



Murray

New designation coordinators on board

We're happy to welcome to the OEMS/TS someone you might recognize. Michael Murray worked at DSHS as a designation coordinator for five years before leaving in 2007. Murray most recently worked for Texas Department of Aging and Disability in the Quality Monitor Program. He has also held nursing positions at University of New Mexico Hospital, Hendrick Medical Center and Abilene Regional Medical Center. His nursing experience includes emergency department nurse, rotor- and fixed-wing flight nurse and trauma coordinator. He will be working on both trauma and stroke designations.

A new face to the DSHS designation team is Patricia Ashton-Garcia, RN. In addition to being a registered nurse, Ashton-Garcia is an ECA/first responder. She has been with Health and Human Services agencies for seven years and has held positions as a case manager and nurse surveyor. She also has held nursing positions at St. David's Medical Center and North Austin Medical Center. She will be working on trauma and stroke designations.



Ashton-Garcia

San Antonio office welcomes new specialist

Jeffrey Duncan recently joined the San Antonio DSHS EMS Compliance office. A paramedic, Duncan attended UTHSC in San Antonio and has worked in county EMS systems in Kerr, Grimes and Frio, and he has managed some private systems as well. Duncan has worked in EMS since the early 1980s.



Duncan

Uncompensated care applications now available

The application for the fiscal year (FY) 2013 Designated Trauma Facilities and Emergency Medical Services (DTF/EMS) Account - Hospital Allocation is now available on the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems webpage under News/Features (www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems). The application information also was mailed to administrators of all designated and "in active pursuit" hospitals and emails were sent to each trauma coordinator and trauma program manager.

To be eligible for the FY13 allocation, a hospital must be a designated trauma facility by the application due date, or it must meet "in active pursuit of trauma designation" requirements by the application due date. The application must be emailed per instructions in the application no later than January 15, 2013. Late applications cannot be accepted.

"In active pursuit" requirements:

- Submit a letter of intent to designate as a trauma facility
- Submit a "timely and sufficient" trauma designation application
- Submit data to the State EMS/Trauma Registry
- Participate in the appropriate Regional Advisory Council
- Provide evidence that a hospital trauma performance improvement committee has been developed

FY13 funds distribution details:

- Fifteen percent of the total amount of funds available for the Hospital Allocation will be divided equally among all eligible applicants.
- The remaining 85 percent of the Hospital Allocation funds will be distributed to eligible hospitals based on the percentage of uncompensated trauma care a hospital provides in relation to the total uncompensated care provided by all the eligible hospitals that apply for the Hospital Allocation.

The trauma care funding program enacted by House Bill (HB) 3588, 78th Texas Legislature, stipulates that 96 percent of the funds accumulated in the DTF/EMS Account be distributed to eligible Texas hospitals to reimburse a portion of their uncompensated trauma care. Since the inception of the account in 2003, OEMS/TS has distributed approximately \$447,550,000 from the DTF/EMS Account to approximately 270 eligible Texas hospitals to reimburse a portion of their uncompensated trauma care. All eligible hospitals that applied received a minimum of \$11,686 in FY 2004, \$29,596 in FY 2005, \$34,132 in FY 2006, \$28,853 in FY 2007, \$42,831 in FY 2008, \$42,165 in FY 2009, \$40,362 in FY 2010, \$37,250 in FY 2011, and \$29,021 in FY 2012.

For questions or additional information regarding "in active pursuit" of trauma designation requirements, please contact Emily Parsons at (512) 834-6794 or emily.parsons@dshs.state.tx.us.

On Duty

New GETAC appointments

The Governor's Office notified the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems of five appointments to the Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council. All terms expire January 1, 2018.

Jodie Harbert III
College Station, Texas
Position: EMS Educator
(Reappointment)

Shirley Scholz
Ransom Canyon, Texas
Position: Air Medical
(Reappointment)

Karen M. Pickard
Ovilla, Texas
Position: EMS Volunteer Service
Pickard began her career as a paramedic in 1980 and has a bachelor's degree in nursing from UT Arlington. She began working with EMS volunteers 30 years ago when she moved to then-rural Ellis County. Since then, she has worked with volunteer agencies across the state, including The State Firemen and Fire Marshals Association of Texas, which works with and sponsors EMS and fire volunteers.



