

VT EMS Advisory Committee

Minutes

October 21, 2020

1:00 pm

In Attendance:

Charlene Phelps

Adam Heuslein

Ellen Stein, UVM

Dan Batsie

Ray Walker

Jim Finger

Drew Hazelton

Leslie Lindquist

Pat Malone

Bobby Maynard

Gwynn Zakov

Alan Beebe

COVID Response Update – Dan Batsie

- Numbers are up in last month
- Numbers seem to be surrounding outbreaks. Not seeing substantial increase in community transmission, mostly small outbreaks that become bigger
- First case of school-based transmission. 1 transmission over thousands of kids that have been in school, its to be expected.
- Situations are coming up from lack of masks, social distancing, crowds/parties
- Vaccine is focus; EMS is listed as 1A for priority for vaccine. Looking at integrating EMS as vaccine recipient as well as vaccinator.
- Vermont still lowest rate of transmission in US

Workforce Retention Assessment

- Dan went over the results of the survey of all VT-licensed EMS providers. He will do a thorough review of this and then send out the information to all. He will add number of providers at different certification levels
- Executive level leadership training – Dan will talk to fire service about getting this rescheduled
- Ray will be putting together re-licensing data so the group can get an idea of the percentages of renewals
- 11 Provisional licenses are currently out there – 9 of the 11 were interested in renewing
- Jim Finger mentions that its important to look at those who recently let their certification lapse (this cycle). Maybe an exit interview. Dan will look into digging some data on this

Education Committee

- Committee has had some discussions regarding licensure levels, IC, and finishing up some of the students delayed from the spring
- Tuition Vouchers – Paramedic money has been used up; new applicants have been put on a waiting list. Matching up students/classes still needs to be worked on to determine final amounts. 7 EMT classes have not yet started, almost complete on allocation of those funds also. 187 EMTs, AEMTs, and EMRS are fully enrolled in classes under the tuition vouchers, another

100 or so will be likely added to that number. Average year is 600 students in VT education, 300 students have been added in 2 months. These students are also approved and authorized by service chiefs. Pat Malone indicates there will need to be a process put in place to track these students to see who comes out the other side, important info for committee and legislature. 40-50 paramedics have been put in classes

Legislation Update

- S.142 – passed. Forms the EMS education council. Also created the Vermont Responder level. Goals to implement for July 2021. Creates instructor levels and portfolio based EMT evaluation. Pat Malone put together a work plan for requirements of H124 (enclosed). Will look for education experts to invite as ex officio members to the council.

Legislative Report Question Review

- Format – no changes were suggested
- Executive Summary
 - Impact of COVID to EMS should be added to this section
- Several of the legislative issues have had some movement and have been dealt with. The 2020 report will include information on the work that has been done and what the funding has done to help with these issues
- Question 1: Whether every Vermont municipality should be required to have in effect an emergency medical services plan providing for timely and competent emergency response.
 - S.124 did not require VT towns to have plans but did require emergency planning districts to report on EMS systems. Will likely not happen this year
- Question 2: Whether the state should establish directives addressing when an agency can respond to a nonemergency request for transportation of a patient, if doing so will leave the service area unattended or unable to respond to an emergency call in a timely fashion.
 - Dan could run mutual aid numbers, but number has been historically inaccurate. May need to be looked at in a prospective way and put out guidance on how agencies should track this. Definition of mutual aid needs to be developed
 - The goal would be to develop data standards for Siren
- Question 3: How the EMS system is functioning statewide and the current state of recruitment and workforce development.
 - Been discussed at length and there is data and information to answer this question
 - Workforce development survey information could be added as a summary or appendix
- Question 4: Each EMS district's response times to 911 emergencies in the previous year, based on information collected from the Vermont Department of Health's Division of Emergency Medical Services.
 - Data Dan will provide
- Question 5: Funding mechanisms and funding gaps for EMS personnel and providers across the State, including the funding for infrastructure, equipment, and operations and costs associated with initial and continuing training, licensure, and credentialing of personnel.
 - Funding that came out of this legislation session should be addressed here

- Question 6: The nature and cost of dispatch services for EMS providers throughout the State and suggestions for improvement
 - H.124 – group is requested to provide information to the commissioner on dispatch and the effects on EMS. Legislature will be setting rates.
 - Dispatch subcommittee established to determine the response to this question – Bobby Maynard (Chair), Jim Finger, and Adam Heuslein. Will report back to this committee next meeting
- Question 7: Legal, financial, or other limitations on the ability of EMS personnel with various levels of training and licensure to engage in lifesaving or health preserving procedures
 - Education funding was one-time funding. Financial limitation is that this funding will run out, but needs do not run out.
- Question 8: How the current system of preparing and licensing EMS personnel could be improved, including the role of Vermont Technical College’s EMS program: whether the State should create an EMS academy: and how such an EMS academy should be structured.
 - This question has had some movement in this area with creation of education council and instructor qualifications
- Question 9: How EMS instructor training and licensing could be improved.
 - This has been addressed and can report on progress of IC discussions
- Question 10: The impact of the State’s credentialing requirements for EMS personnel on EMS providers.
 - Credentialing is no longer required
- Provider tax? Is it worth going after?
 - 2021 is likely not a good year for this due to likely sizeable deficits.

Minutes from August 19, 2020 meeting approved

Next Meeting – Draft language of report to be presented

November 18, 2020 – in person meeting to be held at Regional Ambulance. Lunch to be provided prior to meeting. Meeting at 1:00 pm. Virtual option available as well

Meeting adjourned