



Brent D. Sherard, M.D., M.P.H., Director and State Health Officer

Governor Dave Freudenthal

MEMORANDUM

To: Ambulance Services
Physician Medical Directors
Physician Task Force on Prehospital Care
Governor's EMS Advisory Committee
Trauma Coordinators
Fire Chiefs

From: EMS Office 

Date: March 12, 2009

Subject: Office Updates

The 2009 legislative session has finished. There were three EMS related bills: HB-105 Blood Borne Pathogen Notification, HB-146 EMS Sustainability Trust, and HB-244 Uncompensated Trauma Care. HB-105 and HB-244 were unsuccessful during the session. Rep Jeb Steward's HB-146 EMS Sustainability Bill was passed and signed by Governor Freudenthal. This bill will provide the Department of Health with \$500,000 of tobacco settlement funds to provide grants to agencies such as joint powers boards to conduct EMS needs assessments. Additionally, there was \$50,000 appropriated to start the grant program. Details on the specifics of the grant process remain to be worked out.

The planning for the 39th Annual Wyoming Trauma Conference is underway. Early registration forms have been sent to all ambulance services. Additional conference registration forms are available from the EMS Office and are posted on the EMS website. The conference registration and hotel room rates remain the same as in 2008. Speakers scheduled include: Dr. Craig Jacobus, Scott DeBoer, Mike Grill, Matt Strout, Larry Macy, and Dennis Edgerly. Vendor/sponsor packets have been sent out. Tentative preconference classes will include: Geriatric EMS (GEMS), Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS), Basic Trauma Life Support (BTLS), Electrical Safety, and Best Practices in EMS. Invitations have been extended to Senator John Barrasso, MD, Governor Dave Freudenthal, and Brent D. Sherard, MD, MPH, Director and State Health Officer. The State Fire Marshal's Office and Cheyenne Fire/Rescue will again provide speakers and assistance to the conference. Giveaways will include the ever popular rifle raffle and a HD plasma TV raffle. Saturday's banquet will feature humorist Dr. Humor along presentation of the Governor's Award for Physician Medical Director of the Year and the Medic of the Year Awards.

The EMS Office will be presenting a medical director's training program designed to familiarize physicians with their roles and responsibilities as a medical director for an ambulance service. Don Wood, MD from the Utah EMS Bureau will present the program with assistance from Doug Schmitz, MD, EMS Medical Director and Bob Dean, Senior Trainer for the EMS Office.

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The EMS Office extends its deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Georgia Walton of Kemmerer. Georgia was a long time EMT and served as Kemmerer's Ambulance Director for a number of years. Georgia was the recipient of the Medic of the Year Award in 1995. She served on the Board of WAEMSA, was a EMT class coordinator, and EMS class evaluator. She will be missed in the Kemmerer community.

Training scholarships, in the amount of up to \$1,000.00 are still available from the EMS Office to ambulance services that have not applied for them from 2008. To date, eighteen (18) of the seventy-four (74) ambulance services have applied for and received training scholarships. Ambulance services receiving training scholarships include: Alpine FD/EMS, AMR-Cheyenne, Campbell County Memorial Hospital EMS, Dayton Rescue, Evansville Ambulance Service, Glendo Volunteer Ambulance Service, LaGrange EMS, Lingle FD/EMS, Memorial Hospital of Converse County EMS, Mortimore's Ambulance Service, Newcastle Ambulance Service, Osage FD/EMS, Sweetwater Medics, Vase EMS, Kemmerer, LaBarge, and Cokeville, EMS. These scholarships may be used to offset the expense of sending personnel to conferences either in state or out of state. Scholarship applications are available from the EMS Office. In addition, Merit Thomas's Hospital Preparedness Program has training scholarship funds available for ambulance services. Contact the EMS Office for further information.

Ambulance service administrators and medical directors are reminded that when there is a change in personnel or physician sponsorship the EMS Office needs to be notified. Often the EMS staff does not hear of local changes in personnel or medical directors until several months have lapsed. Physicians must send a signed and dated letter to the EMS Office when they become a medical director for an ambulance service. This has become especially important with the advent of the stipends that the EMS Office is currently providing to 27 of the state's 30 physician medical directors.

The institution of criminal background checks and fingerprinting has resulted in some confusion among those applying for certification. The EMS Office **will not** be sending out the background check forms until a class is finished and the certificates of completion are processed. Completion of the criminal background checks prior to course completion **will not** be accepted.

Merit Thomas's Hospital Preparedness Program has funding for the acquisition of personal protection equipment for ambulance services to obtain masks, gowns, and gloves for use in the event of a Pandemic Flu outbreak. Applications for these funds will be sent to the ambulance services in the near future.

For EMTs that are due to recertify this fall, you are reminded that you will have to undergo the criminal background check and fingerprinting when you recertify. The specific procedure for this will be detailed later this spring. EMTs who are recertifying and have been certified for four continuous years will only need to complete the Wyoming DCI background and fingerprinting check. They will not have to complete the FBI forms.

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For the past twenty-six years it has been my pleasure and honor to work for the Wyoming Department of Health's Emergency Medical Services program. EMS has been a part of my life since my first EMT-Basic class in Casper in 1974. I have been able to travel the state and have gotten to know first hand how important a role and position the EMS providers provide to their communities. EMS is truly the backbone of our state's healthcare delivery system. EMS providers are the unsung heroes of healthcare. I will forever cherish the friendships I have made over the years.

The past year has seen my health deteriorate to the point that I feel I can no longer function in an effective capacity in my present position. I have made the decision to retire effective May 29, 2009. My last working day, in the office, will be March 31, 2009. An interim program manager will be named shortly. Dr. Sherard has indicated that his support for the EMS programs will continue.

My hope is that whoever is appointed to continue in this position will continue to provide feedback to the EMS community by continuing this "Chief's Corner." May God Bless each and everyone of you and all the good that you do for the citizens of our great state.

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