

Office of EMS Trauma Systems  
Texas Department of State Health Services  
[dshs.texas.gov/dshs-ems-trauma-systems](https://dshs.texas.gov/dshs-ems-trauma-systems)



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

# Proposed Trauma Rule Amendments Open For Formal Public Comment

### From this Side

EMS/Trauma Systems leadership team and staff share their experiences and perspectives to spark conversation on issues important to the EMS and trauma system in Texas.

### Updates

The Office of EMS/Trauma Systems provides the latest regulatory changes, important programmatic data, and relevant funding information to keep you informed.

### News and Links

Access current news, initiatives, and publications from national EMS and public health organizations, as well as links to GETAC, rules, and enforcement actions.

### NEMSIS 3.5 is here: What you should know

The Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Registries (EMSTR) provides insight on new data collection platform.

### DSHS Announces 2023 Texas EMS Award Winners

Award winners were announced at the Texas EMS Conference in Austin, November 21, 2023. Join us in congratulating each of our winner.

### GETAC Committee Member Selections

The Governors EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC) Committees welcome new members.

# FROM THIS SIDE

Insight • Inspiration • Ideas



As we close out 2023, let's take time to reflect on the challenges the healthcare system has faced and what we've been able to overcome. What lessons did we learn, and are we going to take that new-found knowledge and apply it to our daily life in 2024?

Each day we are faced with new obstacles and expectations in our personal life and our professional career. As you navigate 2024, remember to take care of yourself, as well as your patients. Don't forget to do the little things, like starting each day with a smile. Smiling is a simple way to make a huge impact to your patients and others that you encounter. It's infectious, and this simple gesture can affect those around you in a positive way! Each day is better when approached as an optimist (and not a pessimist).

*"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement."  
– Helen Keller.*

Take care of yourself; you can't take care of patients if you aren't healthy to begin with. Get up and exercise and don't forget to take care of your mental health as well. Our profession can be stressful. It's important to not let stress build up to the point it becomes overwhelming. Identify the stressors in your life. If it's within your span of control, address it, whether that means changing bad habits, starting a new process, or learning a new skill. If you set your mind to it, you can accomplish it.



Set goals for yourself and treat each obstacle as an opportunity for growth. With a positive attitude, you can overcome what life throws your way. "In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity." – *Albert Einstein*


Remember that you are not alone. Look to your co-workers, friends, and family around you. There is always a light at the end of the tunnel.

No matter what challenges 2024 brings, with focus and determination, we can overcome them. Approach 2024 with a full heart and embrace every challenge. The possibilities are endless. Make this year your best yet!



Valerie Phillips  
North Regional Manager

# SAMHSA Online Training Opportunities



The SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC) is shining a light on a critical topic—*Responder Self-care and Stress Management*. First responders deal with numerous challenges, from hazards to traumatic events, impacting their mental health. It's essential for them to grasp the nuances and impact of stress and adopt positive coping mechanisms.

CE credit available.

## **Service to Self-Training Course**

**1-Hour**

Designed to provide interactive training to first responders. It addresses their heightened vulnerability to substance use and mental health conditions, offering resources and support. Completion makes participants eligible for continuing education units (CEUs) from CAPCE.

## **Disaster Responder Stress Management**

**1-Hour**

Tailored for those responding to disasters, this educational content assists responders in managing stress. It includes a compassion fatigue wallet card to track mental health needs and provides self-awareness strategies and resources for effective stress management.

## **Creating Safe Scenes**

**1.5 hours**

This CAPCE accredited, course helps first responders assist individuals in crisis with mental illness or substance use disorder using safe, positive approaches. It helps first responders understand more about mental health, mental illness, and substance use disorders so they can better assess risks and apply the safest strategies for taking care of themselves and the individuals they are called to serve.

## **First Response**

**1-Hour**

An online training course designed for first responders tackling the opioid crisis. However, its research-based resources, coping strategies, and exercises are universally applicable to any stressful event. Completion earns CEUs for EMS professionals.

