

# MIEMSS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

May 2022

## Maryland EMS Clinicians and Jurisdictional Programs

**SAVE THE DATE! Maryland EMS Care.** May 11-15, 2022, Ocean City Fontainebleu Resort, Ocean City, Maryland. Visit <https://miemss.org/> for the complete program schedule and further information.

**COVID-19.** MIEMSS continues to provide guidance on recommended steps for EMS operational programs. Although COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in Maryland have markedly declined from their peaks in early January 2022, EMS continues to transport patients with COVID-19 illness as well as immunosuppressed patients. At the present time, EMS clinicians should continue to pay meticulous attention to using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). EMS is part of the health care environment, and these guidelines are based upon CDC and Maryland Department of Health (MDH) recommendations for health care professionals:

- EMS clinicians should continue to wear surgical masks, eye protection, and gloves, at minimum, on all calls.
- If there is any concern for COVID-19 illness, clinicians should use gloves, eye protection, surgical gown, and a fit-tested N-95 or equivalent respirator.
- ALL patients encountered by EMS should be instructed to wear a surgical mask, if their clinical condition allows. EMS should provide an appropriate mask if the patient does not have one. Exceptions to this guideline include patients who have significant disabilities or children under 2 years of age.
- Consider local hospital visitor policies when allowing family members to accompany patients who otherwise are capable of making their own medical decisions.
- For patients who are suspected to have COVID-19 illness or exposure, clinicians should reference the COVID-19 EMS Guidance dated July 1, 2021.

The latest information regarding monitoring and caring for patients and EMS clinicians, including COVID-19 EMS Guidance documents, may be found on the Infectious Diseases portion of the MIEMSS website. Recognizing that guidance regarding COVID-19 is ever-changing, MIEMSS continues to post new documents to the <https://www.miemss.org/home/infectious-diseases> website as updates occur.

**EMS Transfer of Care Times.** EMS-to-Emergency Department transfer of care times have gradually improved since reaching high levels in early January 2022. MIEMSS continues to closely monitor transfer of care times, and sends weekly reports to hospitals upon their request. We encourage leaders to continue collaborative discussions with hospitals on strategies to transfer care from EMS to hospital staff in an efficient fashion. In addition, MIEMSS will keep the following tools available for use by EMS clinicians:

- ***Pandemic Triage Protocol.*** This protocol is a safe and effective measure for evaluating patients with a likely viral syndrome who may be able to remain at home and advising them about self-care.
- ***Direct to Triage Protocol.*** This protocol enables delivery of stable patients to the ED triage waiting area. Of note, it is important that the patient report be conveyed to nursing staff when using this protocol.

MIEMSS sincerely appreciates the great flexibility of Maryland’s EMS clinicians and jurisdictions as they respond to challenges in our health care system. MIEMSS will continue to advocate for additional strategies and resources to provide assistance in any way possible.

**MIEMSS Partnering with Mental Health Association of Maryland to Offer Free Mental Health First Aid Courses to 400 First Responders.** MIEMSS is engaged in a multi-year initiative with the Mental Health Association of Maryland (MHAMD) to launch a series of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) certification courses to first responders, statewide. The 8-hour course, valued at \$150 per person, is being offered to first responders at no cost through funding provided by the Maryland Department of Health’s Behavioral Health Administration. The courses may be delivered in-person, virtually, or via a blended combination of both. The trainings will be facilitated by dozens of Mental Health First Aid instructors throughout Maryland.

Since the pandemic began, hundreds of agencies across the state have responded to the increased mental health challenges experienced by Marylanders by offering the MHFA course to their staff. Participants learn to identify the signs and symptoms of common mental illnesses and substance use disorders. Mental Health First Aiders are equipped with an action plan to respond effectively to an individual experiencing an emerging mental health challenge or crisis.

**Now through June 30, 2022,** MIEMSS will sponsor training for 400 first responders in Maryland. Successful completion of the 8-hour course participants will enable participants to receive a nationally recognized certification from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing (NCMW). Participants will:

- Increase their mental health literacy
- Increase their confidence in providing support to someone in distress
- Increase their knowledge of professional and self-help resources
- Decrease stigma associated with mental health concerns and responses

First responders can register for a course individually, or stations and departments can request to have their members/employees trained as a group. For more information on how to register for a class or request a group training, contact Jevon Billups at [dominionservicesolutions@gmail.com](mailto:dominionservicesolutions@gmail.com) or 571-378-3030 (phone/text). To reach the Mental Health First Aid Maryland team, contact Indu Radhakrishnan at [iradhakrishnan@mhamd.org](mailto:iradhakrishnan@mhamd.org) or 443- 901-1550 ext. 228 (phone).

