



EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCH NATIONAL STANDARD CURRICULUM READY

The first link to getting help in a medical emergency is often a telephone call to the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Dispatcher, **9-1-1** in many areas of the country. The EMS dispatcher plays an important role. The dispatcher mobilizes the emergency response and needs to determine whether a call is a minor medical emergency or one that requires advanced life support resources. During the 1970's, it became apparent that protocols were needed to help the dispatcher allocate the appropriate level of help based on medically sound and clinically based decisions.



The dispatcher also needs to give verbal instructions over the telephone to the victim or to a bystander before the crews arrive, needs to gather information about the safety of the scene for the patient, bystanders, and the crews, and needs to relay this information to the crew already on the way.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Maternal and Child Health Bureau have recently updated the *Emergency Medical Dispatch: National Standard Curriculum*, first developed in 1972. This training program applies voluntary practice standards, developed by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) and the National Association of Emergency Medical Services Physicians (NAEMSP). Emergency Services providers use these uniform standards to develop or select an emergency medical dispatch program that includes proper training of emergency medical dispatchers (EMDs) along with medically approved

protocols. NHTSA makes these programs available at low cost through the Government Printing Office.

The revised curriculum consists of Instructor and Student Guides, and a new Manager's Guide. The course is designed to train already qualified telecommunicators to perform emergency medical dispatcher functions. Students do not have to be qualified as either an emergency medical technician or as a First Responder before completing EMD training.

The course can train EMDs to use any protocols that have been reviewed, adapted, and approved for local use by a State or local EMD Medical Director, including protocols that have been copyrighted. The curriculum does not include a set of protocols, but NHTSA has identified at least four sets of protocols that are currently used and are available as "starter kits" for EMD programs.

The Dispatcher course can be presented in 24 hours. Students who participated in pilot testing of the materials in Birmingham, Alabama, however, said that they would like to have had a longer class time. NHTSA recommends that the course be given in a minimum of 24 to 32 hours.

The Management Supplement to the Curriculum is designed for a community just beginning to establish an EMD system. It includes important topics including medical direction; quality improvement; public information, education and relations; and the importance of networking and building support for implementing the proposed EMD system. The Management Supplement, while not a stand alone guide, will point out some of the steps needed to implement a new EMD program.

Twelve State EMS Directors and other interested

professionals reviewed drafts. The input from the review group led to an updated curriculum that is responsive to the needs of the broadest range of EMS systems and circumstances. Physicians on the review panel focused on the roles and responsibilities of the Dispatch Medical Director and on the contents of the Emergency Medical Dispatch Protocol Reference System (EMDPRS) for 32 chief complaint types.

This protocol reference system serves as the basis for an EMD Medical Director to review and approve the dispatch protocols that will be used in a dispatch service and to train new EMDs for that service.

HOW TO PURCHASE

The *Instructor Guide*, *Participant Manual*, and *Management Supplement* of the ***Emergency Medical Dispatch: National Standard Curriculum*** are available for purchase from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, PO Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. Telephone orders may be placed at (202) 512-1800.

Government Printing Office Prices for **Emergency Medical Dispatch National Standard Curriculum**

| | | |
|------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Instructor Guide | \$30.00 | ST# 050-003-00464-2 |
| Trainee Guide | 24.00 | |
| | | ST# 050-003-00466-9 |
| Manager's Guide | 12.00 | |
| | | ST# 050-003-00465-1 |

MORE INFORMATION

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