

Spokane County EMS & Trauma Care Council  
Meeting Minutes  
July 9, 2024, 9:00-11:00a.m.  
Spokane Fire Training Center, Classroom A & Zoom Virtual Meeting

EMS Council Chair, Anne Raven, called the meeting to order and those present were noted on the attendance sheet.

Members/Alternates/Ex-Officio Present

Robin Albrandt, James Akramoff, David Baird, Jack Busch, Tom Chavez, Liz Cias, Dr. Maika Dang, Dr. Cody Laverdiere, Dr. Jim Nania, Randy Olson, Lindsay Payton, Anne Raven, Jeff Reid, David Sewell, Chris Wyrobek, James Young

Guest Present

Jacob Grant, Jason Hartman, Carrie Christiansen, Tamara Drapeau, Deanna Jones, Jaclyn Numata, Beth Perkins, Leah Salmon-Conroy, Cassandra Doyle, Kayla Kramer, Brad Kane, Kara Welchel, Mel Rabel, Joey Rodriguez, Treena Russell

EMS Office Staff Present

Berkley Van Hout, Office Administrator & County Coordinator

**MINUTES:** Approval of June 2024 Meeting Minutes

**Action:** It was M/S/P to approve the minutes

**CHAIR'S REMARKS:** Anne Raven

➤ Hospital Status Report

- Providence: Lindsey Peyton reported that Providence held an active shooter exercise that went well and had a good turnout including SFD, SPD, and AMR. The goal is to have annual exercises, and the safety plans committee will continue to provide resources and education to the community. Lindsey will write a report of the exercise and can share with anyone interested.
- Multicare: no report
- Transport: no report

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Jack Busch

➤ Financial reports for June 2024

Jack shared the financial reports.

**Action:** It was M/S/P to approve the reports

➤ Initial Review of 2025 Budget

Jack presented the initial proposed 2025 budget that was constructed by the Executive committee. The proposed budget included items that would be involved in a 3-5-year strategic plan and allow for organizational growth and service delivery. The current system relies on part time and volunteer work for data requests, training opportunities, and protocol updates. Two items that were added to the 2025 budget proposal include a paid part time QI/QA Program Coordinator and a full-time paid EMS Systems Program Coordinator, which would include the need of additional office space and an increase in employee benefits and operating expenses. Jack reviewed a brief job description for each position and explained that the goal of these positions is to take the burden off agencies to collect and review data and implement their own trainings. The total expenses from 2024 to 2025 was proposed to be a \$202,000 increase which would be used from reserved funds. Jack emphasized again that the plan is to create a 3-year pilot program to develop the positions and services as part of a strategic plan. The final review of the budget will be voted on at the September meeting, and if approved, a review of a strategic plan would take place in October. Jack opened the floor for questions regarding these positions or the budget, and James

Young (Life Flight Network) asked how these positions would affect annual share fees. Jack explained that the share fees increase would remain at a 5% increase, which is the same rate as the past two years, while the new programs are being built and tested with use of reserved funds. Share fees are currently based on the number of providers at different certification levels, which could change in the future if the Council decided to review and change the process. Randy Olson asked if there was consideration of purchasing an office building instead of renting, and Jack explained that is an option. Chief Chris Wyrobek asked if there was any consideration for cost of expanding employees in a computer system for IT support, online security, and cloud-based archiving, and Jack will continue to investigate costs for this. Software costs were based off the cost of Microsoft office programs. Jack explained that if costs end up being more than \$5,000, that the EMS Council would vote to approve that purchase. Chief Wyrobek also asked if there was consideration of offering contract work instead of hiring additional employees, which was not considered but can be discussed prior to the final review of the budget in September. A motion was made by Randy Olson, and concern regarding the uncertainty of share fee increases in the next few years was brought forward by members. Chief Wyrobek stated that with the addition of these programs and increase in expenses, after 3 years the EMS Council will have a snapshot of what these programs can offer and will likely reduce the workload of officers from other agencies that are volunteering their hours to complete jobs for the Council. The Executive Chair of the EMS Council, Tom Chavez, expressed that the Executive Committee created this plan to benefit all of Spokane County, and can offer these positions because of the fees that have been paid in the past. The EMS Council can decide over the next 3 years how to improve these additional positions and programs. Another motion was made by Randy Olson to approve the initial proposal of the 2025 budget, and Dr. Maika Dang seconded the motion.

**Action:** It was M/S/P to approve the initial proposed 2025 budget. A vote was taken and was unanimous. A final budget will be reviewed and voted on at the September meeting.

## **REPORTS:**

- BLS Report: Dr. Travis Dierks not present.
- EMS WAC Revision: no representative.
- Inland Empire Fire Chiefs: Chris Wyrobek reported that it was approved and updated in the FOG that air ambulance partners moved to Red Net as a landing zone frequency effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. At the next Fire Chiefs meeting, they will discuss and vote on implementing a whiskey zone as a backup in case there is a failure in the 100-megahertz system county wide. Reach out to Chief Wyrobek with any questions.
- SREC Board: Cody Rohrbach not present.
- East Region EMS & TCC: Tamara Drapeau reported that the annual budget was approved at the last meeting which included an increase for EMSConnect to support OTEP for rural areas. The Department of Health gave an extensive report about WAC changes that are anticipated to be approved by end of August. The East Region EMS&TCC is reviewing positions on the board and have vacant positions and have increased the number of verified ambulance agency positions to 4. Please reach out to Rinita Cook if you are interested in holding one of the positions on the East Region Board.
- SRHD: Robin Albrandt reported there has been an increase in Covid outbreaks in long term care facilities. SRHD sent an announcement about the launch of the Spokane County respiratory illness data dashboard and shared the [link](#).
- Curriculum & PM Advisory Committee/Providence Health Training: Jim Akramoff reported that the East Region EMS Council has agreed to help with the cost of traveling instructors to rural areas and will be sending instructors to an AEMT class at the end of August in Garfield County and Stevens County. East Region also offers tuition for rural areas, and Providence Health Training has had many EMT and AEMT students able to attend classes because of the East Region. Paramedic course registration closed at the end of June, and testing will begin this month. Interviews will take place in August, which will include a practical exam. They are continuing to work on the curriculum for a skills-based class instead of a lecture type class.