**Medicaid Supplemental Payment Program.** MIEMSS continues to work with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) on the Medicaid Supplemental Payment Program that will help rebalance reimbursement to EMS for the unreimbursed costs of providing services to Medicaid patients by

calculating and obtaining the appropriate portion of federal reimbursement for these services. Participants in the program must be an EMS Board-designated jurisdictional EMS operational program that is funded directly by public (tax) dollars; bills Medicaid for EMS transports; and documents expenses paid with public (tax receipt) funds.

Thirteen of the 14 jurisdictions that qualified submitted documentation needed to receive federal reimbursement for costs incurred from October 2020 through June 2021. It is anticipated that these jurisdictions will receive federal Medicaid reimbursement totaling over \$80M dollars, with federal Medicaid payments to individual jurisdictions ranging from \$147,000 to \$38M. Jurisdictions that did not participate this year have the opportunity to do so in the future.

**At Hospital Ambulances (@HA).** MIEMSS developed and released a web-based application showing ambulance activity at the many hospitals utilized by Maryland's jurisdictional EMS clinicians. The application is known as the At Hospital Ambulances (@HA) dashboard. This application runs on iOS, Android, and Windows mobile devices as well as on desktop computers. The application displays the hospital name and number of ambulances at a hospital, as well as the minimum and maximum length of stay of a unit or units at the hospital. The information may be sorted by Length of Stay, Alphabetically by Hospital, or by Unit Count. If there are no units at a hospital, then the hospital is not listed (unless there is an associated CHATS Alert). Not all of the jurisdictions are participating. A map, available on the dashboard, shows which jurisdictions are supplying data and those yet to come onboard. Access to the @HA dashboard is available to clinicians via a link on the eMEDS® patient care reporting system dashboard. It may also be viewed at <https://aha.miemss.org>. Jurisdictional EMS administrators have credentials to login to view additional details, including the ambulance's unit number and jurisdiction. At this time, 19 jurisdictions are submitting the necessary data to support the dashboard. MIEMSS continues efforts to improve the utility of the application.

**Statewide EMS Communication System Upgrade.** The MIEMSS EMS Communications System Upgrade Project is in the Implementation Stage of Phase 1, which encompasses the Southern Maryland – EMS Region V. The Implementation Stage began in May 2021, after the successful completion on Factory Acceptance Testing of the Phase 1 equipment in March and delivery of Phase 1 Equipment in April. Current work includes the integration of the NICE audio recording system with the InterTalk™ console system and enhancements to the system software. All microwave installations associated with Phase 1 as well as a significant portion of the Phase 2 microwave have been completed. System core integrations and console configurations will be completed in the fourth quarter of 2022; these are precursors to performing Regional Acceptance Testing in 1Q23. MIEMSS has approved the contractor, OCI, to commence work on the Phase 2 (Region III and Western Maryland) to mitigate timeline challenges due to Phase 1 equipment installation delays, COVID-19 impacts (e.g., travel ban, personnel quarantines) and resolving issues related to new equipment, e.g., tuning/optimization, firmware updates, and addressing the occasional part failure. The project team continually looks for targets of opportunity to mitigate timeline challenges.

**Electronic Maryland EMS Data System (eMEDS®) Updates.**

- **COVID-19 Updates:** eMEDS® continues to adapt to the necessary change requests associated with Maryland’s COVID-19 response.
- **Ambulance @ Hospital Dashboard (@HA):** MIEMSS continues to work with various EMSOPs to submit their CAD data to ImageTrend® in order to populate the @HA Dashboard in near-real time.
- **Mobile Integrated Health (MIH):** Since October 2020, MIEMSS has been working with the Statewide EMS Advisory Council’s (SEMSAC) MIH Workgroup to implement ImageTrend®’s MIH module. EMSOPs have continued to utilize the MIH module within eMEDS® since quarter 1 of 2021.
- **eMEDS® Support:** eMEDS® support receives tickets from EMS clinicians, hospital personnel, and other stakeholders throughout the state for issues like password resets and login issues, access questions, report writer functionality, and other various needs.
  - o Email: [emed-support@miemss.org](mailto:emed-support@miemss.org)
  - o Phone Number: (410) 706-3669
- **Quarterly ImageTrend® Releases:** MIEMSS and ImageTrend® have been working to minimize the amount of downtime that occurs during periodic updates to the eMEDS® site. Since quarter 1 of 2020, it was decided to stop automatic, twice-per-month updates from being pushed and to move to a quarterly update schedule. When these updates occur, the site will be updated to the latest version available from ImageTrend®. We do not expect any prolonged outage during these updates as all necessary precautions are being taken to prevent this. However, some updates may take up to six (6) hours to complete due to the complexity during these times.