By completing these resources, responders gain not only valuable knowledge on healthy coping and stress management strategies but also the ability to recognize signs of mental and substance use disorders in themselves and others.



## NEMSIS 3.5 IS HERE: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

On November 20, 2023, the Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Registries (EMSTR) program launched a new statewide data collection platform. The new application replaced the MAVEN system and is compliant with the National EMS Information System (NEMSIS) version 3.5, as required by NEMSIS on all patient care records (PCRs) by January 1, 2024.

The new NEMSIS 3.5 system features simplified call dispositions, cardiac standards integration (outlined in the Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival (CARES) elements), and the incorporation of a Universal Unique Identifier (UUID) for all individual patients. The Universal Unique Identifier's purpose is to track patient outcomes between prehospital, trauma, and rehabilitation patient care in a de-identified manner and will expand on analysis capabilities. Additionally, the system's data linkage element allows for enhanced crash analytics, trauma quality improvement initiatives, and EMS patient care outcome analysis.



### Resources

- [Online Submission Guide](#)
- [EMS Quick Guide](#)
- [How to Register a New Facility with EMSTR](#)
- [How to Request a New EMSTR Account as an External Partner User](#)

Visit the [EMSTR site](#) for more info.

### Texas Wristband Initiative

The new EMSTR platform will also incorporate the Texas Wristband Initiative in the EMS PCR using the NEMSIS eOutcome.03 and eOutcome.04 variables. The Wristband number is currently an optional element. If you are interested in obtaining Texas wristbands for your agency, please contact your local Regional Advisory Council (RAC) for instructions.

For any questions regarding EMSTR submissions, please contact the Registry Operations Support Team at [injury.web@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:injury.web@dshs.texas.gov). EMSTR appreciates your attention to these updates and contribution to quality and timely prehospital Texas data collection.

# DSHS Announces 2023 Texas EMS Award Winners

The Texas Department of State Health Services EMS/Trauma Systems Program presented its annual emergency medical services awards on November 21, 2023, at the Texas EMS Conference in Austin with special guest speaker, Dr. Jennifer Shuford, DSHS Commissioner. Each of the award categories honors a person or organization that exemplifies the highest standards of the Texas EMS/Trauma System.



**EMS Public Information/  
Injury Prevention**

Friendswood VFD EMS

**EMS Educator**

Penny Engelking, LP - Belton

**EMS Telecommunicator**

Jimmy Casas, EMTP - San Antonio

**EMS Administrator**

Diego Pérez, EMTP - Van Horn



**EMS Telecommunicator**

Jimmy Casas, EMTP - San Antonio, pictured with TDEM Chief Nim Kidd and State EMS Director Joe Schmider

**EMS Educator**

Penny Engelking, LP - Belton, pictured with DSHS Commissioner Dr. Jennifer Shuford

**EMS Citizen**

Chris Stroup- Perryton

**EMS Medical Director**

David Miramontes, MD - San Antonio

**EMS Citizen**

Chris Stroup - Perryton

**First Responder**

Abilene Fire Department

**EMS Air Medical**

CareFlite - Grand Prairie

**EMS Provider**

Perryton Fire EMS

**EMS Persons of the Year - Weatherford**

Zach Harmon, LP  
Melinda Lane, LP  
Zachary Richmond, EMTP  
Jordan Tolliver, LP

**Regional Advisory Council**

Panhandle RAC - Canyon



**EMS Public Info/Injury  
Prevention**

Friendswood VFD EMS  
pictured with (left to right),  
Jorie Klein - Director, EMS Trauma  
Systems, Dr. Alan Tyroch - GEATC  
Chair, Dr. Shuford, Nim Kidd, and  
Joe Schmider.



