



EMS OFFICE WEEKLY UPDATES

Wednesday, February 4, 2015

**CORRECTED DATES ON PAGE 2
FOR DOCUMENTATION TRAINING**

Community Response and Support Referral Program

The Skagit County Emergency Medical Services Department (SCEMS) and Northwest Regional Council (NWRC) are excited to announce a new tool available to all fire and EMS agencies to assist in ensuring individuals seen by fire and EMS personnel who may need services not available through the 9-1-1 system are connected with the right resources. Responders on 9-1-1 calls simply identify potential needs on a standardized form; receive patient consent; and send the referral form to NWRC (fax 360-428-1302) after the call. NWRC’s Aging and Disability Resources staff then contacts the individual, screens to determine the individual’s needs and assists them in connecting to services within Skagit County. NWRC will also provide feedback directly to an assigned contact at each fire/EMS agency so responders know what actions are being taken based on the referral.



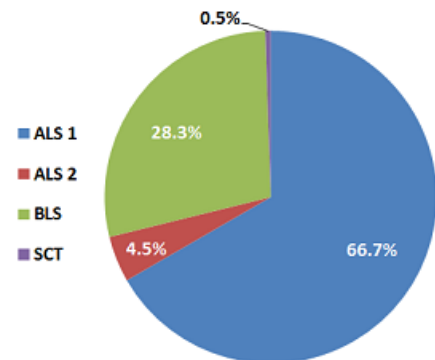
SCEMS and NWRC will be hosting an open meeting on **Tuesday, February 24th** from **3:00 to 4:30pm** at the EMS Training Room located at 2911 E. College Way, Mount Vernon to meet with any interested agencies to further explain the process and answer questions.

The goals of this program are to reduce the frequency of 9-1-1 calls for social and other low-acuity needs, and help to ensure that our fellow citizens are not falling through the cracks in an overly complex healthcare system, but rather have a strong understanding of what resources are available and know how to access them. Whatcom Fire District #7 has been coordinating with NWRC for more than 2 years now, and North Whatcom Fire and Rescue just under a year. Both have already seen a positive impact in the lives of those they serve. We are excited to now offer this to all interested agencies within Skagit County. For more information, email Mark Raaka at markr@co.skagit.wa.us or Kristine Glasgow at GlasgKM@dshs.wa.gov.

BLS Integration Planning Session – RESCHEDULED for March 17th

The **EMS System Evaluation** completed in March, 2013 by Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) noted one of the critical issues related to the Skagit County EMS system was finding opportunities to engage first responders in the system through BLS integration. ESCI correctly observed that “there are agencies that have the wherewithal and willingness to both respond and transport patients as needed.” Burlington Fire Department and Central Skagit Medic One are currently working together to beginning piloting the transport of BLS patients by Burlington Fire Department EMTs within the Burlington City limits. The most current data shows that roughly 30% of all patients transported in Skagit County are BLS level transports.

The Board of County Commissioners will be holding an open work session with all interested stakeholders to review the current timelines and plans for BLS integration within Skagit County. The meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 17th** from **2:00 – 3:30pm** in the County Commissioners Hearing Room at 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon. For more information, email Mark at markr@co.skagit.wa.us.



Skagit County EMS Transports by Service Level

Ambulance Documentation Essentials Training

Documentation of the patient's clinical condition is critical enough, but ambulance providers are also required to document issues that impact compliance and reimbursement. **Maggie Adams** will explain the ever-changing regulatory requirements of documentation. Ambulance services face potential audit and revenue leakage; they must ensure that the medical necessity for transport is clearly documented prior to billing a claim. Taking a down-to-earth approach, this lively session offers practical tips on documenting the important elements of ambulance transportation.



Maggie Adams has over twenty years' experience in healthcare and the ambulance industry. For thirteen years, Maggie was the president of the only company in the country devoted exclusively to EMS patient account collections and insurance denial appeals. For eight years, she was Page, Wolfberg & Wirth's senior consultant, a highly regarded presenter at their national ambulance billing conferences, and a key contributor in developing and delivering educational training sessions for the National Academy of Ambulance Coding. Maggie serves on the faculty of the EMS Leadership Institute and she is a graduate of the Wharton School of Economics and Finance, University of Pennsylvania.

There will be four opportunities to attend this training:

**CORRECTED DATES
AND TIMES
SORRY FOR ANY
CONFUSION!**

March 2 nd	6:00 – 8:30pm	EMS Office Training Room
March 3 rd	11:30am – 2:00pm	Burlington Fire Department
March 3 rd	7:00 – 9:30pm	Burlington Fire Department
March 4 th	9:00 – 11:30am	Anacortes Fire Department

HB 1721 – EMS Alternative Transport Bill introduced in Olympia

House Bill 1721 was introduced last week in Olympia by Representative Robinson, Schmick, Cody, Harris, Riccelli and Van De Wege, with the goal of reducing avoidable hospital emergency room visits and helping to ensure those in crisis are transported to a more appropriate facility to meet their needs, such as chemical dependency and mental health facilities when appropriate. While some communities do not have capacity in their community at this time, passing the bill into law now sets the stage for creating and expanding lower cost community alternatives to the hospital emergency room. If passed, this bill would provide the physician and EMS personnel with liability protection for these transports.

If the bill does pass, the first directive of the bill is for the State to establish a workgroup to develop guidelines/protocols for such alternative transports. It also directs the State to establish a reimbursement rate for such transports for those covered by Medicaid. Obviously with any proposed legislation, nothing is final until it is passed, but HB 1721 aims to improve the shared goal among healthcare workers across the state of getting the patient to the right resources. We will continue to track the progress of HB 1721 and keep everyone informed.

Until next week, thanks for all you do and stay safe!

Skagit County Department of Emergency Medical Services

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