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# GETAC recap

Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC) met Monday, November 19, 2007, in Houston. The council unanimously approved both the revised minutes from its February 23, 2007, meeting and the minutes from its May 25, 2007, meeting. (There were no August meeting minutes due to cancellation of the August meeting because of the threat of Hurricane Dean.)

**Chair Report:** Chair Edward Racht, MD, discussed the GETAC retreat, rescheduled for January 25-27, 2008, which has a goal of looking at the structure of the committees and reviewing the responses and comments of the EMS/Trauma System Regulatory Task Force survey. The annual committee application process would usually have begun in December, but it was decided that the present committee members would remain appointed until the recommendations from the GETAC retreat were brought to the stakeholders in February.

**Staff Reports:** Kathryn C. Perkins, assistant commissioner for the Division for Regulatory Services, discussed the problems last summer with the DSHS Exchange Building; legislative issues, including the Senate Bill (SB) 10 (referred to as the gurney car bill) and SB 1119 (referred to as the red light camera bill); hospital licensing rules; and the prompt payment by DSHS to EMS responders who had signed the MOA and were deployed during Hurricane Dean. Steve Janda, director of the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems Coordination, reported the public license search—the new version of

the “cert query”—is now operating on the EMS/Trauma Systems website; reported on the disaster MOA and its review by DSHS and stakeholders that will begin soon; and discussed funding based on runs reported to the EMS/Trauma Registry and other EMS and trauma system funding programs, including the 3588 account, the ECA training program and the Local Projects grants.

Maxie Bishop, state EMS director, updated the Council about the National Registry EMS passing rate percentages (see page 30 for details). EMS/Trauma Registry's John Villanacci apologized for stakeholder challenges with the Registry and reported that a meeting will be set up with Health Commissioner David Lakey, MD, to discuss long-term strategies to fix the problems.

## **Standing Committee/Task Force Reports:**

**Air Medical Committee** – Chair Shirley Scholz, RN, reported the committee discussed “lifeguard” helicopters and access to public or “prior permission required” helipads; a workgroup to explore an alternative state licensure program as an alternative to Commission on Accreditation of Air Medical Services (CAMTS); the possibility of joint DSHS-FAA surveys of air medical providers; and new language to clarify the helipad rule. The committee asked GETAC for support in recommending hospital licensing changes with regards to air medical helicopter access; and asked that rule language previously recommended to the hospital licensing rule be reconsidered and substitute language be considered later in the meeting when motions were discussed.

**Education Committee** – Chair Jodie Harbert, LP, reported the committee discussed provider

licensing rule 157.11; recent legislation on epinephrine auto-injector devices; suggestions on how the National Registry (NR) for EMTs could improve skills exams; use of clinical simulations in lieu of clinical training; formation of a subcommittee to look at developing a survey for suggested changes to Scope of Practice; a meeting in January to discuss EMS curriculum; national accreditation; and mandatory background checks for applicants.

**EMS Committee** – Chair Pete Wolf, EMT-P, reported the committee discussed the EMS subscription rule (157.XX); the decision to make a motion at the GETAC meeting to reinstate the original verbiage into the subscription rule 157.XX; and recent legislation regarding epinephrine auto-injector devices. The committee heard a presentation on infectious disease exposures to EMS personnel, and discussed forming a task force specific for these issues and concerns to GETAC.

**Injury Prevention Committee** – Chair Gary Kesling, PhD, reported that the committee discussed key issues and planning for the next legislative session; issues concerning the EMS/Trauma Registry and the committee's continued support; and a possible pilot project, launching a peer review section for *Texas EMS Magazine* on prevention and research.

**Medical Directors Committee** – In the absence of chair Steve Ellerbe, DO, John Griswell, MD, reported that the committee requested that GETAC formally request all funds collected as part of House Bill (HB) 3588 of the 78<sup>th</sup> Legislature and SB 1119 be dispersed as intended; discussed developing a standardized system to treat infection disease exposures in emergency personnel;

discussed recommendations to improve the EMS/Trauma Registry; agreed that the Disaster Preparedness Task Force should take steps to becoming a standing committee; discussed proposed recommendations in 157.11 regarding anaphylaxis treatment and stretcher patient transport; and discussed instructor certification rule 157.44.

**Pediatric Committee** – Chair Joan Shook, MD, reported the committee reviewed the Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) National Resource Center survey results of performance measures and concluded that data needs to be reviewed in more detail and more support provided; looked into forming a “non-responders” group to investigate lack of survey response; reported the committee wants to develop a “frequently asked questions” sheet for future surveys; and discussed hurricane preparedness, transportation needs for pediatric patients in an evacuation, and the provider licensing rule 157.11 concerning the requirement for epinephrine auto-injector devices.

