

METRO REGION EMS SYSTEM PLAN FY 2008-2009

Revised 7/1/2007

Regional Programs & Projects



Seven Metropolitan Counties in Minnesota

1. Metro Region Data Collection

EMS pre-hospital data is being collected on a statewide basis. The Metro Region EMS Program funds EMS research, sponsors training activities and works on other projects in response to identified regional health indicators and EMS needs. It is our goal to continue to utilize this pre-hospital data as we make programmatic decisions in the future. The EMS Providers and EMS Committee will determine what data would be beneficial to gather on a regional basis and then determine how to appropriately use and disseminate that data.

Goal: To use EMS data as the basis of recommending policy and quality improvement decisions intended to improve patient outcomes and develop best practice models through evidence-based care standards and training.

Objectives:

- Identify EMS data elements in MNSTAR that are relevant to EMS system planning in the Metro Region.
- Develop regional EMS data reports to identify potential gaps or needs in the Metro Region's EMS systems.
- Provide the EMS providers with usable data from MNSTAR through the regional DATAMINING computer program

Evaluation:

- Generate a list of EMS data elements for review by EMS Committee and EMS Providers.
- EMS Committee reviews regional EMS data reports biannually.

Outcomes:

- Ambulance service data is used to identify EMS system gaps and needs that may be addressed by regional EMS programs and projects and community health boards.

Timeline:

July 2007:

Identify data elements that can be evaluated.

July 2007:

Prepare documents to ensure HIPAA compliance and contracts to permit data sharing among EMS Providers.

September 2007:

Evaluate six months of identified data, determine outcome/action. Identify further data elements to be evaluated.

March 2008:

Evaluate six months of identified data, determine outcome/action. Identify further data elements to be evaluated.

September 2008:

Evaluate six months of identified data, determine outcome/action. Identify further data elements to be evaluated.

March 2009:

Evaluate six months of identified data, determine outcome/action. Identify further data elements to be evaluated.

2. Regional Resource Coordination and Tracking System

Coordination of EMS resources and the flow of EMS patients within the metropolitan region is essential in ensuring quality prehospital care and as importantly, plays a significant role in addressing system wide issues related to hospital, heart and trauma center overcrowding thus meeting the overarching EMS objective that each patient is directed to the most appropriate facility based upon their condition. Regional coordination requires that the healthcare community – public and private hospital groups and healthcare systems as well as the EMS providers- work collaboratively to achieve this goal. Tracking and coordination of regional resources has been identified as a crucial need within the region in order to monitor the level of available resources and how they can be deployed in a timely manner particularly in significant community events such as mass casualty incidents. A secure system to track and access these resources is essential to support EMS systems management.

Goal: To effectively coordinate emergency medical service resources to support system demands and response to significant regional events such as mass casualty incidents.

Objectives:

- Provide a real-time, reliable system for EMS resource allocation during mass casualty incidents and large scale, multi-jurisdictional events.
- Development and maintain a Metro Region EMS resources list and identify the means to facilitate the allocation of those resources when needed.
- Develop a Metro resource EMS tracking system that will coordinate with the MnTrac system.

Evaluation:

- Patient capacity of Metro Region hospitals as well as real-time available EMS resources during a mass casualty incident is tracked on MnTrac™ or a functional equivalent system.
- Metro Region EMS Resources and Point of Contacts are available to all Regional Providers.
- Assess the EMS dispatch CAD systems for the ability to export live data in a standardized format to track resources.

Outcomes:

- A regional tracking system provides efficiencies (operational and financial) for all entities involved.
- An online database of Metro Region resources and Point of Contacts is available for all Regional Providers.

- Develop a strategic timeline to design and implement regional EMS tracking system.

Timeline:

Ongoing-2009: Assessment of CAD systems and data sharing capabilities.

February 2008: Develop specifications for resource tracking system.

Ongoing-2009: Metro EMS Regional Resources updated and available online.