**GETAC's Lifetime  
Achievement Award**

Leon Charpentier, EMTP  
Harker Heights

**Designated Trauma Facility**

Ochiltree General Hospital - Perryton

**GETAC Journey of Excellence**

Jeffery Barnhart, FACHE - Hereford

**GETAC's Lifetime Achievement  
Award**

Lucille Maes, LP - Angleton  
Leon Charpentier, EMTP - Harker  
Heights

## GETAC Committee Selections



The Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council mission is to continuously enhance our EMS and Trauma system for our stakeholders in Texas as we meet the emergency health care needs of all Texans. This mission is met by the GETAC council members' continued support through the endless work of dedicated professionals serving on various committees.

We welcome the newest committee members and express appreciation to the outgoing members for their commitment of time and service to fulfill our vision of a unified, comprehensive, and effective Emergency Healthcare System.

### Air Medical and Specialty Care Transport Committee

**Reappointed:** Adam Gallagher, Martha Headrick, Jim Speier, Dr. Hashim Zaidi **Newly Appointed:** Glenn "Trey" Howard, Thaddeus Walz **Outgoing:** John Hamilton, Daniel Oakes, Stacy Putman, Darin Smith, William Solomon

### Cardiac Care Committee

**Reappointed:** Heather Biddy, Dr. Craig Cooley, Nancy Huard, Dr. James McCarthy, Casey Rauschuber **Newly Appointed:** Stephen Berry, Kyle Jacobson, Jennifer Milum, David Wampler **Outgoing:** Suzanne Mewis, Dr. Alan Taylor

### Disaster Preparedness and Response Committee

**Reappointed:** Eric Epley, Dr. Emily Kidd, Nim Kidd, Lisa Spivey, Chase Wheeler **Newly Appointed:** Brad Cecil **Outgoing:** None

### SPECIAL THANKS

GETAC would like to recognize our outgoing council members for their outstanding leadership and commitment to the Texas EMS and Healthcare System.

#### Karen Pickard, RN

GETAC Member, 2010-2023

#### Jeffery Barnhart, FACHE

GETAC Member, 2016-2023

#### Lucille Maes, LP

GETAC Member, 2019-2023

### Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Committee

**Reappointed:** Sheri Adams, Gerardo Garcia, Teresa Gardner, Kelly Sears **Newly Appointed:** Michael Furrh, Michael Hayes, Brant Stovall **Outgoing:** Eddie Martin, Robert Fox, Angela Prather

### EMS Education Committee

**Reappointed:** Brian Ayres, Diedra Blankenship, Justin Boyd, Miranda Hagans **Newly Appointed:** Dustin Conger, Farris Nation **Outgoing:** Gregory LaMay, Shirlinda Savahl

### EMS Medical Directors Committee

**Reappointed:** Dr. Heidi Abraham, Dr. Jeffrey Jarvis, Dr. Christopher Winckler **Newly Appointed:** Dr. Keegan Bradley, Dr. Stephen Harper, Dr. Carlos Palacio **Outgoing:** None

### Injury Prevention and Public Education Committee

**Reappointed:** Mary Ann Contreras, Stewart Williams **Newly Appointed:** Sarah Abbott, Kati Alley, Bryan Dulock, Krista Easley, Catherine Glenn, Jennifer Poteat, Christine Reeves **Outgoing:** Sharon Cheatum, Debra Curti, Amanda Morlock, Dr. Rohit Sheno, Amber Tucker

### Pediatrics Committee

**Reappointed:** Crystal Bassham, Kathryn Kothari, Crissie Richardson, Belinda Waters **Newly Appointed:** Dr. Barbara Gaines, Dr. Jendi Haug, Sally Snow **Outgoing:** Ronald Mlcak

### Stroke Committee

**Reappointed:** Carla Escobar, Lisa Hutchison, Dr. Robin Novakovic-White **Newly Appointed:** Victoria Cairns, Kevin Cunningham, Ashley Garza **Outgoing:** Catherine Bissell, Dr. George Cravens, Juan Delgadillo, Sarah Hancock, Remedios Morris, Dr. Arash Shadman, Amanda Webb