Pickard

Alan H. Tyroch, MD
El Paso, Texas
Position: Trauma Surgeon or Nurse
Dr. Tyroch is professor and Chair of Surgery at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center of El Paso. He is Chief of Surgery and Trauma Medical Director at University Medical Center of El Paso. As a member of the American College of Surgeons, he serves as the state chair for the ACS South Texas Committee on Trauma and is a Governor at Large. He has been an active member in the Border RAC (TSA-I) since 1997.



Tyroch

Dr. Tyroch, a fifth generation native Texan, earned a bachelor's degree in microbiology from Texas A&M University and a doctorate of medicine from the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. He completed a surgery internship at Baylor College of Medicine (Houston), a general surgery residency at the Phoenix Integrated Surgery Residency Program (Arizona) and a trauma/surgical critical care fellowship at the University of California, San Francisco-Fresno Campus.

Level I stroke center application now on website

The application to apply for state designation as a Comprehensive (Level I) Stroke Center is now posted and accessible on the DSHS website at www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/formsresources.shtm#Stroke. DSHS began accepting applications October 1 from Comprehensive (Level I) Stroke Centers certified by The Joint Commission or the DNV. Further state stroke system development information is available at www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/stroke.shtm.

“Approved” doesn’t mean certified

Q: I just submitted my Recertification form electronically and the status reads, “Approved”. Does that mean my application is approved?

A: No, your Recertification application will need to be reviewed by EMS Certification staff before it is approved and you are issued a new certification card. The online application is listed as “approved” by the online system, which indicates that the online system has accepted your payment and application. We hope to have that wording modified soon to avoid further confusion. Contact the EMS Certification office at (512) 834-6734 if you have additional questions.

On Duty

Did you know...

Volunteer personnel can now use the electronic renewal process to submit their DSHS Renewal application. But, wait! Before you can use the electronic system, you will also need to fax the Volunteer Sign-Off form to the Certification office at (512) 834-6714. Personnel that want to upgrade their certification levels (e.g.: ECA to EMT) will still need to submit the paper DSHS Initial application at this time. We hope to have an electronic application submission solution soon.

Looking for more continuing education?

How about flash CE? Texas EMS Conference is partnering with the EMS Gathering of Eagles conference to present ten-minute CE sessions on Sunday, November 11. To receive one full hour of CE, you must attend five of the flash sessions and record the CE numbers. For each five-session set you attend, you will receive one hour of EMS continuing education credit. You choose the type of CE based on the sessions you attended. The topics are wide-ranging and cutting-edge, offering the latest in the science of EMS. The sessions will be held all day on Sunday at the Hilton Austin.

Watch for MOA changes!

DSHS is changing the way it administers Memorandums of Agreement for help during disasters. Watch our website and this magazine for details.

Two receive Star of Texas honors



Two emergency first responders were honored at the Star of Texas awards at the Capitol in September. EMT Mike Hatley, 46, was on duty as the system status controller (SSC/Dispatcher) for the East Texas Medical Center-Pasadena communications center when he suffered a massive hemorrhagic stroke. Around 2:00 p.m. on December 27, 2011, Hatley stood up at his console and said "stroke," then he slumped down in his chair. Colleagues say he had been symptomatic but was reluctant to leave his post due to multiple active 9-1-1 calls he was working. An ambulance was called to treat and transport, but he died two days later.

Michael Thomas Steffen, 65, of Salt Flat, lost his life while responding to an emergency on March 12, 2012. He was responding to a call for additional assistance at an accident on U.S. Highway 62/180 in his private vehicle when he lost control, the vehicle rolled over, and Steffen died on-scene. Steffen was an ECA for Northern Hudspeth County EMS.