**eMEDS®/CRISP Integration.** MIEMSS is continuing to cultivate a relationship of mutual benefit with the Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP), Maryland’s designated health information exchange (HIE). This ongoing relationship has yielded a number of recent fruitful projects:

- Upgrading the eMEDS® / CRISP data linkage from 138 elements via HL7 to an export that includes NEMESIS data elements via XML. This was completed as of July 2021.
- Designing a capability to export supplemental questions from eMEDS® to external sources.
- Constructing a COVID-19 status dashboard that informs Maryland’s hospitals and governmental leaders of daily hospital capacity statuses.
- Developing a near-real time ICU bed tracking system for COVID-19 response purposes.
- Acquiring a mobile integrated health (MIH) charting module for eMEDS® used by a number of counties.
- Commencing a project to develop products to serve as replacements for MEMRAD components, including CHATS and FRED.
- Working to integrate hospital outcomes data into eMEDS® for review by EMS clinicians.
- Creating a portal whereby paramedics can access clinical health data for their patients at the bedside.

**eMEDS® / ESSENCE Integration.** MIEMSS, in conjunction the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), has developed a near-real time data exchange between the State of Maryland’s EMS electronic patient care report (eMEDS®) and MDH’s syndromic surveillance system. This linkage allows EMS data to be utilized by MDH for the early identification of intentional or natural emerging infectious disease outbreak(s), providing for expedient public health threat and risk assessment for situational awareness, and ensuring prompt applications of public health interventions in the event of a public health

emergency. Additionally, MIEMSS has partnered with MDH and the Johns Hopkins University Advanced Physics Laboratory to engage in the development of an EMS data module within the State’s syndromic surveillance system. This new EMS module is available to other states for the purposes of integrating EMS data with ESSENCE. These technical aspects of this program were recently completed.



## **Hospital Programs**

**Trauma and Specialty Centers.** The following COMAR Regulations are in the “State” process for promulgation:

- *General Provisions* – Approved by the EMS Board and is going through the DSD process
- *Perinatal Standards* – Approved by the EMS Board and is going through the DSD process
- *Pediatric Trauma* – Approved by the EMS Board going through the DSD process

MIEMSS will be updating the Maryland State Trauma Registry with the American Association for Automotive Medicine Association Abbreviated Injury Scale by August 1, 2022.

Due to COVID-19, Trauma and Specialty Center Program re-designations due in CY 2022 have been moved to a virtual platform and the re-designation process is ongoing.

Trauma and Specialty Center Programs due for re-designation in CY 2023 have submitted their Letters of Intent. A notice was published in the April 8, 2022, edition of *The Maryland Register* listing the centers seeking re-designation.



## **Cardiac**

***Public Access AED Program.*** AED information, including application information, is located in the public information tab under “Maryland Public Access Automated External Defibrillator”.

***Cardiac Arrest Steering Committee.*** The mission of the Cardiac Arrest Steering Committee (CASC) is to improve cardiac arrest survival in all communities in Maryland. In the past year, the CASC has been evaluating two new educational and implementation strategies that utilize feedback of high-fidelity simulation data on CPR performance to EMS clinicians and on telephone CPR data to 9-1-1 Specialists. Results of these trials are positive and have been presented to the 9-1-1 Board and to SEMSAC. Plans are

underway to share the results of these pilot programs and identify a few early-adopter communities that may be interested in trying new educational and quality improvement strategies to improve survival in their communities.



## **EMS Preparedness and Operations**

### **General Report:**

Work continues within several active workgroups; these include:

- ***Crisis Scene Collaboration Workgroup***. This group was formed to identify best practices, training and tools to assist Fire/EMS and Law Enforcement (LE) personnel to safely and effectively work together in assisting agitated individuals at incident scenes. This workgroup is made up of representatives from Fire/EMS departments, Medical Directors, LE, mental health clinicians, the Attorney General’s Office, and a civil rights expert. The workgroup has met three times and is currently collecting expert advice and information and completing a draft guidance document.