### Trauma Systems Committee

**Reappointed:** Jennifer Carr, Dr. Aileen Ebadat, Dr. Stephen Flaherty, Dawn Koepp, Dr. Craig Rhyne, Dr. Scott Sagraves, Dr. Elizabeth Scherer **Newly Appointed:** KaLinda Evans, Wesley Milum, Dr. Howard Pryor, Zachary Ward **Outgoing:** Kevin Cunningham

# Updates

Regulations • Programs • Funding



## RULES

### Proposed Trauma Rule Amendments Are Open For Formal Public Comment

The department continues to focus on the amendments to the trauma rules, implementation of the maternal and neonatal designation survey guidelines, technical assistance to the designated facilities during our monthly calls, and rural system development.

The [proposed trauma rule amendments](#) are open for formal public comments. Individuals who would like to provide comments must follow the guidelines outlined in the link when submitting their written comments. The department has a group of selected stakeholders who will review the comments in collaboration with the department. This group includes five members of the Governor’s EMS Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC), six members of the GETAC Trauma Systems Committee, four representatives of the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs), as well as representatives from the Texas Organization of Rural and Community Hospitals (TORCH), the Texas Hospital Association (THA), and the Texas Medical Association’s EMS-Trauma subcommittee.

This group is meeting weekly to review the comments submitted.



## FUNDING

### 2024 Trauma Uncompensated Care (UCC) Application

The designation and funding unit are finalizing the 2024 Trauma Uncompensated Care (UCC) Application. This [application](#) will be open on February 1, 2024, and must be submitted to the department by May 1, 2024. An educational overview of how to complete the application will be offered in February.

# Updates

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## DESIGNATION

### Perinatal Implementations in Effect January 1, 2024

- Adopted Neonatal Texas Administrative Code requirements: [Hospital Level of Care Designation for Neonatal Care](#)
- Texas Designation Survey Guidelines for Maternal and Neonatal Levels of Care Designations.

The Texas Designation Survey Guidelines for Maternal and Neonatal Levels of Care Designations were released August 7, 2023, with an implementation date of January 1, 2024. The survey guidelines establish a standardized structure and consistent process for maternal and neonatal designation surveys in Texas. The survey guidelines provide elements on planning and conducting surveys for facilities, surveyors and survey organizations. Four trainings were offered for each program in August and September. Attendees included facility and program staff, surveyors and survey organizations. The Designation Survey Guidelines require a Quality Assessment Performance Improvement (QAPI) training for all Maternal and Neonatal Surveyors.

#### **The Designation Unit developed and implemented a Perinatal Quality Assessment/Performance Improvement (QAPI), Patient Safety (PS) Training.**

- Training was developed to establish a consistent structure and processes for the Maternal and Neonatal QAPI, PS Plan and Program.
- 13 trainings were held between August 15 through December 19 for 2023.
- 1,102 stakeholders comprising facility and program staff, surveyors, and survey organization staff attended. A video of a latest training is located on the [Maternal](#) and [Neonatal](#) designation websites for viewing.



The trainings have evolved over the past few months as the department asked for stakeholder feedback and revised the presentation and training to integrate the recommendations. The trainings will continue in 2024 with plans to have guest stakeholder presenters, additional resources and case presentations.



# Updates

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GETAC

## Whole Blood Task Force

Dr. Alan Tyroch, Chair of the Governor's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC), has implemented a Whole Blood Task Force. The purpose of this task force is to evaluate the feasibility of implementing a whole blood program in all twenty-two regions of Texas and, if feasible, to define recommendations for implementation. Dr. Tyroch appointed Eric Epley, Executive Director of the Southwest Texas Regional Advisory Council (STRAC), to chair this task force. In addition, Donald Jenkins, MD, FACS, and Christopher Winkler, MD, FACEP, are appointed co-chairs. Individuals interested in serving on this task force should contact Mr. Epley to define the meeting schedules. This task force will report activities to GETAC in March.