3. EMS Research

The Metro Region EMS Program has been funding EMS research grants for a number of years because EMS research continues to be identified as a critical need by EMS providers in the region. The Metro Region has the capacity to do research based on both academic expertise and credible scientific sample size, this is an opportunity to continue to support research that could have a greater impact and develop evidence-based EMS Best Practice models. The Metro Region EMS Program will again solicit and accept proposals for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) research grants. The intent of the grants is to support specific research projects which may: improve the coordination of emergency medical response in the seven county metropolitan area; improve resource utilization; reveal 'best practices' in EMS operations; improve the public's awareness of the value and utility of EMS; demonstrate enhanced cost effectiveness of services; evaluate medical equipment, treatments and pre-hospital interventions; improve pre-hospital medical care skills of emergency medical responders in the metropolitan area; evaluate trends or developments in pre-hospital care; establish basis for pre-hospital protocols or standard operating procedures; or otherwise demonstrate a positive impact on regional EMS services.

Goal: To improve patient care, allocation of resources, and the efficiency of EMS operations by determining the efficacy of evidenced based emergency care as well as uncovering best practices in the area of EMS oversight and operations.

Objectives:

- Provide EMS research grants to Metro Region agencies which have a demonstrable impact on Metro Region EMS service delivery and regional impact.
- Provide a forum for sharing the results of EMS research conducted in Metro Region.
- Offer presentations on research to other venues as appropriate upon request.

Evaluation:

- At least two EMS research grants are awarded to agencies within Metro Region for EMS research.
- Presentations on completed EMS research projects are provided to the EMS Committee, EMS Provider Advisory Committee and as Regional training topics. Final reports or summaries of final reports are posted on Metro Region's EMS web site.
- Grant recipients demonstrate how their research impacts EMS.

Outcomes:

- At least two research projects, relevant to improved **efficiency of EMS operations**, coordination of EMS in the Metro Region and/or the evaluation of standards or procedures to improve patient care, are completed.
- The research conducted is made available for others to utilize the information that was discovered.
- Practical application of grant research is identified.

Timeline:

August 2007:

Construct research question if appropriate.

October 2007:

RFP distributed for EMS research grants.

December 2007:

Evaluation of grant applications and determination of award made by the EMS Committee.

September 2008:

Research grants completed and final reports submitted to Metro Region EMS Program.

Ongoing-2009:

Presentations of research findings are made to the EMS Committee and/or EMS Provider Sub-Committee. Final reports, or summaries of final reports, are updated and posted on the Metro Region's EMS web site.

4. EMS Training

On-going training is a need of all EMS providers. The ability to afford specialized or advanced training is becoming more difficult for all ambulance services – rural and urban, paid and volunteer. Regional coordination of training can meet this on-going need as well as offer a cost-effective solution for the EMS providers within our region. The Metro Region EMS Program plans to provide classes, workshops, seminars and sponsor sessions at regional conferences on topics identified by the providers within the region that are not readily available through existing training programs and conferences.

Goal: To enhance the knowledge and/or skills of EMS providers and managers.

Objectives:

- Provide workshops on current EMS topics or issues to EMS providers in the Metro Region, based on input from the Metro Region and county-based EMS committees.
- Build relationships with the local volunteer groups such as CERT and Medical Reserve Corps to assess training needs.

Evaluation:

- A minimum of three (3) educational sessions or workshops to be offered on topics of interest including findings from the EMS Regional research projects to Metro Region EMS providers.
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- Presentations (2) of the completed EMS Regional projects.
- Offer annual training geared to volunteer groups.

Outcomes:

- To have a wide variety of EMS Providers participate in training opportunities or workshops offered by the Metro Region.

Timeline:

October 2007: Two or more training opportunities to be identified and scheduled.

November 2007: Annual volunteer training topics identified.

Ongoing-2009: EMS committees to continue planning regional training.

May 2009: Three or more opportunities have been completed for EMS providers and/or managers in the Metro Region and two volunteer sessions presented as well.