- ***Active Assailant Interagency Workgroup***. This workgroup continues efforts in support of Governor Hogan’s Executive Order “Active-Assailant Incident Preparation and Coordination”, issued in February 2019. The Maryland State Police and MIEMSS continue to co-chair the work group. Meetings have resumed virtually after a short pause caused by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Participants include representatives from hospitals, public/private education, federal, state, and local fire, EMS, emergency management, LE, and other organizations. Several subcommittees continue to make progress towards completion of identified goals and objectives.

Last year, the workgroup completed work on a new website, <https://aaiwg.maryland.gov>, where workgroup and related materials are located. The focus in the coming year will be on community outreach and recovery. Recovery efforts will focus on emergency people search and family support to assist those involved in or affected by active assailant events.

A statewide symposium will be held in Annapolis on October 14, 2022. Additional information will be available as the symposium planning is completed.

- ***Responder Health and Wellness Workgroup***. In 2019, a workgroup was formed with the goal of improving the health and wellness of Maryland’s first responders. The group brings together critical incident stress management and peer support team members from Fire/EMS, LE, 9-1-1 centers, and commercial ambulance agencies. Licensed mental health clinicians also support the workgroup. Efforts have resumed following a pause stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. The vision of this group is to ensure that *Every Maryland first responder has the health and wellness knowledge and support necessary to thrive.*

### **Field Operations:**

- Working with state, federal, and local partners on the Baltimore National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) plan update.
- Planning and evaluating a next-generation Maryland Emergency Medical Resource Alerting Database (MEMRAD) system for MIEMSS.
- In conjunction with the Regional Coordinators and SOCALR Director, continuing to distribute Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 Test Kits (PCR and Antigen) to Maryland Public Safety and Commercial EMS Agencies.
- In conjunction with our Data Manager, continuing to work on pre-hospital patient care report data (eMEDS®) integration and analysis with the Maryland Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE) team. MIEMSS recently completed an opioid analysis project with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab.

#### **EMRC/SYSCOM:**

- Initiated, participated and critiqued the recent NCR MCI Drill. This drill featured a scenario based in Prince George County. Bed statuses for 100 patients were requested and documented. A brief review was drafted for the NCR group.
- Advertised, interviewed and hired three (3) new contract employees to augment the EMRC/SYSCOM “full-time” crews.
- Began reviewing SOPs and guidance documents to identify areas for revision and updating.

#### **Programs:**

- ***Automatic Electronic Defibrillator (AED) Program.*** The Region IV office is responsible for managing the AED registration and renewal process as required by COMAR and the Annotated Code of Maryland. For the last 30 days, they have:
  - o processed 27 program renewal requests,
  - o renewed 369 AEDs located at sites throughout the state,
  - o processed 10 new programs,
  - o approved the placement of 52 new AEDs at sites throughout the state, and
  - o continue to answer a multitude of questions from organizations participating in the program.
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- ***Critical Care Coordination Center (C4).*** MIEMSS continues to utilize the C4 to help physicians identify available hospital critical care resources when patient transfers are necessary. Nearly 2,800 assists have been generated. C4 is staffed with two (2) critical care coordinators and a Central Intensivist Physician (CIP) 24/7. Any Maryland hospital seeking a critical care transfer can contact the C4. The C4 coordinator has a near-real time view of statewide hospital critical care bed capacity. The CIP then works with referring physicians to identify patients’ anticipated critical care needs. The coordinator and CIP, working jointly with the sending and receiving facilities, match the patients with available critical care resources that can manage the patients’ conditions. MIEMSS has expanded the C4 to include Pediatrics. “C4-Pediatrics” provides an EMS Coordinator and Central Advisor Pediatric Physician available 24/7 by phone. C4-Pediatrics provides consultation and facilitates the transfer of patients requiring a Pediatric Intensive Care

Unit or Pediatric Acute Care Unit utilizing the intensive care bed surveillance system at MIEMSS. The phone number for C4 and C4-Peds is the same (410-706-7797), with option #1 connecting to the Adult ICU coordinator and physician team and option #2 connecting to the Pediatric coordinator and pediatric emergency care and critical care physician team.

- **Voluntary Ambulance Inspection Program (VAIP).** The VAIP document has been completed and will be posted this spring in conjunction with the *2022 Maryland Medical Protocols for Emergency Medical Services*.

