



PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY
HEALTH SERVICES COUNCIL
Your Voice In EMS

RECOMMENDATION FOR CONSIDERATION

Executive Committee Meeting Date: May 6, 2015

Subject: Final Recommendations for Critical Care Paramedic Project

VTR#: 0515-01

Committee/Task Force: Air Medical Task Force

☒ Recommended Goal

☐ Recommended Policy Change

☐ Other:

Recommendation:

The Pennsylvania Department of Health should accept PEHSC's final recommendations to implement the expanded scope of practice for paramedics practicing on licensed air and critical care transport ambulances [a.k.a. Critical Care Paramedic] in Pennsylvania

Rationale [Background]:

The critical care paramedic program was initiated by the PEHSC Statewide Air Medical Task Force in March 2010. This project represents the first expanded scope of practice for paramedics in the history of Pennsylvania's EMS system.

The project was completed in three (3) phases and recommended educational requirements, competency evaluation, provider transition, scope of practice, resource typing, medications and statewide critical care protocols. The PEHSC board has previously approved, and the Department of Health has preliminarily accepted Phase I and II recommendations.

In the final phase of the project, the working group reviewed the program in its entirety with the BEMS Director to gain insight on the Department's regulatory authority in several areas of the proposed program. Based on this interpretation, several aspects of the program were revised:

- Clinical Practicum
- Competency Evaluation
- Continuing Education
- Transition to Critical Care Paramedic
- Reciprocity
- Medical Directors

Throughout the document, previously proposed "requirements" were re-designated to reflect "best practice recommendations," in order to maintain the highest program standards possible. The working group believes the program is now ready to transition from development to the operational phase and has indicated its willingness to continue to provide the Department with additional advice on any yet unidentified start-up issues.

Medical Review [Concerns]:

The PEHSC Medical Advisory Committee voted to concur with these final recommendations at their April 15, 2015 meeting. The MAC has also been integrally involved in reviewing the now published statewide critical care protocols.

Fiscal Concerns:

As identified in previous VTRs related to this project, it is not the vision of the working group for every ALS agency to develop a critical care transport service line. Given the significant capital and operating costs associated with providing high-quality critical care transport, it is incumbent upon any agency considering this service line to perform a market analysis and/or explore a strategic partnership with their local healthcare facilities to share the cost/benefit.

Educational Concerns:

The educational objectives for critical care expanded scope of practice have been established within the program document. At the Department's request, these objectives have been translated into a new course review checklist, to be used by the Department, in consultation with PEHSC, to approve critical care transport courses.

Plan of Implementation:

Following acceptance of these final recommendations, the Department should consider:

1. Publishing the recommended scope of practice and drug list in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.
2. Publishing an EMS Informational bulletin to provide the regulated community with information related to both critical care transport ambulance transport agencies [28 Pa. Code §1027.39] and expanded scope of practice [28 Pa. Code §§1027.39(d) and 1027.40(f)].
3. Proceed to review and approval, in consultation with PEHSC, critical care transport educational programs.

The PEHSC Committee/Task Force offers consultation to the Department in regard to the content of this Vote to Recommend (VTR) and its attached documents. The PEHSC Committee/Task Force specifically offers staff or member support to participate in Department deliberations regarding this recommendation in an effort to convey committee/task force discussions.

Executive Committee Comments/Concerns:

Signed: _____ Date _____
President

For PEHSC Use Only – PA Department of Health Response

Accept: _____ Table: _____ Modify: _____ Reject: _____

Comments:

Date of Department Response: _____