

**EMS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES  
AUGUST 12, 2004  
TELECONFERENCE**

**Members Present:** Dan Ehlen, Donna Pretzer, Nancy Capes, Rod Gilmore, Mark Weber, Darleen Bartz and Tim Meyer.

**Others Present:** Dean Lampe, Mike Hall and Linda Zahn.

**Welcome:** Tim welcomed everyone and introduced everyone on line.

There were not enough members present to have a quorum so there was no approval of minutes or election of officers.

**Air Ambulance Rules:** Tim Meyer gave an overview of the history of the air ambulance statute and rules. DEMS has sent a letter to all Trauma coordinators so that they will pass the information to their ER physicians explaining how the air ambulance rules impact them. There was much discussion between the committee members regarding how most people assume that when you call for an air ambulance two personnel will be on board, and that could cause confusion and potential patient harm.

Tim Meyer shared information from a conversation with Rep. Todd Porter where Rep. Porter said that he would sponsor legislation next session to allow the Department of Health to license another level of air ambulance called "Critical Care Air Ambulance". This would be an avenue to require a higher level of minimum staffing than we have now. There was more discussion from the committee debating the need for another level of licensure when that would add to the confusion for a referring physician.

The committee asked Tim Meyer and DEMS to do two things regarding air ambulance before our next meeting:

1. Survey physicians asking what their expectations of staffing are for air ambulance.
2. Invite Representative Porter to attend our next meeting.

**Soar Data Collection System:** Tim Meyer gave an overview and current status report on the SOAR system that went live July 1, 2004. As of now we have just under 30 services reporting by internet and many more are working to convert to this new system. All ambulance services will be required to report calls electronically by July 1, 2005. The vendor is working on merging our historical data base into SOAR. We have data dating from 1994.

**EMS Personnel Licensing Issues:** Tim Meyer and Mike Hall described a situation that happened this past spring where several Paramedics from Fargo were temporarily denied re-registration from the National Registry of EMTs (NREMT) because of an anomaly at the NREMT. This same situation

could happen again and North Dakota has no legal mechanism to certify or license most EMS personnel independently from the NREMT. There was discussion on this and the committee agreed that the state needs to have a mechanism to address this situation. The committee also agreed that when our Administrative Rules will next be opened up for change, likely the year after the legislative session, this would be one thing to address.

**Scope of Practice:** Tim Meyer explained that a paper has been issued called “The National EMS Scope of Practice Model” from the Pew Commission that describes changes in the training requirements for EMS personnel on a national level. If these changes are implemented in their present form, it would have significant ramifications for North Dakota, particularly for the EMT level of training. This document is open for public comment until January 2005. Tim has suggested a meeting with service directors to let them know that this model issue is out there, and how they can be a part of the comment process.

**CISM Funding:** Tim Meyer explained that our funding for the Critical Incident Stress Management program will not be renewed by NHTSA. Our current funding expires on September 30, 2004. North Dakota spends about \$10,000 a year on CISM, which is mostly for travel reimbursement for CISM team members. Tim Meyer has discussed this with Tim Wiedrich and Brenda Vossler from Emergency Preparedness and Response Section to see if CISM could be funded through Bioterrorism funds for the near future. A more long term solution for funding may be to have this program outside of state government to allow it to accept donations.

There was debate by the attendees on the effectiveness of CISM. This has been a topic that has been debated on a national level as well. The committee asked Tim Meyer to have Alan Aarhus set up a meeting with the CISM members to discuss potential changes for the delivery of these services.

Rev. Lee Gale has finished training for Basic and Peer to Peer interventions, so he is now a state trainer.

**New Business:** Mark Weber brought up the concept of requiring training institutions and having instructors affiliated with them. He feels we need ideas from the EMS and medical community on ways to increase educational standards and instructor knowledge. If the instructors are better trained, this would lead to better trained providers and this would decrease the need for CISM. Tim Meyer explained that he plans on having Mark Haugen give a presentation to the EMSAC at a future meeting to explain training institution accreditation. The ND EMS Association would like to have a meeting before the end of September to further discuss these issues.

**Next Meeting:** Teleconference at Noon on Wednesday, November 10.

**Submitted by:** Linda Zahn, recorder.