### **Regional Highlights:**

- **Regions I and II:**
  - o Regional Coordinators continue to deploy rapid and PCR tests to public safety EMSOPs.
  - o Regional Coordinators have been visiting hospital emergency departments to offer assistance during latest surge with several facilities under “crisis standards of care”.
- **Region III:**
  - o Continuing to support the agency’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - o Continuing to support multiple grants, including the Cardiac Devices, Advanced Life Support Training, and Naloxone Leave-Behind Grants.
  - o Conducting Voluntary Ambulance Inspections across the region.
  - o Conducting base station site surveys for Region III hospitals.
  - o Continuing to support local EMS Operational Programs.
- **Region IV:**
  - o Updating the Voluntary Ambulance Inspection Program incorporating minor enhancements and the 2022 EMS Protocol additions.
  - o Continue to support Winterfest / Miltenberger online conferences. This online continuing education content will remain available through December 31, 2022.
  - o Continue working with several recipients of the Cardiac Device grant to assist them with their reimbursements.
  - o Working with various stakeholders in the First Responder Health and Wellness area on statewide projects.
  - o Assisting three Region IV jurisdictions with ELITE enhancements.
  - o Assisted EMSOPs with data reporting.
  - o Region IV staff continue to support Maryland’s continuing COVID-19 response efforts.
  - o Currently facilitating Hospital Base Station re-designations for two hospitals in Region IV.
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- **Region V:**
  - o Presented at the II International Symposium of cardiopulmonary resuscitation in Peru.
  - o Continue to support Maryland’s COVID-19 response efforts.
  - o Lead vendor relationship development for EMS Care 2022.

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## **Emergency Medical Services for Children**

**Emergency Medical Services for Children Department (EMS for Children).** The EMSC Department coordinates virtual state Pediatric Emergency Medical Advisory Committee (PEMAC) and Pediatric Data Analysis Research Team (DART) meetings with ongoing subcommittees and a workgroup focused on protocol revisions and EMS data analysis. PEMAC met on May 4, 2022, with the Family Advisory Network forum in the afternoon. The 2022 Federal EMS Assessment was completed by 100% of the EMSOPs in Maryland between January and March 2022. This national survey reaches 16,000 EMS agencies across the country. The next in-person training for these Champions will occur May 12-13, 2022, as a preconference to EMS Care 2022 and focus on Child Fatality Review program changes, resilience for both children and clinicians, and the development of additional pediatric clinical scenarios for local training. Quarterly web-based forums will continue to share educational material.

C4-Pediatrics, launched on October 1, 2021, and led by Dr. Jen Anders, includes a team of pediatric emergency medicine and pediatric critical care physicians along with additional paramedic coordinators. The Central Advisor Pediatric Physician (CAPP) is available 24/7 through the same statewide access phone number as C4. C4-Pediatrics will provide consultation and facilitate the transfer of patients requiring a Pediatric Intensive Care Unit or Pediatric Acute Care Unit when the normal referral patterns are not currently able to accept a transfer.

The EMSC Department coordinates four (4) different grant programs that remain funded:

- **EMSC State Partnership Grant** (federally funded by HRSA/MCHB) is focused on federal performance measures specific to emergency care in EMS and emergency departments. PEPP 4<sup>th</sup> edition hybrid course was held as a pre-conference for Winterfest EMS 2022 and three more will be scheduled between July and November across the state. The Family Advisory Network (FAN) 2021-2022 project is focused on the dissemination of Safe Sleep education and creating teaching resources for EMS and ED public education. This project is one of four presentations at the MSFA Convention in June. The others are CPS Update, Bike Safety Community Events, and Pediatric Cardiac Arrest: Improving Outcomes. Contact the EMSC program at [PEPP@miemss.org](mailto:PEPP@miemss.org).
- **Child Passenger Safety and Occupant Protection (CPS & OP) Healthcare Project** (federally funded by NHTSA through the Maryland Highway Safety Office [MHSO]). The project's 22<sup>nd</sup> year of funding began on October 1, 2021. It continues to provide outreach to health care providers to provide education and parent educational tools on child passenger safety. The project collaborates with local Safe Kids chapters and coalitions, KISS program at MDH, EMS agencies working on CPS, and hospital EDs and nurseries to provide education and car seat resources. Vehicular Heatstroke Prevention Awareness is ongoing, with in-person outdoor thermometer displays and social media education. On April 26, 2022, the project again provided a Nursery/NICU Child Passenger Safety workshop focused on updated procedures and protocols for car seat challenge testing and new technology in child safety seats for small infants. Contact the project at [cps@miemss.org](mailto:cps@miemss.org).
- **Bike Helmet Safety Project** (state funded through the MHSO) is in a fifth year of funding. During the first five years, almost 3,900 bicycle helmets have been distributed through Safe Kids

coalitions and community partners, Trauma Centers, and Pediatric EMS Champions. Bike safety educational materials are available and new display signs are available for returning to in-person outreach and education. Bike helmet orders for spring outreach will be gathered from the participating partners. Contact [bikesafety@miemss.org](mailto:bikesafety@miemss.org) for more information or to request educational materials.