Ongoing-2009: EMS committees to collaborate with other regional partners to sponsor breakout sessions at regional conferences on topics of need or interest to Metro Region providers.

5. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

Emergency medical service personnel – dispatch, ambulance, fire, law enforcement, rescue and hospital staff- are at high risk of developing stress-related illness and injuries from the effects of critical incident stress. They share many common stresses inherent to their work including higher risk of injury, the need to make immediate decisions without error, unfamiliar or uncontrollable work environments and frequent exposure to the sights, smells and sounds of human trauma and continual responsibility for human life. Critical incident stress management (CISM) is a comprehensive, organized approach for the reduction and management of harmful aspects of stress in emergency services. CISM has been identified as a priority program not only for EMS providers within the Metro Region, but also for providers throughout Minnesota and across the United States.

Goal: To enhance the well-being of EMS providers and increase retention through critical incident stress management.

Objectives:

- Contribute to the support a system for critical incident stress management.
- Collaborate with other regional EMS programs to support the development and sustainability of CISM teams.
- Require Metro CISM to identify new funding mechanisms to complement funding from the Metro Region EMS Program.

Evaluation:

- Critical incident stress management services are available twenty-four hours/day, seven days/week all year long (24/7/365) through the Metro CISM Team.
- Metro Region EMS Program staff participates in at least one Minnesota Association of Regional CISM Programs meeting each year and/or Minnesota CISM Consortium meeting.
- Regional CISM will provide a contemporary and appropriate approach to CISM through training annually within the Metro for EMS providers and CISM team members.
- Receive written funding and activity reports from Metro CISM.

Outcomes:

- Short and longer-term adverse physical and mental consequences of critical incident stress are mitigated through access to the Metro CISM Team for assistance in managing critical incident stress.
- Access to CISM services in Minnesota is strengthened through development of partnerships between CISM teams for training, support and/or mutual aid.

- The Metro CISM team has an effective and appropriate approach to CISM and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) situations that provide for initial and longer term support of Emergency Service Personnel.
- Metro Region CISM Team identifies and secures new funding mechanisms, in addition to the Metro Region EMS program.

Timeline:

July 2007:

Metro Region EMS Program revises contract with the Metro CISM Team to provide service support from July 2007 through June 2009.

November 2007:

Metro CISM Team presents a report and a two (2) year plan, including a strategic plan for obtaining other funding sources to sustain their program, to Metro Region EMS Committee and Metro Region Providers Advisory Committee.

June 2008:

Metro Region EMS Program has participated in at least two Minnesota Association of Regional CISM Programs and/or Minnesota CISM Consortium meetings – participation in a minimum of one meeting each fiscal year.

Ongoing-2009:

CISM support to Metro EMS community.

6. EMS Agency Support

EMS is a unique community resource that is partly health care, public safety and emergency management while often regarded and operating as a secondary service. Despite substantial investment in EMS education and training as well as public awareness, the provision of essential emergency medical response is often fragmented. The challenge to the future of EMS and its effectiveness depends upon the actions taken in response to the public perception of the EMS industry as well as the ability of the EMS community to identify current issues and collectively find diverse and innovative solutions to improve patient care. The efforts of this regional program are focused to support EMS agencies on workforce, funding, data collection, leadership, EMS visibility, and medical direction concerns. The Metro EMS Region is committed to enabling the EMS provider organizations to be capable of initiating a process to improve and facilitate change to enhance the service they provide to the regional community. The Metro region is committed to collaborate with the EMSRB and the Minnesota Ambulance Association (MAA) to assess and analyze current EMS issues and jointly develop action plans to address solutions. The Metro EMS Region is committed to inform the public and elected officials regarding the extraordinary contributions the EMS community makes to preserve and protect the health of our citizens.

Goal: To serve as a multidisciplinary regional center for information, reference, training and support resources for EMS providers.

