

1. Due to COVID, SEMSCO and SEMAC meetings were once again held virtually May 25-26. If you want copies of meeting agendas and handouts, help yourself at www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/meetings_and_events.htm. The truly scintillating archived webcasts of the meetings are parked at www.health.ny.gov/events/webcasts/archive/. Reading these may be much less painful, and more quickly digested; plus their delayed release allows inclusion of updates and information released subsequent to the May meetings.
2. Of note for those attempting to interact with Bureau staff: 70% of personnel have been detailed on NYD COVID operations. You may see some delays in returning emails, phone calls and processing paperwork.
3. Med Standards and SEMAC reviewed and approved NYC Unified Protocols after some discussion about IV nitroglycerine. Typically supplied in glass bottles of 250 mL or larger, adding intravenous nitro to the State ALS formulary runs afoul of 800.23(c) which requires any fluid volume over 249 mL to be in plastic containers. Since NTG could be mixed in plastic containers just prior to use, Med Standards recommended SEMAC considered adding it to the ALS formulary (which they did). The glass vial thing needs a regulation change down the road...the plastic stuff is incredibly expensive and risks errors.
4. The Viral Pandemic Triage Protocol (see # 20-06 at www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/policy/policy.htm) was discussed at length and then disgusted at even more length (pun intended); considering whether to kibosh it, genericize it for future outbreaks, make it able to be turned on/off Regionally, etc. Ultimately, a little TAG was established for review which is a tad humorous if you recall the January 2021 meeting. Back then it was assigned to a workgroup for review.
5. As though we don't have enough to worry about, Ebola has reared its ugly head once again, prompting issuance of Policy Statement 21-02 on Prevention and Control of Ebola Virus Disease (www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/policy/policy.htm). There was considerable discussion on development of a SEMAC policy encouraging Ebola patient transport directly to an Ebola capable facility. SEMAC will work on this.
6. The proposed Hudson Valley Region SGA pilot for EMTs is awaiting Health Commissioner approval as a pilot study. SEMSCO and SEMAC authorized the pilot statewide in January 2021 with the Hudson Valley Region serving as a data collection hub. In the study, iGel supraglottic airways would be placed by trained EMTs in cardiac arrest patients, using continuous waveform capnography and verification by an ALS provider or physician along with tight QA/QI oversight. No word on why the delay although the Health Commish might be busy with other things like COVID, nursing homes, the Attorney General and Feds. Just sayin.
7. Multiple agencies across the State filed and were approved for Community Paramedic Programs for COVID vaccination. It was believed by some that these authorizations ended with the expiration of the Governor's Executive Order (EO) on June 25, 2021 but later determined that authorizations continue under the Federal PREP Act (see www.phe.gov/emergency/events/COVID19/Documents/covid19-vaccination-wrkfr-factsheet-508.pdf) at least through the end of 2021.

8. A National Weekend of Honor was held during July 2021 to remember fallen EMS heroes: have a look at www.national-ems-memorial.org/national-ems-weekend-of-honor-pays-tribute-to-fallen-ems-heroes/.
9. Med Standards and SEMAC noted that Suffolk County is still not using the NYS Collaborative Protocols, despite expressing intent to adopt them during 2020. A request will be sent to Suffolk to adopt the protocols without requiring they join the Collaborative unless they wish to jump on board.
10. Questions were raised on the TXA protocol adopted in January and forwarded to the Commissioner. No word yet on approval. See item #6 above. Of note, as though you are not already suffocating in abbreviations, for your Region to use TXA, it must be approved by your RTAC (Regional Trauma Advisory Council). Not sure where you find your RTAC, but your Regional Council might be able to share their secret handshake. LOL.
11. The new State Protocol App is up and running and, my goodness did it ever get a lot of discussion. If you put it on your iPhone or Android by going to your store and downloading Muru (Next Gen EMS Protocol App), you'll see what I mean. It's got a lot of features, many of which require someone (Ferris Bueller?) to populate all the meds and equipment your department carries, including doses and concentrations. The question at hand was when will the Collaborative App sunset and Muru take its place? No answer, so take your pick.
12. The free ePCR platform launched as promised using the ImageTrend Elite site (<https://newyork.imagetrendelite.com/Elite/Organizationnewyork/>). July 1st marked the end of paper PCRs, sort of. Agencies still charting on paper must scan the forms and enter them via an electronic portal. Agencies enrolled in the CME recert program have until the beginning of 2022 to get onto a fully electronic PCR platform in order to remain in the CME program. The source for answers to all questions is emsdata@health.ny.gov.
13. In the ever changing masking requirements, inquiring minds pressed the Bureau on where masks are actually required to be worn, besides during patient care on scene and in transport. For example, are they needed when a crew is responding to a scene or about town in an empty rig? Supposed guidance never materialized from NYS but it did roll out from OSHA when they issued an Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS), effective effect June 21, 2021: www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets. Specific to EMS, ETS requires masks in patient care situations. Pull the "Is Your Workplace Covered by the COVID-19 Healthcare ETS" sheet and read the footnotes. You're in there.
14. Training and Education proposed NYS adopt the Federal (NHTSA) change notices issued March 29, 2021 to enhance scopes of practice during the pandemic and beyond (see www.ems.gov/pdf/NHTSA_2019SOPM_ChangeNotices_One_and_Two_032921.pdf). These were approved by SEMSCO and SEMAC and will add IM injection to EMT scope of practice, nasal swab specimen collection to EMT, AEMT and Medic scopes of practice and immunization during a public health emergency to EMT, AEMT and Paramedic scopes.
15. Instructor retention concerns focused considerable discussion on Policy Statement 19-01 (Instructor Certification). With vastly different course lengths, it can be a struggle for Course Sponsors to recruit CICs for full length original classes. The T&E Chair will submit some proposed modifications to job-share CIC work, allowing credit towards instructor recertification for multiple CICs in longer length courses.