The Star of Texas Awards honor emergency medical first responders, peace officers and firefighters who have been seriously injured or killed in the line of duty for the sacrifices they have made to protect Texans. The Star of Texas Awards were created by House Bill 1937 in 2003 to honor and commemorate individuals who have made profound commitments while performing their duties as peace officers, firefighters and emergency medical first responders. The award was expanded in 2005 to include all peace officers, firefighters and emergency medical first responders who were seriously injured or killed in the line of duty on or after Sept. 1, 2003. HB 1164 in 2007 further expanded the award to include federal law enforcement officers or special agents seriously injured or killed while performing duties in Texas to assist state or local law enforcement.

Accreditation begins January 1, 2013

Texas Administrative Code 157.32 relating to accreditation went into effect in August. Beginning in January, all paramedic education programs in Texas must be accredited or have a current Letter of Review from the Committee on Accreditation of Education Programs for the EMS Profession (CoAEMSP) in order to continue teaching paramedic courses. The rule also requires EMS education programs to adopt the National Highway and Traffic Administration's National EMS Education Standards for EMR, EMT, AEMT and paramedic. For information on that, go online to Texas EMS Magazine and click on July/August 2011 issue. Then click "National Registry rolls out new exams."

Grant funding available

DSHS has funding available for areas that have suffered a devastating event that may severely reduce or incapacitate emergency response capability. The Extraordinary Emergency Fund is available to assist licensed EMS providers, hospitals and registered first responder organizations if unforeseeable events cause a degradation of service to the community.

DSHS also has a total of \$50,000 this fiscal year available for EMS training programs, registered first responder organizations (FROs), coordinators and instructors to conduct ECA courses in rural or underserved areas of the state lacking local EMS training resources. Grant funds cover the cost of instruction and textbooks, as well as other expenses such as printing and supplies. OEMS/TS will accept grant applications on a first-come-first-served basis until the funds run out for the fiscal year. Eligibility requirements for ECAT grants: A minimum of three students; students must agree to perform emergency care attendant services for at least one year with a local emergency medical service provider or first responder organization; services must be provided in a designated rural or underserved area of Texas, as determined by zip code or county; and the course coordinator must be affiliated with an educational program. And give yourself plenty of time: It takes about 60 days for an ECAT grant to work its way through the DSHS approval process. For more information on either program, go to www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/TrainingFunding.shtm or contact Haramain Shaikh at (512) 834-6700 ext. 2377 or haramain.shaikh@dshs.state.tx.us. For a list of all EMS and trauma funding available through DSHS, go to www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/efunding.shtm.

Federal Medicare fraud indictments announced

The U.S. Attorney's office announced indictments of people in Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston for defrauding the government of nearly \$100 million in false Medicare billings. The indictments were part of an investigation in seven U.S. cities involving about \$429 million in fraudulent billings. The government alleges that the defendants billed for services not performed, for unnecessary services and for equipment not provided. In Houston, the CEO of Riverside Hospital and five others were charged with conspiracy to commit fraud by paying "recruiters" to send patients to the hospital and offering "partial hospitalization" for the mentally ill. Riverside is licensed as a general hospital by DSHS and is designated with contingencies as a Level IV trauma facility.

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Are you a Facebook fanatic?

Join more than 1400 other fans of Texas EMS Conference and "like" us on Facebook. We update the page with the latest news about the conference, including last-minute changes and hotel updates. Also, the Austin Convention and Visitors Bureau has created a special tab on our page with details on what to do in Austin.

Uptick in elderly falls could be reporting changes

More accurate coding of falls could be the reason for a recent national spike in the number of elderly falls. Rates jumped 42 percent between 2000 and 2006, say researchers at Johns Hopkins. They attribute the spike to the implementation of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) in 1999 that attributed deaths to the fall rather than an illness or complication as a result of the fall. The study was published in the May/June issue of Public Health Reports.

RAC coordinator joins OEMS/TS

Colin Crocker recently joined OEMS/TS as the RAC program coordinator. Crocker attended the University of Oregon and has most recently worked developing and managing education policy projects for the National Security Education Program and The Language Flagship. He will be coordinating RAC contracts.



Crocker

On Duty