

MIEMSS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

September 2022

Maryland EMS Clinicians and Jurisdictional Programs

Monkeypox: What You Need to Know. Monkeypox is a viral illness that typically starts with flu-like symptoms and progresses to a rash, characterized by fluid-filled lesions that resemble chickenpox or herpes, within 3 days. The rash typically starts on the face and spreads to other parts of the body.

As of this writing, there have been over 16,000 documented cases in the United States, including 447 confirmed cases in Maryland. Viral spread typically requires close contact with an infected person or animal (e.g., primates, small mammals), contaminated materials, or by respiratory droplets that can travel as far as six feet.

The CDC has provided guidance on precautionary measures to reduce the risk of transmission. EMS clinicians should pay close attention to recommended personal protective equipment (PPE), which includes: gown, gloves, eye protection and NIOSH-approved N-95 (or equivalent) respirator. Read more here: <https://www.miemss.org/home/Portals/0/Memos/Memo-Monkeypox-What-You-Need-to-Know-20220526.pdf?ver=2022-05-26-120520-063>.

COVID-19. MIEMSS continues to provide guidance to EMS operational programs on recommended steps for dealing with COVID-19. With the arrival of new variants, COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in Maryland continue to wax and wane. EMS continues to transport patients with COVID-19 illness as well as immunosuppressed patients. Patients and EMS clinicians should continue to wear surgical masks on all calls for service. For patients with respiratory symptoms, or suspected/proven COVID-19 illness, EMS clinicians should remember to use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including: gloves, gown, eye protection, and a fit-tested N-95 respirator.

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 will post new documents to the <https://www.miemss.org/home/infectious-diseases> website as updates occur.

EMS Transfer of Care Times. MIEMSS continues to closely monitor times on the transfer of care from EMS to hospital staff, and sends weekly reports to hospitals upon their request. Nearly all of the hospitals in Region III and many in Region IV and V now receive these reports. Several hospitals have used these data to re-evaluate triage processes and focus their attention on improving transfer of care times.

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, the Direct to Triage 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.

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. Eligible to participate in the program are EMS Board-designated Jurisdictional EMS Operational Programs that is funded directly by public (tax) dollars; bills Medicaid for EMS transports; and documents expenses paid with public (tax receipt) funds.

The thirteen JEMSOPs that participated in the program in FY22 will receive a total of for costs incurred during a nine-month period in FY22. The 13 JEMSOPs include: Allegany County; City of Annapolis; Anne Arundel County; Baltimore City; Baltimore County; Caroline County; Dorchester County; Frederick County; Harford County; Howard County; Montgomery County; Prince George’s County; and Queen Anne’s County.

More than 80 percent of all emergency service transports provided to Medicaid members, and 23 percent of all emergency transports overall, by participating JEMSOPs are potentially eligible for a supplemental payment. ESPP will continue for the foreseeable future to provide annual federal reimbursement for EMS Medicaid costs. JEMSOPs that did not participate in the first year of the program have the opportunity to do so in the future.



Recent News

Maryland Health and Education Officials Urge Parents to Keep COVID Vaccinations on Their Back-to-School Checklist. With summer vacations ending and schools heading back into session, Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) are urging parents statewide to keep COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters at the top of their back-to-school checklists. “Our children deserve the strongest protection against COVID, exactly like they do with other potentially dangerous childhood diseases such as polio and measles,” said MDH Deputy Secretary for Public Health Services Dr. Jinlene Chan. “If you have not already done so, please get your children updated on all their required vaccines and protect against COVID at the same time as part of your back to school routine this year. We can work together to keep our kids safely learning and growing together.” Read more here: <https://health.maryland.gov/newsroom/Pages/Maryland-health-and-education-officials-urge-parents-to-keep-COVID-vaccinations-on-their-back-to-school-checklist.aspx>.

First 2022 Human Case of West Nile Virus Confirmed in Baltimore Metropolitan Area. On August 25, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) announced that an adult living in the Baltimore Metropolitan area had tested positive for the West Nile virus – the first confirmed human case of the virus in Maryland this year. The West Nile virus is transmitted to humans by mosquitoes who have been infected by feeding on birds that have the virus. In rare instances, the virus may be spread from person to person through organ donation, blood transfusion, breastfeeding, or from pregnant mother to fetus. Read more here: <https://health.maryland.gov/newsroom/Pages/First-2022-human-case-of-West-Nile-virus-confirmed-in-Baltimore-Metropolitan-area--.aspx>.

