam. The reason? The AHA doesn't address some things that are now required in Texas, such as epi-pens.

Five receive emergency funding

Five EMS providers recently received emergency funding designed to help areas that suffer devastating events. The Extraordinary Emergency Fund (EEF) is available to assist licensed EMS providers, hospitals and registered first responder organizations if unforeseeable events cause a degradation of service to the community. Situations that may severely reduce or incapacitate emergency response capability are considered extraordinary emergencies. For further information, please contact Roxanne Cuellar at Roxanne.cuellar@dshs.state.tx.us or (512) 834-6700, ext. 2377.



The following organizations were awarded Extraordinary Emergency Funding recently:

Los Fresnos Community Ambulance, \$18,590 for a cardiac monitor

North Bosque EMS, \$44,993 for cardiac monitors

Mart EMS, \$125,000 for a new ambulance

Stinnett EMS, \$50,000 for a new ambulance

Merkel EMS, \$2,341 for communication radio repeater

NHTSA data indicates record low traffic fatalities in 2008

The number of overall U.S. traffic fatalities reported in 2008 hit its lowest level since 1961, and fatalities in the first three months of 2009



also decreased, according to U.S. Department of Transportation. Traffic deaths in Texas decreased by 84 fatalities, or about 2.4 percent, from 2007. The 2008 U.S. highway death count stands at 37,261, a drop of 9.7 percent from 2007. The percentage of alcohol-related crash deaths in the U.S. also dropped 9.7 percent. In Texas, the number of alcohol-related crash deaths declined by 4.8 percent, although because the number of overall deaths declined, the percentage of total crash deaths due to alcohol remained at 38 percent. For a complete list, visit www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811172.pdf.

ADA emergency preparedness guide for local governments useful to EMS



One of the responsibilities of local government is to help people prepare for and respond to emergencies, and that includes people with disabilities, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The Department of Justice has a new guide, "Making Community Emergency Preparedness and Response Programs Accessible to People with Disabilities," that can help EMS agencies identify needs and evaluate effective emergency management practices for persons with disabilities. For more information, go to www.ada.gov/emergencyprepguide.htm.

New emergency use authorization online course

Curious about how medical products are authorized during an emergency? And what the heck is Emergency Use Authorization (EUA)? An online course developed by the Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides public health officials, emergency managers or Strategic National Stockpile coordinators with an introduction to the Emergency Use Authorization of medical products. And it's free! Go to <http://emergency.cdc.gov/training/eua/index.html>.



On Duty