



TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, January 5, 2022 – 9:00 a.m.

Held via Zoom Videoconferencing

MINUTES

| <u>MEMBERS</u> | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>NAME</u> | <u>CATEGORY REPRESENTED</u> | <u>ORANGE COUNTY EMS STAFF</u> | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Robert Viera, Chair | – Ambulance Association of Orange County | Carl Schultz, MD | – EMS Medical Director |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris Waddell, RN | – Base Hospital Coordinators | Gagandeep Grewal, MD | – Associate EMS Medical Director |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jacob Wagoner | – Ambulance Service Provider non-9-1-1 | Danielle Ogaz | – EMS Systems & Standards Chief |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Titus Ynares, RN | – Orange County Nursing Leadership | Meng Chung | – BLS Coordinator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chad Drueten | – Ambulance Service Provider 9-1-1 | David Johnson, RN | – Facilities Coordinator |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ryan Creager | – Air Transport Provider | Juan Alvarez | – EMS Specialist |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bryan Johnson, RN | – Fire Service Provider (with transport) | Justin Newton | – EMS Specialist |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rhonda Rosati, RN | – Fire Service Provider (non- transport) | Erica Moojen | – Office Supervisor |
| | | Eileen Endo | – Office Specialist |

| <u>GUESTS PRESENT</u> | | | |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------|--|
| <u>NAME</u> | <u>REPRESENTING</u> | <u>NAME</u> | <u>REPRESENTING</u> |
| Julia Afrasiabi, RN | – UCI Medical Center | Gloria Guerra, RN | – St. Jude Medical Center |
| Nicholas Berkuta | – City of San Clemente | Andrew Hill | – Laguna Beach Fire Department |
| Drew Bernard | – Emergency Ambulance Service | Lance Lawson | – American Professional Ambulance |
| Shelley Brukman, RN | – Children’s Hospital of Orange County | Nicole Plouffe | – Children’s Hospital of Orange County |
| Ruth Clark, RN | – Orange County Global Medical Center | Teressa Polinski, RN | – UCI Medical Center |
| Laura Cross, RN | – Mission Hospital | Patrick Powers | – City of Placentia |
| Daniel Graham, | – Liberty Ambulance Service | Kim Zaky, RN | – Children’s Hospital of Orange County |

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Robert Viera.

II. **INTRODUCTIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None made.

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was noted that the meeting on the minutes is incorrect and should be changed from July 7, 2021 to October 6, 2021.

The minutes from October 6, 2021 were approved as revised.

IV. **OCEMS REPORT**

• **OCEMS Report**

Reported by Meng Chung:

- **OCEMS Report:** Memorandums that Orange County EMS released in the past two to three weeks were outlined (further discussion to take place under other business); the resumption of IFT-ALS services by Emergency Ambulance Service; and the extended moratorium on the EMS Skills Verification form until March 2022 were announced. Dr. Schultz announced that Emergency Ambulance Services resumed its IFT-ALS services effective immediately. The State EMS Authority has extended the moratorium on the EMT Skills Verification form until March, 2022.

In addition, On December 20, 2021, Dr. Schultz released a memorandum acknowledging this shortage and medical direction on modification of the policies and procedures for both pediatric and adult patients. In regard to the shortage, the memo authorizes ALS providers to continue to use expired medication for up to six months past its expiration date. If expired drugs are used, the provider must notify the patient or his/her representative and OCEMS. (see memo #4190)

- **Health Emergency Management /COVID Update:** The Health Care Agency Operations Center (AOC) remains staffed at Level 2 Alert. Currently the AOC is coordinating mobile vaccination PODS; distribution of COVID testing kits; and coordinating monoclonal antibody resources. Dr. Grewal reported that COVID case rates remain high. On January 4, 2022, the seven day average daily cases rate with a seven day lag was at 42.6 per 100,000 population while this case rate increased to 53.6 per 100,000 population. One week ago, the number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 was 615 and today, this number has increased to 6731 patients.
- **OCEMS 2021 Ambulance Inspection Summary:** A summary of the 2021 Ambulance Inspections (see Attachment #2) for 2021 is included in the agenda packet. OCEMS staff inspected 422 ambulances during 2021 calendar year. 409 ambulance units passed inspection with 13 vehicles failing inspection. The second page of the report shows a breakdown of inspections being done on a month to month basis. Mr. Chung reported here were some delays in body and mechanical repairs making some units unavailable for inspection until a later date.
- **OCEMS 2022 Ambulance Count:** Mr. Chung reported that 379 ambulance vehicles were issued effective December 29, 2021. Mission Ambulance has elected not to renew their company and vehicle licenses in 2022. There are two new ambulance companies who are now licensed in Orange County. They are AmWest Ambulance and LifeWest Southern California (see Attachment #3).
- **MED-9 Annual Radio Compliance:** Attached to the agenda packet is the MED-9 radio compliance percentages for the 2021 calendar year (See Attachment #4).

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- *None. (See other Business)*

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- *None. (See other Business)*

VI. OTHER BUSINESS (*The following items were raised and had not been placed on the regular agenda but are additional items*)

- **Suspension of Hospital Diversion**

As 9-1-1 calls are increasing, this has resulted in an increase in hospital diversion to more than 200 hours a day for three consecutive days. As a result, this led OCEMS to release correspondence to suspend hospital diversion with the exception in the case of trauma, stroke-neurology, and cardiovascular receiving centers.

- **Ambulance Patient Off-Load Times**

As 9-1-1 calls were increasing, a large number of ambulance transports were being held at emergency receiving centers throughout the County without being released back to the field. As a result, Orange County EMS instituted a policy that allow an ambulance unit to return to the field **if** the unit's wait time was greater than 60 minutes and a second unit was present and had been waiting for greater than 15 minutes. The initial unit was permitted to take the patient to another hospital or place the patient on a cot in the emergency department and return to service. Ambulance service providers and fire department representatives were reminded that if the initial unit elects to transfer the patient to a different hospital, the secondary unit may place its patient on to a cot. This policy will remain in place until stress on the system

improves. Questions from Committee members were raised to clarify the policy and whether the patient was an ALS or BLS patients. Dr. Schultz replied if a patient's wait time was greater than 60 minutes and no other ambulance unit was present, the ambulance company needed to wait until a second unit arrived and waiting more than 15 minutes before the first unit could leave. He also indicated that once a paramedic has given his/her report to the nurse, the patient becomes the hospital's responsibility to care for.

Ruth Clark and Chris Waddell stressed the importance than any e-PCR documentation be posted so that it may be reviewed by the base hospital coordinator. In addition, they requested that the e-PCR show documentation the new hospital' destination should it be changed. Dr. Schultz also requested that EMTs document the location of any cots so that they may be retrieved in a timely manner.

- **Mutual Aid**

Due to excessive demand for ambulance services, Orange County EMS has decided to extend the option of mutual aid beyond 9-1-1 ambulance provider to any licensed Orange County ambulance provider. As a result, those who typically provider 9-1-1 responses can now reach out to an Orange County licensed ambulance provider who does not normally respond to 9-1-1 calls and establish new mutual aid agreements. The intent is to expand the number of ambulance available to answer 9-1-1 calls.

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM

IX. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 6, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

X. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.