

EMS Education & Examinations Rule Task Force
July 28, 2010
Oxford Suites
1426 S. Entertainment Ave., Boise, Idaho

TASK FORCE MEMBER ATTENDEES: Lynette Sharp, Mary Anne Pace, Dr. Curtis Sandy, Steve Holley for John Lewis, Tom McLean, Dean Philbrick, Rod Piller, Mark Zandhuisen, Val Navo

EMS Bureau Staff: Dia Gainor, Wayne Denny, Justin Clemons, Russ Pierson, Diana Hone

Visitors: Bev Barr

Introductions

EMS Bureau Standards & Compliance Section Manager Wayne Denny opened the meeting at 9:03 with introductions.

EMS Bureau Chief Dia Gainor thanked everyone for participating and expressed how important administrative rules are to clarify and give details to the intent of the law to make sure things happen in a way that ensures provider and patient safety. The goal is to have the system function as efficiently as possible with the best capacity that can be expected from a community. Education and exams are the primary issue when thinking about preparing individuals to function and ensuring that they are able to function in the EMS system. Rule writing is a big task for this group to shoulder and at times will be very difficult. The devil is in the details. She thanked the group in advance for their endurance and the intellectual contributions they will be making.

Many of our current education and examination rules are old and are built on premises that date back to some of the first generation thinking of EMS systems. A distinction of this task force's work is that there are far more national pieces, not federal, but national pieces that will have to be actively understood and factored in. It is essential that all task force members understand "The National EMS Education Standards (2009)" and how those were driven by the "National Scope of Practice Model (2006)" and how that was driven by the "National EMS Core Content (2005)." The "EMS Education Agenda for the Future: A Systems Approach" is a must as well. These documents were provided to the members on a CD and will be posted on the EMS website www.idahoems.org under "Negotiated Rule Writing – Education & Exam Rules Task Force." Understanding why and how Idaho, as a rural-frontier state with a great dependency on volunteers, fits into the national framework will be important. The National Registry of EMTs' (NREMT) policy and process control issues must be kept in mind when developing the concepts for Idaho rules.

Subject matter experts from the national organizations can be brought in to explain and discuss any subject the task force members want to know more about or understand. For example, a representative from the national Commission on Accreditation of EMS Programs (CoAEMSP) could be brought in to explain the national requirement for accreditation of paramedic programs. Some of these other organizations' documents or policies may be incorporated by reference in Idaho rule and thereby defer to their mechanism and use the details that they have already written.

Dia suggested that the model of accreditation by CoAEMSP is something that is really important for task force members to understand. Perhaps Idaho will want to use this paramedic model of accreditation and apply it to the other levels of education for AEMT, EMT and EMR. It would be an accreditation like

approach in Idaho with an Idaho specific body that accredits the organization that is doing two EMT courses a year or one EMT course a year regularly and thereby not have to go through the every course application process.

Dia noted that the effective date of some portions of the rule can be pushed out a couple of years to let stakeholders gear up for it or get used to it before it is implemented.

Wayne explained that the bureau needs this task force to supply concepts rather than the specific language for the rules. The concepts and ideas will be turned into question and answer rule language by bureau staff and the Department of Health and Welfare Rules Unit. Bev Barr from the Rules Unit explained the rule making process.

Mary Anne Pace asked if the task force will be creating new rule or updating current rule. Wayne explained that the answer is, both, and reviewed some areas that are not clearly or fully covered in the current rule.

Review of Current Rules and Education Standards Manual

Criteria for educational programs, certification of EMS instructors, and establishment of fees for training are the three main areas for review and concept formation.

The current EMS rules are difficult to read and understand because with the existing format one has to stitch things together from several different sections to get the entire concept. The new rule will group pertinent concepts together. The Department is moving to a “Question and Answer” format for rules so stakeholders get the entire answer when looking in one place rather than having to search through several sections. The rule and standards manuals should provide all the information needed so a stakeholder does not have to look back to the law.

The group reviewed sections 200-229 in the current rule and the current Education Standards Manual. Much of what is contained in the standards manual may be pushed up into rule.

Some of the topics that were discussed during this review and will be discussed in more detail at future meetings were:

CoAEMSP paramedic accreditation

Educational institutions offering distance learning so rural areas can have access to quality teachers

How to bring educational opportunities to an experienced EMT in a community to bring them up to the paramedic level? The problem with students from rural areas leaving home to take a paramedic course at an institution is that they never return to their home community or they come back to work for a couple of years and then move on.