- QI Committee: Dr. Nania shared a CARES summary at the June Council meeting and the QI Committee reviewed and discussed a case.
  - Today's meeting agenda includes:
    - Trauma KPI reports
    - 2 case reviews

**OLD BUSINESS: None**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Behavioral Health Transport: SPD Sargent Jason Hartman

Sargent Jason Hartman from Spokane Police Department attend the meeting to discuss the change in the Spokane County triage transport destination protocol. Sargent Hartman supervises the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) for SPD and brought up concern that involuntary psychiatric patients are being taken to the nearest hospital and is looking to identify criteria for mental health and substance abuse issues to get patients to a facility that is better equipped with staff and security. SPD has experienced an increase in elopement risk, as violent patients do not have access to a locked room at all hospitals and are leaving the hospital prior to being seen, and/or becoming aggressive towards hospital staff. Dr. Maika Dang asked if concerns are being addressed with hospitals, and Carrie Christiansen, the Mental Health Coordinator for SPD, explained that they could do a better job of speaking directly with hospitals, but rely on AMR. Dr. Nania asked if there are locked rooms or remotely monitored rooms at all hospitals in Spokane, and members shared that Deaconess has 8 lock rooms, Deaconess North has 1, and Holy Family and Valley Hospital do not have any. Concern regarding staff safety at facilities that do not have lock rooms was brought up, and Dr. Jim Nania suggested that there would likely be more proportional distribution of behavioral health patients to emergency departments if they were appropriately equipped and staffed, and that hospitals might need to make that commitment due to the magnitude of this problem. The lack of single bed certification at hospitals has also become a challenge, as patients that are detailed by a DCR must be transferred to a hospital that has single bed certification, which some do not. Carrie Christiansen explained that single bed certification means that facilities get reimbursed from the state to provide mental health treatment for patients that are detained by a DCR, and that facility would be the patient's mental health placement. Carrie also explained that the law does not differentiate between mental health and substance abuse, and law enforcement and behavioral health units have impressions that certain hospitals are better equipped to handle involuntary psych patients. Dr. Dang explained that all emergency departments can accept mental health emergency patients, and that there may need to be direct communication with hospitals for cases of extreme violence to be moved to a facility with a locked room, as Deaconess and Sacred Heart do not always have their lock rooms available, and some patients don't get placed into a locked room. Lindsay Payton from Providence shared that the hospitals, SPD, and AMR have begun meeting quarterly and recently discussed the lack of mental health resources in the community and are working to gather data to bring to state representatives in hope that funds can be reallocated to different resources. Holy Family has begun tracking the number of elopements, and the group agreed that more data needs to be collected to bring to state representatives. Lindsay Payton asked what data the group would like to collect and have presented to state representatives, and the group agreed that the number of mental health patients transported by EMS to each facility and the distribution between all hospitals, how many of those patients are voluntary vs involuntary, the total number of elopements at each facility, and average boarding time would all be important information. The group also agreed that it would be beneficial to have a behavioral health representative to attend the meetings to get a better understanding of the facilities in Spokane and include them in the discussion to create options and criteria for less severe patients. Sargent Hartman thanked the group for the discussion.

- Recently Approved Training Course Applications
  - EMS Connect Initial EMT-SGA (07/26/2024-08/27/2024)
  - Spokane Community College Initial EMT-SGA (09/18/2024-12/11/2024)

**PROTOCOL COMMITTEE:** Tom Chavez

- Protocol Committee update: The SALT triage protocol and the Tranexamic Acid (TXA) protocol were recently approved by the Department of Health, and both protocols have been updated on the Handtevy app. The concentration used in the Handtevy app for TXA is 10mg/ml. There will be a proposal for the EMS Council to purchase SALT triage tags for the entire county, and Dr. Nania requested considering a printed card with officer job descriptions and duties to be placed in EMS vehicles as well. The County FOG will be updated, as they were waiting for the triage protocol to be completed.
  - Handtevy Update: Individual agencies can now have agency administrators that can change personnel listed under their agency.
  - Airway Train the Trainer Course: The Prehospital Emergency Airway train the trainer course has been confirmed and will be held September 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>. Agencies were given a specific number of individuals that they can send to be funded by the EMS Council, and a registration link was emailed out. Agencies will be able to send additional personnel if they wish to fund those individuals on their own. Spots are limited, and all individuals that register must also complete the online pre course prior to the class.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/OTHER BUSINESS:**

- EMS Connect Classes for July & August
  - 07/30/2024 “Culture of Safety & Crew Resource Management”
  - August (date TBD) “Evidence Based Guide & Research”
- Providence EMS Live at Nite Classes for July & August
  - No class in July.
  - August class TBA
- No meetings in August. Next meeting September 10<sup>th</sup>.

**MEETING ADJOURNED at 1048**