Objectives:

- Develop regional priorities and an action plan to address workforce recruitment, retention, succession planning, and leadership development based on input from the EMS providers and partners.
- Assure collaboration for informing political officials and constituencies' in the areas of support for EMS and health care issues impacting local providers as well as regional and state EMS programs.
- Continually update web site to provide current information about available grant programs, training and other resources for EMS providers.

Evaluation:

- Implementation of an action plan with specific timeframes that addresses the priorities of workforce recruitment, retention, succession planning, and **leadership development** issues identified within the Metro Region.
- **Provide ongoing series of organizational leadership development seminars and training opportunities.**
- Website updated quarterly for current programs, training and resources available for EMS providers.
- EMS and healthcare issues that impact the local providers in the Metro Region are collaboratively identified annually and priorities established for dissemination of information to elected officials and the public.

- Collaborate with local community colleges and four year colleges and universities to formulate articulation agreements which would recognize prior EMS education to be transferable into a variety Bachelor degree completion programs.
- Create a universally acceptable vision statement for the EMS Metro region.

Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of EMS providers by the general public.
- Metro Region EMS Program's website serves as a clearinghouse of information and resources for EMS providers as well as an educational, informational resource for the general public regarding EMS news and operations as well as personal and family safety and emergency preparedness.
- Create a unified vision of EMS that can be projected through all of the Regional EMS activities that would enhance the visibility and awareness of EMS.

Timeline:

- September 2007:*** Research issues of workforce recruitment, retention, succession planning, and leadership development issues identified within the Metro Region.
- December 2007:*** Develop a prioritized action plan to address workforce recruitment, retention, succession planning, and leadership development issues identified within the Metro Region.
- Ongoing-2009:*** Quarterly maintenance of the EMS Metro Region website identifying current programs, training and resources available for EMS providers.
- September 2007:*** Create a unified vision of the Metro EMS Region.
- November 2007:*** Identify EMS and healthcare issues that impact the local providers in the Metro Region for dissemination to elected officials and the public.
- November 2008:*** Identify EMS and healthcare issues that impact the local providers in the Metro Region for dissemination to elected officials and the public.
- Ongoing-2009:*** Continued development of academic relationships to promote articulation agreements and EMS personnel participation in degree completion.

7. EMS Public Education

EMS providers are expected to be a public education resource by the citizens in their communities. In order to support the public education role of EMS providers, the Metro Region EMS Program is committed to developing a regional initiative for community public education that would address the need to enhance the public's awareness of healthy and/or safety-conscious lifestyles as well as personal and family emergency preparedness. The Metro Region EMS Program will work with the EMS providers and community health representatives to identify appropriate public education/information topics. Furthermore, the regional program sees benefits in multi-regional and/or statewide public education initiatives and is committed to exploring the possibility of collaboration with one or more regional programs on a public education campaign. The Metro Region EMS Program plans to use the "EMS Week" forum as one avenue for promoting EMS to the general public.

Goal: To increase public and governmental awareness of healthy and safety-conscious lifestyles through a public education campaign that targets the reduction in the risks of illness or injury and/or promotes safer behavior as well as promotes the essential roles EMS plays in the region.

Objectives:

- Identify a public education initiative through input from the Metro Region EMS providers and the community health assessments.
- Explore the option of collaborating on a public education initiative with other regional EMS programs.
- Support EMS Week campaigns by distributing promotional materials to EMS providers and promote EMS Week activities sponsored by local EMS agencies.
- Ensure metro region EMS web site current through regular updates and additional postings of new information to site.
- Develop a strategic and collaborative relationship between local media groups and EMS providers within the region.

Evaluation:

- Education materials, addressing an identified illness or injury or promoting safer behavior, are developed and distributed through EMS providers.
- Informational resources that are developed are distributed to the community to promote public awareness, and health prevention and promotion.
- EMS Week activities are coordinated with the regional EMS provider agencies.

