

## EMS Office Update

March 3, 2005

With the legislative session concluding it is time to bring everyone up-to-date on issues that will impact the ambulance services across the state. The following is a breakdown of bills that have passed the legislature and how they will affect our providers:

- **Enrolled Act No. 42** - provides for immunity for physician medical directors while serving in the capacity as medical director for any ambulance service; provides immunity for hospitals and its employees for activities directly related to providing clinical training for Department of Health approved EMS classes; and provides immunity for students while participating in Department of Health approved EMS classes.
- **Enrolled Act No. 67** - updates the language in the present automated external defibrillation statute. Requires appropriate training for all persons who possess an AED. Provides limited liability for: any person who attempts to use an AED, any prescribing physician and any individual who provides the training in the use of the AED. Repeals the reporting requirement for clinical use of an AED.
- **Enrolled Act No. 70** - provides for reimbursement for uncompensated trauma care to hospitals through the EMS Office's Trauma Program. \$2.5 million general fund appropriation for compensation to hospitals based upon number of patients in trauma registry and a hospital being concurrent in their data submission. Time limited appropriation through June 30, 2006.
- **Enrolled Act No. 86** - authorizes ambulance service providers and fire department providers to obtain criminal background records on prospective employees. Provides prospective employees to submit finger prints for criminal history record purposes.

Copies of these bills will be sent to each ambulance service as soon as the legislature finalizes the bills. Thanks to the Wyoming Hospital Association, the Wyoming Medical Society, Sherilyn Kaiser from the Wyoming Medical Center, the Fire Chief's Association, Representatives Bob Brechtel, John Hastert, and Doug Osborne, and Senators Pat Aullman (EMT-Intermediate from Thayne), John Barrasso, MD, Mike Massie, and Charles Scott for supporting these bills as they proceeded through the legislature.

A reminder to all ambulance services that your applications for the EMS System Enhancement Awards are due in to the EMS Office by Friday, March 18, 2005. Additional applications may be obtained by contacting Beth at the EMS Office.

**60** of our **72** ambulance services have replaced or upgraded their mobile radios to meet the requirements of the Wyo. Link and APCO Project 25 communication projects. The upgrading of hospital base stations is progressing with **8** hospitals receiving new base stations since January. Base stations for the remaining hospitals and thirteen clinics has arrived and will be installed as Motorola can schedule them. All of these base

stations are APCO Project 25 and Wyo. Link compatible. Funding for this project has come from the HRA Bioterrorism Hospital Preparedness Grant.

EMS Week is May 15-21, 2005. The EMS Office will be sending the ACEP planning guide to each ambulance service shortly. Additional copies of the planning guide can be obtained by downloading the information from the following: [www.acep.org/emswEEK](http://www.acep.org/emswEEK). You are the crucial first link in our state's healthcare delivery system. It is important that the public realizes the importance of the role EMS provides for our communities. The EMS Office encourages each of your services to take time to educate those in your community about the services that you provide.

Mark I nerve agent antidote kits have been received as a result of funding from the Office of Homeland Security. Each hospital emergency department will be receiving 100 kits and ambulance services will be receiving 9 kits for each vehicle. Training information and posters will be included. The kits contain two auto injectors containing atropine and pralidoxime chloride (2-PAM). These are designed to provide protection for the ambulance crews and hospital workers who may be faced with exposure to life-threatening poisoning by organophosphorus nerve agents. The kits are being supplied at no cost to each hospital and ambulance service. They should be distributed by the end of the month.

The Cheyenne Fire/Rescue pilot Paramedic training program is in its final stages with their graduation set for April 28th. Students are scheduled to take their National Registry examination in May at St. Anthony's Hospital in Denver. Cheyenne Fire/Rescue is the first non-transporting fire service to be authorized to provide Paramedic level care. Rock Springs Fire Department is authorized for EMT-Intermediate level of care and has submitted an application to have their authorization raised to the Paramedic level. Weber State University in Logan, Utah is conducting a pilot distance learning Paramedic training program. Eleven Wyoming EMTs are enrolled with the major portion of their didactic session conducted locally. Students from Rock Springs, Cody, and Sheridan are participating in this pilot distance learning program.