Towson Tigers to Honor First Responders at Home Opener Against Morgan State. Towson University Athletics and Towson Football would like to invite and honor all First Responders at their September 10 home opener against Morgan State, in the Battle for Greater Baltimore. Go to <https://towsontigers.com/> and use promo code "TUFIRST" to unlock an unlimited number of \$12 tickets for any First Responder and their families, friends, or loved ones. A limited number of Towson University Challenge Coins will be given out (while supplies last) to thank First Responders for everything they have done to protect and serve their communities. For more information, contact Will Fisher at 410-704-3331 or wfisher@towson.edu.



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.

- ***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.* During the 2022 legislative session, a Peer Support Bill was passed and signed by the governor. The Bill (SB 446) provides confidentiality protection for peer support team activities as well as other provisions. The new law also requires the Behavioral Health administration, in consultation with MIEMSS to study and write a report on specified items related to peer support teams. MIEMSS personnel and members of the first responder health and wellness workgroup will assist with this study.

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:

- Continuing to review SOPs and guidance documents to identify areas for revision and updating.
- Began the recruitment process for contractual EMSCO-I positions.

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 month of July 2022, they:
 - o processed 16 program renewal requests,
 - o renewed 44 AEDs located at sites throughout the state,
 - o processed 11 new programs,
 - o approved the placement of 22 new AEDs at sites throughout the state, and
 - o continued to answer a multitude of questions from organizations participating in the program.

- **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. Over 3,880 assists have been generated. C4 is staffed with two (2) critical care coordinators and a Central Intensivist Physician (CIP) 24/7. Any Maryland hospital with a patient needing a critical care transfer or treatment guidance can contact the C4 at 410-706-7797 and select Option #1 to be connected with the Adult ICU coordinator and physician team. 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 C4 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 also include Pediatrics, accessed by calling 410-706-7797 and selection Option #2, which connects the caller with the Pediatric coordinator and pediatric emergency care and critical care physician team. "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. Efforts are underway for a statewide tour to promote the CH this fall.

- **Voluntary Ambulance Inspection Program (VAIP).** The VAIP document has been completed and posted to the MIEMSS website in conjunction with the 2022 *Maryland Medical Protocols for Emergency Medical Services*; go to <https://miemss.org/home/vaip>.

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."
 - o VAIP inspections being coordinated for Region I EMSOPs.

- **Region III:**
 - Deployed COVID rapid and PCR tests and distributed pocket protocols to public safety EMSOPs.
 - Working on research protocols through the RIG on cardiac arrest and miscoded patient care records.
 - Facilitating quarterly Base Station Coordinators meeting for Region III.
 - Supported data collection efforts for the Annual EMSOPs Resource Survey.
 - Scheduled Voluntary Ambulance Inspections for Harford and Howard Counties and preparing to deploy an electronic VAIP inspection form.
 - Completed base station site visits for all Region III hospitals due this year and submitted draft reports for final review.

- **Region IV:**
 - Continue to support Winterfest / Miltenberger online conferences. This online continuing education content will remain available through December 31, 2022.
 - Continue working with several recipients of the Cardiac Device grant to assist them with their reimbursements.
 - Working with various stakeholders in the First Responder Health and Wellness area on statewide projects.
 - Assisting two Region IV jurisdictions with ELITE enhancements.
 - Region IV staff continue to support Maryland’s continuing COVID-19 response efforts.
 - Currently facilitating Hospital Base Station re-designations for three hospitals in Region IV.
 - Supporting Tidal Health Peninsula Trauma Conference scheduled for September 23 in Ocean City.
 - Provided support to Region IV EMS Clinicians needing assistance with licensure.
 - Supported efforts to reconcile EDAS data at hospital emergency departments throughout the region.
 - Supporting Winterfest 2023 Planning Committee. Winterfest 2023 is scheduled for February 3- 5, 2023, in Easton.