- **Safe Kids Maryland** state coalition continues to provide prevention information through social media and articles in *Maryland EMS News*. The spring meeting on March 2 featured presentations from the Maryland Poison Center and Safe Kids Worldwide “Ready to Roll” programs. September 7, 2022 meeting will be at 12:30 p.m. following PEMAC. Contact [safekidsmd@miemss.org](mailto:safekidsmd@miemss.org) to be added to the email event announcements. Maryland Risk Watch team continues to collaborate with the MSFA Fire and Injury Prevention/Life Safety Committee. Steps to Safety prevention interactive training stations are planned for the MSFA Convention in June 2022. The MIEMSS YouTube account has PSAs posted on “What to Expect When You Dial 9-1-1” and “Right Care When it Counts”. Contact Maryland Risk Watch at [riskwatch@msfa.org](mailto:riskwatch@msfa.org).

Dates to Save:

- **Mid-Atlantic Life Safety Conference:** September 27, 2022

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## Recent News

**First Responders in Maryland Will Soon Have Access to Peer-to-Peer Counseling.** First responders, who often witness some of the most traumatic events, will soon have access to peer-to-peer counseling. On April 21, 2022, Governor Larry Hogan signed a bill into law that provides counseling to firefighters and emergency medical personnel through their departments. The support services are free and confidential. Read more here: <https://www.wbaltv.com/article/first-responders-peer-to-peer-counseling-maryland/39786826#>.

**MDOT: 557 Fatalities on Maryland Highways in 2021.** Maryland saw a 3% decline in roadway fatalities in 2021 over the previous year, according to state transportation and law enforcement officials who gathered at the Maritime Conference Center in Linthicum Heights on April 18, 2022, to announce the data. Nevertheless, last year’s 557 fatalities – including 129 pedestrians and six bicyclists – leaves plenty of room for improvement. “We have the ability, and the responsibility, to stop these needless tragedies,” said Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Secretary James F. Ports, Jr. “Today, I challenge every person – every driver, passenger, motorcyclist, pedestrian, bicyclist – every single person who uses our roadways. Let’s work together to bring the number of fatalities on Maryland roads to zero.” Read more here: <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/news/557-fatalities-on-maryland-highways-in-2021/>.

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## Prevention

**May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month.** In 2020, there were 5,579 motorcyclists killed in traffic crashes, an 11% increase from 2019 (5,044). Motorcyclist deaths accounted for 14% of the total highway fatalities that year. NHTSA reminds vehicle drivers and motorcyclists that cooperation, along with safe driving and riding practices from all road users, will help reduce the number of fatalities and injuries on our highways. Read more here: <https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/motorcycle-safety>.

**Share the Facts About Fire and Smoke.** Fire deaths can be reduced by teaching people the basic facts about fire. The US Fire Administration offers some simple messages to help you explain the characteristics of fire and smoke to community members on social media. Read more here: <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/fief/index.html#featured>.

**First Responder Mental Health and Suicide.** Working in EMS can be as rewarding as it is challenging, but little research has examined exactly how hard the job can be. More specifically, few studies have looked at exactly how big a problem mental health issues and suicide are among first responders, what makes professionals vulnerable, or how best to address these issues. Answering those questions is why the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Office of EMS (OEMS) has partnered with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and its National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH) to better understand first responder mental health and suicide. Read more here: [https://www.ems.gov/newsletter/fall2021/first\\_responder\\_mental\\_health\\_and\\_suicide.html](https://www.ems.gov/newsletter/fall2021/first_responder_mental_health_and_suicide.html).



## 2022 Educational Programs

**Winterfest & Miltenberger 2022 EMS Conferences.** The Winterfest & Miltenberger 2022 EMS Conferences are now available through the newly revamped MIEMSS Online Training Center! All content is eligible for BLS and ALS continuing education credits. Nursing continuing education credits will be available on or before April 1, 2022. Course content will be available through December 31, 2022. Go to <https://www.emsonlinetraining.org>.