Dr. Sandy noted that there are areas outside the state that are doing distance learning for paramedics and they are CoAEMSP accredited programs. He requested data on the number of EMT courses taught in the state broken down by who teaches them, i.e. a junior college or university separate versus an agency and give their first-time-pass-rates. This may help determine what is working. Wayne noted it may also help identify a best practice agency or organization like what happened with extrication in the agency rule writing task force.

Instructor qualifications

Screening for quality of students being accepted into paramedic programs

How do we get people on board and yet keep quality of service to an acceptable level? Recruitment in rural or retirement communities is difficult because people do not want to make the time commitment for training and continuing education.

Possibility of using competency testing to reduce number of in-class hours for some students.

Course approval vs. program approval.

Task Force Business

Wayne explained that the task force will need a chair to lead the group so he doesn't dominate the direction of the meetings. He wants a place at the table for discussion but needs someone else to lead the meetings so the group is able to develop the concepts they feel are important to consider.

Mary Anne Pace volunteered to be Chair. Mark Zandhuisen so nominated her and Curtis Sandy seconded. Steve Holley felt Mary Anne would be a good candidate because of her proximity to the Bureau and that she represents a wide scope of interests. Lynette Sharp moved and Dean Philbrick seconded to close nominations.

Mark Zandhuisen moved to cast a unanimous ballot for Mary Anne Pace to be the Chair of the EMS Education and Examination Rules Task Force. Tom McLean seconded.
Motion passed unanimously.

Future Meetings – 4th Wednesday of each month until finished: Aug 25, Sept 22, Oct 27, Nov nothing, Dec 1, Jan 26, etc.

Meetings will start at 9:00 am

The task force will identify global areas and may assign some things to smaller groups to review and bring back. Members were urged to stay connected to who they represent and their regional concerns. Meeting information, minutes, and draft rules will be posted on the EMS Bureau website: www.idahoems.org

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to evaluate current EMS education and examination rules, determine needs, and develop rules that reflect contemporary educational standards and competencies.

Mark Zandhuisen moved to approve mission statement. Steve Holley seconded.
Motion passed unanimously.

Rule Topics

RULE TOPICS TO BE COVERED: (These were taken from the current rule section headings and the Education Standards Manual chapter headings with a few brief notes from the discussion.)

EMS Training Programs

EMS Training Standards

Examination - Put in its own section after education requirements?

Monitoring instructor performance – what consequences for poor performance; performance criteria must be descriptive enough because course outcome can be due to quality of students as much or more than the quality of instructor or the fact that students only needed the credits towards a degree rather than to actually become a paramedic; perhaps course pass/fail rates should be posted so potential students could evaluate where to take their course.

Inspection – should there be requirement for EMS Bureau staff to visit courses to give brief overview of

process to get licensed and/or also inspect the course facility?

Consistency with scope of practice – keep tied to National Scope of Practice

Qualifications of course instructors – now we have different qualifications for different levels, is that correct or should they all be the same? Should all instructors have to do the Adult Methodology, etc.? Do we want to set standards as to how much a guest instructor can teach? Is there a number of years they had/have to be licensed or practiced as an actual EMT before they can be an instructor? Once an instructor, are there any continuing qualifications? Must they be a licensed EMS provider to be an instructor? Licensed in another state sufficient?

Primary or Lead instructors – is there a difference? Should we break out how much of a course the primary instructor must teach? Does only the primary instructor have to take the Adult Methodology course?

Skill Instructors

AEMT and Paramedic instructors

Certification Exams

CEUs

Educational program components

Educational program administrative requirements

Course standards

Changes to an approved course

Student prerequisites

Course application & record submission procedures

Instructor standards

Ongoing training and education program (OTEP)

Educational program quality assurance

Advanced EMT clinical rotation objectives

From the beginning, should the rules for paramedics be separate from the other levels because of the national accreditation process already in place? Should some of the CoAEMSP accreditation concepts or tools be used for the other levels to some degree?

If an accreditation process for the other levels is desired, even though such a body does not exist today, the rule must provide a structure to allow it to develop. The bureau already crafted an organizational model for how a state specific accrediting body could work a few years ago. The concepts come from CoAEMSP. Briefly: You have a board. The board is comprised of subject matter experts throughout the jurisdiction. They have a set of bylaws. Under that set of bylaws they make policies about what organizations that are going to routinely and repeatedly teach courses at the AEMT, EMT, or EMR level have to do and be in order to be accredited. Once this is in place, organizations who would like to stop applying for courses on a course by course basis could get accreditation from this body for perhaps three (3) years. In the mean time, what kind of criteria could be set to allow a different process from the current requirement of applying for every course?

The bureau will work on securing a guest speaker for the next meeting on August 25th.

Tom McLean moved to adjourn. Rod Piller seconded.

Meeting adjourned 4:06