

## DEMST Education Projects

### **NREMT Pilot Project**

In September of 2012 a group of four EMS Educators from around the state along with Tom Nehring and Ed Gregoire traveled to the National Registry (NREMT) in Columbus to discuss a Pilot project proposed to change the structure of recertification requirements of EMS personnel. The Pilot project will have an effect in the continued competency of EMS personnel in all areas of the nation but North Dakota has been chosen for the pilot.

The pilot project consists of changing the recertification requirements of EMT's, AEMT's and paramedics.

Here is a summary of the changes that will occur starting **April 1, 2013**.

1. EMS Providers will be required to create an account with the NREMT through their website.
  - a. This account will allow them to enter and log their continuing education information electronically. Once the required amount of hours has been entered they will be able to submit this to the NREMT for processing and receive their new certification through the mail.
2. All EMS Providers will be required to register with a licensed agency in the state in order to participate in this project. Any provider that is not licensed or registered with an agency will not be able to participate and will be required to recertify by the traditional method. The 'paper and pencil' method of submitting recertification paperwork will be discontinued starting April 1, 2013 and all documentation will need to be completed online through the NREMT website. This method will prove to be more reliable than the method currently used.
3. The required amount of continuing education will be reduced for each level and will be divided into categories. The amount of hours regarding each subject matter has not been determined at this point but will be in the very near future. Here is a summary of the new hour requirement starting **April 1, 2013**.
  - a. Emergency Medical Responder – **16 hours Total**
  - b. Emergency Medical Technician – **40 hours Total**
  - c. Emergency Medical Technician-Intermediate 85 – **72 hours Total**
  - d. Advanced Emergency Medical Technician – **50 hours Total**
  - e. Paramedic – **60 hours Total**
4. Refresher courses that are currently being conducted will be discontinued **April 1, 2013** and will no longer be needed. If an individual has taken a refresher this year but does not recertify until March of 2014 this will be accepted.
5. The announcement of these changes will be introduced at the NDEMSEA regional conferences in January and February of this year. It will be an introduction only and some rumors will hopefully be dispelled. The NREMT will be presenting the entire project at the EMS Rendezvous in April, 2013 and DEMST is encouraging as many providers as possible attend this introduction.

It is extremely important that EMS providers in the state that are currently due to recertify in March of 2013 complete the traditional method of recertification. The NREMT has been very cordial on working with the DEMST on this project and we feel honored that they have chosen North Dakota as the state for this pilot project.

### **EMS Educational Restructure.**

Concerns have arisen over the past few years on problems associated with EMS education within the North Dakota. The NDEMSEA has assembled a group of highly regarded educators from all areas of the state who have met to identify the issues and try to develop some resolution. A few meetings have taken great strides in developing a new structure that will benefit all EMS providers in the state. The DEMST has asked the Educational Sub-Committee to develop an educational structure that will provide a higher level of education, make it easier and more convenient for providers to obtain education and to assure continued competency. Once this plan is developed it will be presented to the EMSAC for comment. We hope to see some type of development in the next few months.

### **Paramedic Programs**

All paramedic programs conducted nationwide will be required to be accredited by the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for Emergency Medical Services Professions (CoAEMSP) by January 1, 2013. Presently we have four paramedic programs in the state and all but one is accredited. However that program is in the process of accomplishing this.

### **EMT-Intermediate 85 status**

As most of you are aware, the EMT-Intermediate 85 is no longer offered in North Dakota. In turn the National Registry of EMTs has also announced they will no longer recertify this level after March 31, 2017. EMT-I85s that recertify by March 31, 2013 will have two more periods that they will be able to recertify for four years expiring on March 31, 2017. Those that are due to recertify March 31, 2014 will have only one recertification period expiring on March 31, 2016. They will not be able to recertify for the next year.

This has created an issue for the State of North Dakota and for providers that are at this level. At this time we have two different options for this level of provider.

1. The provider may take a modified AEMT course and take the cognitive (written) exam and a modified practical exam and become an AEMT. After thorough review of the new material contained in the AEMT course creating a "bridge" or "transition" course is not a viable option. This has been attempted in other parts of the United States with little success. With the new EMS Education Standards an instructor may allow the EMT-I85 attending the AEMT course to "test" out on certain parts of the AEMT course. If the candidate shows entry level competency they could bypass that part of the course. If entry level competency is not shown the candidate would then need to attend that portion of the course to become competent enough to pass the NREMT exam.

2. The EMT-I85 to continue to recertify at that level until it expires with the NREMT. At the time of final recertification the candidate could complete the EMT recertification requirements and submit a request to the NREMT to be certified as an EMT. No further action or testing would be required and the provider could continue to use limited advanced skills currently approved in the State of North Dakota with the exception of intravenous administration and 50% Dextrose. If the current EMT-I85 has not used the advanced skills for an extended period of time this may be the best option.

Educational programs have been notified of these options. To date we only have one educational program that is willing to take on the task of transitioning EMT-I85s to the AEMT level. We have had a few AEMT course conducted in the state with success and expect to see more in the future. We have had the question on why we cannot “grandfather” current EMT-I85s as AEMTs and the answer is that it is a completely new level with many new skills. Some of the skills seem quite simple but can be dangerous if the person performing these skills is not well educated and had their skills verified. The choice on what the current EMT-I85 needs to do in the future is a personal one.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

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