- The emsmn.org web site is reviewed and if appropriate, updated on at least a monthly basis.
- Develop a media release process and a website accessible media relations tab.

Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of methods to reduce the risk of illness or injury and/or promote safer behavior through a public education campaign.
- Provide relevant information that can be utilized by the general public to promote healthy and safe lifestyles.
- Provide relevant information that can be utilized by the general public and elected officials in which to support EMS visibility and EMS initiatives .

Timeline:

- December 2007:** The webpage has a new look and is more interactive and useful for Providers and the general public.
- March 2008:*** EMS Week activities have been collaboratively planned and campaign materials have been distributed to EMS providers.
- May 2008:*** Regional coordination of EMS Week activities utilizing a unified region-wide message.
- March 2009:*** EMS Week activities have been collaboratively planned and campaign materials have been distributed to EMS providers.
- May 2009:*** Regional coordination of EMS Week activities utilizing a unified region-wide message.

8. **EMS Communications**

Public safety and EMS providers repeatedly identify dependable communications as the single most important element required for an **efficient, effective, appropriate** and **coordinated** timely response to everyday emergencies. In the face of regional man-made or natural disasters, an overwhelming initial EMS response is mandatory in order to mitigate tragic loss of life and human suffering. Capacity, multifunctionality, reliability and interoperability are the critical cornerstones for an effective communications and information management system. Any proficient response requires transmission of real-time information to assess needs and resources, which can change suddenly and unexpectedly. Communication failures hinder all levels of response management and often lead to chaos and confusion not only in disaster response but in daily operations as well. The Metro Region EMS continues to remain steadfast in its efforts to build out and maintain the ARMER system in the region. It has committed itself to strive for communication interoperability not only in the region but also throughout the state through relationships with the other regions. The Metro Region EMS is also dedicated to enhancing interoperability through the unrestricted transfer of 911 data and information between primary and secondary PSAP units. The Metro Region uses its EMS Communications Committee to fervently maintain, enhance and expand the Metro Region EMS communication system.

Goal: Maintain, expand, and enhance regional EMS communications system and ensure the regional communication plan is aligned with the MN EMSRB EMS Communication Plan.

Objective:

- Utilize the EMS Communications Committee to address EMS communications issues within the Metro region.
- Review and update Metro Region EMS Communications Plan.
- Offer a plan that will allow the unrestricted transfer of ANI/ALI data and the flexibility to transfer 911 calls to other PSAPs even across regional and state boundaries (Contact One solution).
- Investigate to utility of implementing an ACU-1000 cross band repeater to ensure interoperability with other EMS regions.

Evaluation:

- The EMS Communications Committee meets regularly to address EMS communications issues affecting the Metro Region.
- Annual review and update Metro Region EMS Communication Plan as needs are identified to ensure and maintain alignment with the Minnesota EMSRB Radio Communications Plan.
- Facilitate the development and implementation of an approach to transfer 911 data and information between primary and secondary PSAP units in

the region through the collaborative efforts of co-sponsors from within the Metro Region, State of Minnesota and other vested/interested partners to test the concept.

- Facilitate the development and implementation of a portable approach that will enhance radio interoperability with other EMS regions within the State.

Outcomes:

- Improved interoperability of EMS communications systems within the Metro Region and adjacent jurisdictions.
- Maintain a current EMS Communication Plan for Metro region.
- Improved accuracy of the 911 data that is exchanged between PSAPs and minimized time to dispatch when calls are transferred between agencies.

Timeline:

- July 2007 – June 2009:*** The EMS Communications Committee maintains meeting schedule.
- July 2007:*** Form a Regional Secondary PSAP Interoperability Workgroup.
- October 2007:*** Feasibility study, goals, objectives, evaluation tool and budget to be complete for pilot project.
- November 2007-April 2008:*** Continued project development with funding sources identified.
- May 2008:*** Project to go live
- Ongoing-November 2008:*** Monthly evaluations to be reported the Region.
- January 2009:*** Project evaluation completion
- January 2009-June 2009:*** Investigate initial and on-going costs and identify funding sources to expand to other PSAPs in the Region.