## System Performance Improvement Workgroup

Dr. Tyroch appointed Kate Remick, MD, to lead the State System Performance Improvement workgroup. Shawn Salter, BSN, EMT-P, was appointed co-chair. This workgroup has had two meetings and will report information at the upcoming March GETAC meeting.

## EMS Wall Times

The GETAC EMS Committee, working with the Medical Directors and EMS Education Committees, [developed guidelines to address EMS wall times in Texas](#). Please share this document with your colleagues as we address this local, statewide, and national issue together.

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## Perinatal Advisory Council (PAC) Appeals Panel

DSHS has completed reviewing applications for the Perinatal three-person appeal panel. The selected recommendations are moving the process of final appointment to the panel.

Dr. Patrick Ramsey appointed David Nelson, MD, to lead the discussion regarding the review of the Neonatal and Maternal Strategic Review and data. Dr. Nelson's subcommittee provides updates and recommendations to the [Perinatal Advisory Council \(PAC\)](#). All maternal and neonatal facility leaders are encouraged to attend the PAC meetings. Options for virtual participation are available.

PAC

# Updates

Regulations • Programs • Funding



## REGISTRY

### Pediatric Transport Survey

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Injury Prevention Unit is surveying all emergency medical services (EMS) providers and first responders as a follow-up to the 2023 EMS conference. The Injury Prevention Unit is sending this survey to learn more about how Texas children are being transported.

The survey information will help the Injury Prevention Unit identify potential areas for future collaboration and support. The survey is anonymous and will take you approximately five (5) minutes to complete.

Please find the link [here](#). We appreciate your feedback.



### OOH-DNR Training Document Now Available Online



The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has released a training document to assist citizens in completing the Out-of-Hospital Do-Not-Resuscitate (OOH DNR) form.

The document provides valuable information and step-by-step instructions. It is available in both English and Spanish and can be downloaded on the [EMS/Trauma Systems website](#). A companion document for EMS responders and other healthcare providers is in progress.

For questions related to OOH-DNR orders, please email [EMSInfo@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:EMSInfo@dshs.texas.gov).

## DNR

# NEWS AND LINKS

Local • National • Resources

## NHTSA's EMS Update

Learn more about current projects and efforts in EMS from NHTSA and its Federal partners.

[Learn more](#)

## CDC Newsroom

View the latest CDC public health news and press releases.

[Learn more](#)

## The Bulletin

The Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons.

[Learn more](#)

## Washington Update

Bi-monthly newsletter of the National Association of State EMS Officials.

[Learn more](#)

## EMSC Pulse

A digest of information about the pediatric emergency medical care community.

[Learn more](#)

## Integrated Healthcare

Focuses on improving the patient experience of care through inter-professional collaborations.

[Learn more](#)

## EMS/Trauma Systems Links

### GETAC

Visit the Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council web page to view council, committee, and meeting information.

### Rules

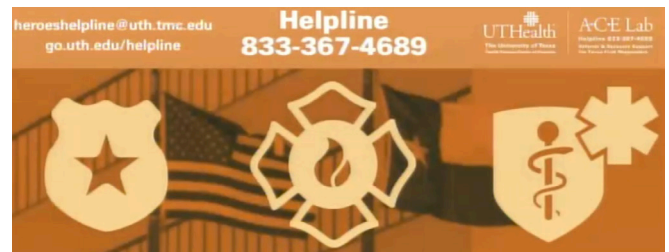
Links to the Texas Administrative Code rules pertaining to EMS/Trauma Systems.

### Disciplinary actions

Public notice of disciplinary action by the Department of State Health Services and the Consumer Protection Division, Consumer Safety Unit.

### Staff Contacts

Contact information for the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems staff and programs.



Texas Department of State  
Health Services



Questions, comments, or suggestions about *Texas EMS Trauma News*? Contact us at [EMSTraumaNews@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:EMSTraumaNews@dshs.state.tx.us).

External links to other sites are intended to be informational and do not have the endorsement of the Texas Department of State Health Services.