- **Region V:**
 - Continue to support Maryland’s COVID-19 response efforts.
 - Continue to work on EMS Bases Station Updates
 - Continue to meet with and support EMS Operational Programs
 - Continue to work with the MWCOG to support inter-agency development.

Cardiac

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. The Committee plans to hold its next meeting, virtually, in September 2022. With administrative support, the meeting and minutes will be generated to represent the discussions had at the meeting.

Emergency Medical Services for Children

Emergency Medical Services for Children Department (EMS for Children). PEMAC will meet on September 7, 2022, to continue work on the 2023 pediatric protocols, discuss the new HRSA EMSC Rural Pediatric Readiness Grant awarded in July and host the Safe Kids Maryland state coalition meeting as the afternoon forum. The next full day in person Pediatric EMS Champions Forum will be October 19 at MIEMSS and be combined with a PEPP Course for those interested.

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

- ***EMSC State Partnership Grant*** (federally funded by HRSA/MCHB) continues to focus on all EMS agencies and Emergency Departments having an identified pediatric champion and plans to host a joint meeting to connect them this winter. Educational programs are being designed to include both skills and scenarios, many written by these champions. Sixteen Safe Sleep Displays have been distributed and the instructional slide set piloted at the MSFA convention will be finalized and posted this fall. For more information, contact the EMSC program at PEPP@miemss.org.
- ***Child Passenger Safety and Occupant Protection (CPS & OP) Healthcare Project*** (state funded through the MHSO) continues to provide outreach to health care providers to provide education and parent educational tools on child passenger safety. Vehicular Heatstroke Prevention Awareness is an ongoing priority with the 20th national child death occurring on 8/27/2022. A webinar on heatstroke in children was held in August that is archived on MIEMSS website and YouTube account. The fourth EMSOP received training and car seats as part of a pilot program

to provide “3 in 1” Car Seats (seats that can be used for infants, toddler and older children) for EMS Agencies to use when the child is not the patient and needs to be transported safely. Monday, 9/12/22, the project will host a webinar on the new update to the Maryland CPS Law that goes into effect 10/1/2022. Contact the project at cps@miemss.org.

- **Bike Helmet Safety Project** (state funded through the MHSO) is in a sixth year of providing bike helmets and bike safety education through Safe Kids coalitions and community partners, Trauma Centers, and Pediatric EMS Champions. August 2, 2022, many of these partners participated in National Night Out providing bike safety educational materials and helmets. Contact 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 September 7, 2022, meeting will be held at 12:30 p.m. at MIEMSS and focus on the many anniversaries in injury prevention – 100 years of Fire Prevention, 50 years of Poison Center consultation and education, as well as 38-years, 28-year, and 25-year anniversaries of other injury risk prevention programs and campaigns. Contact safekidsmd@miemss.org to join the email event announcements.

Dates to Save:

- **Mid-Atlantic Life Safety Conference: September 20, 2022**, at the JH Applied Physics Lab in Laurel Maryland. Brochure and online registration is available at the conference is Free.
- **Public Fire & Life Safety Educators Seminar: March 25, 2023**, at MFRI headquarters in College Park. Save the date flyer is posted and full conference schedule will be available in the fall.

Prevention

National Teen Driver Safety Week (October 16-22) Campaign Materials Now Available. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for teens (15-18 years old) in the United States. In 2019, there were 2,042 people killed in crashes involving a teen driver, of which 628 deaths were the teen driver. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has compiled materials that you can use to promote teen driver safety. Visit <https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/teen-safety/national-teen-driver-safety-week/rules-road> for more information.

2022 Educational Programs

EMT Stipend Program. MIEMSS has processed 491 applicants for the stipend and will continue to process them until June 30, 2023. Applicants should monitor their spam folders for correspondence and instructions on how to proceed to the next step. Please make sure that you apply for the portion of the stipend you are eligible for even if you have since exited the course. Email abrethauer@miemss.org if you have questions.

Save the Date: Critical Issues in Trauma 2022. Saturday, November 12, 2022, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Suburban Hospital Auditorium. Four hours of trauma-related continuing education.



EMS Clinician Services

Licensure-support@miemss.org is the communication method that we prefer that clinicians use to contact our office with questions and concerns. All communications go into a KACE system that is time stamped. This helps the team categorized the ticket to the right department and helps us respond to you in a more efficient manner.