**Stroke Committee** – In the absence of chair Neal Rutledge, MD, committee member Brent Dalley, CCMT-P, reported that the committee viewed presentations about the American Stroke Association Stroke System; GETAC recommendations on stroke education and training; stroke facility designation and transport plans; and the RAC stroke survey letter. A newly-formed subcommittee will review recommendations for acceptable EMS training programs. The committee wants to present a final draft of the stroke facility proposed rule at the May 2008 GETAC meeting.

#### **Trauma Systems Committee**

– Chair Ronald Stewart, MD, reported that the committee supported the exception to Level III trauma facility designation criterion process currently being performed by DSHS staff and re-affirmed its support of the Level III orthopedic requirement essential criterion as it currently exists in rule; discussed the EMS/Trauma Registry and is ready to present a motion to GETAC; discussed establishing specific recommendations concerning the Senate Bill (SB) 1119; and discussed the draft DSHS rule 157.132.

**Disaster/Emergency Preparedness Task Force** – Chair Eric Epley, EMT-P, reported that the task force would like to work with DSHS when the agency rewrites the hurricane MOA; discussed the evacuation process and how emergency preparedness groups should be better defined.

**EMS and Trauma Regulatory Task Force** – Co-chair Dudley Wait, EMT-P, presented the results of the recent survey conducted by the task force which included a number of specific recommendations to DSHS.

#### **Other Reports/Public Comment on Action Items:**

**DSHS Hospital Licensing Rules Review Workgroup** – Jim Parisi reported that the rule to have all hospitals in compliance with available helipads was discussed at the Air Medical Committee.

**Texas EMS, Trauma and Acute Care Foundation (TETAF)** – Jorie Klein, RN, reported possible changes to the divisions in the foundation; reported that the EMS and trauma divisions are focusing on the Comprehensive Clinical Management Program (CCMP), the disaster division on the RMOC, the education division on a site survey; and stroke division on creating stroke centers.

There were no reports from the

DSHS Preparedness Coordination Council or the Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council.

#### **General Public Comment:**

Public comments were heard on the lack of comments on the epinephrine auto-injector devices rule; the concerns about the EMS/Trauma Registry and possible solutions; and comments about the air medical language that was taken out of the subscription rule from the previous meeting.

**Action Items:** A motion was made by Pete Wolf and seconded by Shirley Scholz to request that the council rescind the friendly amendment to exclude air medical providers from the draft subscription plan rule 157.11 made at the May 2007 GETAC meeting and move forward with the original document as written by the combined EMS/Air Medical committees. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Jodie Harbert and seconded by Luis Fernandez, MD, to adopt rule 157.44 (Instructor Certification) with one minor change in line (W), “failure to notify the department when any current student or certified or licensed program employee is arrested or convicted for any crime” and add the words “when known as described.” The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Pete Wolf and seconded by Jodie Harbert to approve rule 157.11 (Provider Licensing) as presented by staff from DSHS with no changes. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Shirley Scholz and seconded by Marti VanRavenswaay to add the word “secure” to the Texas hospital licensing rule so as to read: “...or other safe and secure landing area...”; to add language to read

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“...size and construction to allow a licensed air ambulance in the state of Texas up to medium twin or 14,000 pounds max gross weight, to land safely. For an aircraft greater than 14,000 pounds, such as may be used by the military during disasters, the hospital will have a plan for an alternative landing area, which could be a street or a parking lot that could be secured. Hospital construction in the future will incorporate these requirements into their plan.”; and add language at the end that hospitals granted a waiver to the rule must make that waiver known to the public by generally accepted notification processes. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Ronald Stewart, MD, to suspend EMS/Trauma Registry

submissions by stakeholders starting January 1, 2008, and continuing until such time that the problems associated with the Trauma Registry are corrected to GETAC’s satisfaction. A friendly amendment was made by Luis Fernandez, MD, that a group of internal/external stakeholders work on acceptable resolutions in a reasonable time frame. A second friendly amendment was made by Pete Wolf to suspend Trauma Registry submissions until the next scheduled GETAC meeting set for February 6-8, 2008. A revised motion was then made by Ronald Stewart, MD, and seconded by Luis Fernandez, MD, to suspend EMS/Trauma Registry submission by stakeholders after the February 9, 2008, meeting, if problems with the Trauma Registry are not addressed satisfactorily and to

assemble a group of internal/external stakeholders to work on specific issues or resolutions in a reasonable time frame. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Pete Wolf and seconded by Luis Fernandez, MD, to request GETAC to ask the governor, the speaker of the house and the lieutenant governor that all funds allocated to trauma facilities, EMS providers, and Regional Advisory Councils in HB 3588 of the 78<sup>th</sup> Legislature and the SB 1119 of the 80<sup>th</sup> Legislature actually be appropriated to these entities. The motion passed.

**Future meeting dates in 2008:** February 6-8; May 7-9; August 13-15; and November 22-24 in Fort Worth, Texas in conjunction with the 2008 Texas EMS Conference.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 p.m.