Upcoming EMS Conferences include the following:

- **EMS University** - April 8-9 - Gillette at the Cam-Plex. Contact Gregg Mentzel at Campbell County Hospital for conference information and registration forms.
- The annual **Shock/Trauma Conference** in Jackson has been moved from April to May 12th - 15th due to scheduling difficulties with the local hotels. This represents the 25th annual trauma conference for the Jackson community. An expanded schedule of topics will be presented as the former Teton County EMS group has merged with the fire department to form Jackson Hole Fire/EMS. Look for conference flyers in the near future.
- The **Red Desert Trauma Conference** will be held June 3-5 in Rock Springs. Conference information and registration may be obtained by contacting Larry

Macy at Vase EMS in Rock Springs.

The EMS Office has initiated a five year study on the field use of Paramedic skills and medications. Paramedic authorized services are required to submit monthly reports on the numbers of skills/medications authorized for Paramedics. These numbers will be matched with the services trip reports to validate the field use. The data will be used by the EMS Office's two advisory groups and will be included as part of the EMS Office Annual Report.

The HRSA Bioterrorism Hospital Advisory Board will be meeting in Thermopolis on Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will update members on the progress of this years' grant activities and serve as a sounding board for activities to be addressed in next years' grant which will be submitted later this summer. It is anticipated that the grant funds will be reduced due to the reductions being seen in other programs at the federal level. For further information contact Merit Thomas at the EMS Office.

Maggie Cleveland, RN, Trauma Program Coordinator is still taking requests for ABLS classes. There are a limited number of slots still available. The classes are provided at no charge to the students with instructors and all class materials provided by the Western States Burn Center from Greeley, Colorado. To obtain information on how to schedule a class or find a class to attend contact Maggie at the EMS Office.

Jay Ostby, that IT guy in the EMS Office has begun the process to upgrade the computers that have been placed at ambulance services and operate on the Windows 95 software. This operating system is no longer being supported by Microsoft. As part of the Office of Rural Health's Flex Grant, the EMS Office will begin to obtain upgraded PCs to replace these outdated systems. If your ambulance service has one of these computers contact Jay to have your name placed on the list that needs to be upgraded.

The EMS Office has received notification from HRSA that their application for a third-year state EMSC Partnership grant has been awarded. The grant will enable the EMS Office to maintain the infrastructure for EMSC activities that have been addressed over the years. This is potentially the last year of the EMSC grants as the program, along with the Trauma Grants and the CDC Health Block Grants, have been targeted as several of those recommended for elimination in the President's 2006 budget.

Elsewhere Around Wyoming EMS: Recent changes in several EMS agencies have taken place with long-time EMT-Intermediate Ken Blackburn stepping down as director of the Powell Hospital Ambulance Service. Lynnae Seeley, RN has assumed Ken's position. Bob Symons, Fire Chief, for Sheridan Fire/Rescue has retired and Terry Lenhart has been appointed the interim chief. Current EMT-Intermediate Pat Aullman from Thayne and former EMT-Basic from Gillette, Tom Lubnau II, just completed their first terms in the legislature. American Medical Response in Cheyenne was recently awarded a four year contract to provide ambulance service for Cheyenne.

Lastly, Health Department Director, Deb Fleming, Ph. D., has announced her

resignation. Dr. Fleming has supported the EMS programs and the volunteer ambulance services across the state. She attended EMS conferences when her schedule permitted, attended and worked with our two advisory committees, was instrumental in moving the EMS programs under a medical directors oversight, and supported the EMS legislation that was addressed this past session. Our best wishes and heartfelt thanks go out to her for her support the past two years.