

**Rappahannock EMS Council
Pharmacy Committee Meeting
March 1, 2005**

Minutes

Members Present:

Kevin Dillard, Chairperson
Linda Harris, REMS Council Systems Coordinator
Joey King, Life Care Medical Transports
Robert Zywiak, MWH Pharmacy

Guests:

Tina Skinner, REMS Council Director
Mike Grubb, Spotsylvania County Department of Fire, Rescue & Emergency Svcs
Russ Hummel, Biomedical Equipment & Engineering

Excused:

Tim Kimble , Virginia Office of EMS Program Representative
Chris Simmons, Culpeper Hospital
Don Taylor, Spotsylvania County Department of Fire, Rescue & Emergency Svcs.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Kevin Dillard at 10:00 a.m. at the REMS Council Training Room in Fredericksburg, Va. Minutes of the February 1, 2005 meeting we approved as submitted.

The agenda as follows:

1. One for One Medication Exchange. Tina Skinner reported on conversation she had with both Mike Berg, Compliance Manager at the Virginia Office of EMS, and Mr. Robert Orr from the Pharmacy Board. She spoke to them in reference to item E2 of our Draft proposal for the One for One medication exchange. It references the location of the medication box key on EMS units. Pharmacy regulations state that controlled substances include all scheduled drugs. Under the CSR, Controlled Substance Registration, that we would have to apply for to do the one for one drug exchange specifically outlines that you must control access of drugs and who can obtain and who has access to controlled substances. Mr. Orr agreed that this interpretation is correct. This means that our draft of the one for one exchange will need to be revised as far as the location of the med box keys on EMS units. Tina further stated that controlled substances include Schedule 1 through Schedule 6 medications and the narcotics. Access to all these medications must be controlled. Mike Berg will

contact all program representatives to make sure they understand the regulations for access to controlled drugs. Mike Grubb will meet with Don Taylor to revise the draft proposal. Tina suggested adding to the document the process where by the agency and/ or the council office will need to apply for the controlled substance registration to include the application and fees. And to identify that ultimately it will be up to the medical director for each locality to participate. The draft needs to state that the OMD will have to sign the CSR. The council is willing to apply for all agencies for the registration. Tina would also like for the term 'response vehicle' to be changed to EMS licensed vehicle. The former term can be confusing. Mike Grubb will meet with Don Taylor to make the changes.

2. Needle Stick Safety Program – Mike Grubb reports that the provider that was assigned to this project will report on its progress at the next meeting. He has been on medical leave.
3. Region Wide Temperature Storage – There was a presentation by Mr. Russ Hummel from Biomedical Equipment & Engineering on the temperature monitoring devices and temperature regulation equipment. He has completed research on the need for temperature monitoring devices on EMS units. According to Mr. Hummel the recommendation of the FDA and pharmacy manufacturers is that the temperature range for pharmaceuticals should not be below 50 degrees or above 85 degrees. He monitored 100 med boxes in the ODEMSA Region for about a month at a time from the last week of July 2000 and again in January 2001. During the earlier survey 10 boxes never left the pharmacy. The average number of hours that the medications were above the maximum temperature was 88 days. One box exceeded the temperature for over 500 hours. The latter survey was unfortunately during a milder than normal January. Approximately one third of the boxes went below the minimum during this survey. During these two surveys 89 of the 90 boxes had exposure outside the recommended ranges. There was some discussion about our possible grant for temperature monitoring devices for the 350 EMS licensed units that are within our region. Since Mr. Hummel's research seemed so thorough the decision was not to pursue a RSAF Grant for monitoring devices. There was further discussion on the Pharmgard Temperature Storage unit. They make a small unit that is about 3 ½ cubic feet and approximately sells for \$700.00. The larger unit is 7 ½ cubic feet and costs about \$900.00. Retrofitters and installers would need to insulate the top, bottom, sides, back and door of existing cabinet, plus adding a seal to the door. This could cost approximately \$2,000.00. Once this is completed and the device is installed it will regulate the temperature of the cabinet by adding cooling when the internal temperature reaches 72 degrees and add heating when the temperature reaches 55 degrees.

Bob Zywiak reported on the temperature variances of the medications that are carried by our EMS agencies. He stated that pharmacy companies are reluctant to give information on variations on temperature ranges. He was told that guidelines are set and they will not discuss repercussions if the medications go

outside the guidelines. Mr. Zywiak suggested that during the peak months the agencies could possibly exchange med boxes every 2 weeks if they have not been used. Tina stated that it should be the decision of the Pharmacy as to whether a drug has been compromised or can remain in the field.

The committee has decided to work on a 3 to 5 year plan for RSAF Grant requests for all agencies for the Pharmgard Temperature Storage unit. This will include retrofitting EMS licensed units. The council will also advise agencies as they place RSAF grant requests for new ambulances to add the Pharmgard unit to the request. Kevin will make contact with the state committee about adding this item to the next bid list for the state ambulance contract. The REMS committee will set guidelines on which units will receive the addition of the Pharmgard device. If the ambulance is due to be replaced within the next two years it should not be included for the retrofit. A memo will be sent to agencies for possible grant requests for the Pharmgard.

4. Critical Care Medication Storage – Bob Zywiak stated that he is still checking on the availability of the seven new drugs.
5. ALS Survey – Linda Harris reported that the survey was up and running last week. A link has been added to our web site. A memo was faxed to agencies last week. We have over 600 ALS providers in our region and we felt it was more cost effective to initially fax letters to agencies telling them about the survey. If the response is minimal we will mail letters to selected ALS providers. As of this morning there were 19 responses on the survey. A notice will be posted at MWH about the survey. Comments from the survey will be e mailed to committee members prior to the next meeting.
6. RSAF Grants – This will wait until the fall cycle to place grant request for the Pharmgard device.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be in 2 months on May 3, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. in the REMS 2nd Floor Training Room at 2301 Fall Hill Avenue, Fredericksburg.