



CONSENSUS REACHED IN THE ROLE OF EMS IN INJURY PREVENTION

In August 1995, a panel of experts in out-of-hospital emergency medical services (EMS) deliberated, modified, and affirmed a statement on the role of EMS in primary injury prevention. The Consensus Statement reflects a shifting emphasis from health care to health with a focus on wellness and prevention. Primary injury prevention is preventing injuries from occurring in the first place. As EMS adapts to this new emphasis, the information contained in the Consensus Statement should guide its injury prevention efforts.

**General Statement on the Role of EMS
in Primary Injury Prevention**

The sleeping giant of health care is awakening to its new role in society. As we move from a system designed to care for illness to one that emphasizes wellness, we change our measuring rod of success. Injury prevention takes on a new and more important dimension, not only for improving the health of the nation, but also in the ability to truly contribute to the well-being of the people.

*Richard M. Marmorek, MD
JAMA, 1994*

The intent of this statement is to represent the consensus of the EMS community on essential and desirable activities for EMS in primary injury prevention. After reviewing the literature, the project steering committee drafted the statement. Then the draft was reviewed by more than 100 members of the EMS community including EMS administrators, individual EMS professionals, physicians, nurses, and educators. The consensus panel was composed of individuals designated by 16 national organizations that represent the EMS community or the injury prevention community. Deliberations were open to the public and observers were given the opportunity to comment on the statement.

The purpose is to set a vision and provide guidance for leaders in out-of-hospital emergency medical care. This statement is not a curriculum but can serve as a guide for educators developing curricula for EMS injury prevention activities. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

and the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration jointly funded this project.

The Consensus Statement consists of three major parts:

1. Principal points, 2. Role of EMS in primary injury prevention, and
3. Creating a culture of health promotion and safety. In creating a culture promoting health and safety there are essential injury prevention activities that must be undertaken by the leaders, decision-makers,

and providers of every EMS system.

- Protect individual EMS providers from injury
- Provide education to EMS providers in the fundamentals of primary injury prevention
- Support collecting, reporting, and using injury data
- Obtain support and resources for primary injury prevention activities
- Network with other injury prevention organizations
- Empower individual EMS providers to conduct primary injury prevention activities and interventions in the local community
- Interact with the media to promote injury prevention

For a copy of the **Consensus Statement on the Role of Emergency Medical Services in Primary Injury Prevention**, write to the Office of Enforcement and Emergency Services, NHTSA, NTS-42, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC, 20590 or send a fax to (202) 366-7721.

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