9. Emergency Preparedness and Response

While accounting for about one-third of the nations emergency responders, EMS personnel are the least supported of all public safety and healthcare personnel across the nation to fulfill their roles in responding to large scale events lacking both adequate training and proper equipment for disaster response. Large multiple casualty incidents, whether man-made (accidents or intentional such as terrorism) or natural (storm, fire, pandemic diseases and the like), typically will overwhelm any local EMS provider early in the developing event, especially when emergency medical responders are victims of the catastrophe themselves. A prudent and appropriate response probably requires immediate mutual aid from surrounding communities and even may require expansion to a regional, state, or national response. In light of recent disasters, an overwhelming initial EMS response is mandatory in order to mitigate tragic loss of life and human suffering. In order to be successful and efficient, such a response requires planning, equipment and trained personnel. The development of regionalized EMS strike teams will ensure an approach is in place for the immediate and efficient deployment of NIMS and NRP trained EMT's and Paramedics for effective rapid triage and pre-hospital treatment of victims of a disaster. These teams should be developed in proportion to population density and needs in order to improve the capability and capacity to meet medical surge demands. The Metro based teams will be available for rapid response and for an improved regional, statewide and interstate mutual aid system.

The EMS function necessitates it to be recognized as an equal partner in disaster planning and funding. Disaster tactics need to be taught and practiced as well as continually reviewed and revised as new evidenced-based information, which would increase the effectiveness of a regional response plan, becomes available. The Metro EMS regional program is committed to strive for competence, commitment, cooperation, and coordination in order to provide an effective and efficient regional EMS response in the wake of any disaster through ongoing collaboration with state, county, and local emergency management, public safety, public health and healthcare provider agencies.

Goal #1: To coordinate and plan for regional EMS responses to comply within State and Federal guidelines, structure, and initiatives in cooperation and collaboration state, county, and local emergency management, public safety, public health and healthcare provider agencies.

Objectives:

- Collaborate on multidisciplinary projects within the region and incorporate a regional coordinated response approach.
- Create a permanent Emergency Preparedness Committee in the Metro Region.
- Develop regional strategy for EMS business continuity planning.
- Develop a Metro EMS Regional Coordination Center and provide 24/7 on-call staffing for EMS (MAC) multi-agency coordination.

- Coordinate the development Regional EMS Strike Teams in accordance to established guidelines.

Evaluation:

- Plans are developed for regional responses incorporating NIMS strategies, i.e. the Metro Region IRP.
- Provide annual training seminar in the area of incident management and emergency preparedness for the EMS provider agencies.
- Ongoing participation with county EMS councils and emergency management directors, MN EMSRB, MN DPH, MN HSEM, MMRS, RHRC and other emergency preparedness partners. The Regional EMS Coordinator position is designated to play integral and essential roles in numerous disaster preparedness and response plans.
- Provide a regional EMS business continuity workshop.

Outcomes:

- The Metro Region EMS providers are actively involved and informed in the development and maintenance of the regional EMS incident response plan to significant events and disasters which may occur and that regional EMS is actively involved and represented in the emergency preparedness planning process at all levels within the region as well as involved in the development and operations of Metro Region Strike Teams.

Timeline:

Ongoing:

Maintain relationships with local, county, regional, state, and Federal emergency preparedness agencies and groups to continually assess and review regional response plans as well as to facilitate regional coordination of resources and assets.

September 2007:

Work groups organized to develop Metro Region Strike Teams.

Ongoing-2009:

Strike team selection process developed/initiated and ongoing training for team members and leaders.

November 2007:

Finalization of business continuity workshop content and event.

March 2008:

Annual EP training and EMS business continuity workshop scheduled.

Ongoing-2009:

Annual EP training and EMS business continuity workshops continue.