16. Sponsor renewals due June 2021 have been extended until December 2021.
17. Procrastinators are more likely to fail their NYS Exams! That's an important message from the Bureau. Students who complete a course get an email within a week of course completion explaining how to register with PSI (<https://schedule.psiexams.com/>). While they have a year to do so, every month they wait brings them closer to failure when they actually take the test. All candidates now get three tries at their exam. They should register ASAP for the best odds of passing. Their score and a temporary card are provided on site after they complete the exam. People who fail should wait 48 hours to reschedule so their records have time to synchronize.
18. New BLS skill sheets are in the approval pipeline. Don't print mass quantities of the current forms.
19. The migration of CME paperwork submission to an on-line portal is currently in pilot with a select number of agencies. Once the bugs are ironed out, it will be rolled out statewide.
20. Speaking of recert, cards have been the talk of the town of late. A new (washable, at least once) card will roll out shortly. It will also be available to print through the Health Commerce System (HCS) which, if you have yet to get access, you should do so through either your Regional Council or County EMS Coordinator. Not only are current EMS certifications verifiable on the HCS but purportedly, Instructor Certs will also be accessible through HCS once the printable card feature arrives. Don't hold your breath – miracles rarely happen overnight.
21. National Registry exams were optional for initial certification for all levels since Spring 2020 but this authorization lapsed with the expiration of the Governors EO on 6-25-2021, leaving some 300-400 folks who registered, took and passed the NREMT exams unable to get NYS Certification without going back and taking the NYS exam. There has been a strong push for emergency regulations to permanently allow an alternative (National Registry) exam option. A signal that they may be close will be an emergency meeting of SEMSCO to approve draft regs. Keep your ear out for that. And yes, students get three cracks at the Registry exam, just like the NYS test.
22. The 20% "holdback" in NYS reimbursements to Course Sponsors, Regional Councils and Program Agencies had many on the edge of their seats and caused considerable hardship. It's been paid back and checks are no longer showing holdbacks. Phew!
23. In the category of "pucker factor" news, a recent DLA (Division of Legal Affairs) opinion suggests that geographic restrictions on Course Sponsorships may not be authorized under law or regs. The Bureau will be issuing a revision to the Course Sponsorship Policy Statement clarifying this opinion. It will likely reinstate the requirement for each Course Sponsor to file an annual training plan with their Regional Council. Keep your ears peeled for more on this fur ball.
24. The EMS Systems Committee reported continued discussion on revisions to the infamous Policy Statement 06-06 which defines the CON process. They are also examining Regional Processes and deliverables (Regional Councils and Program Agencies are funded with DOH monies). They are also exploring ways of highlighting best practices in EMS across NYS.
25. The Bureau is collecting data on long hospital wait times. Feel free to use this form: <https://apps.health.ny.gov/pubpal/builder/survey/ems-agencies-to-report-long-wait>.

26. Just a reminder, if you have suggestions or corrections to the Collaborative Protocols you can: <https://redcap.urmc.rochester.edu/redcap/surveys/?s=XM XFDFMEA9>.
27. Two new SEMSCO Committees have been created: Quality Metrics and EMS Innovation. Quality will deal with (duh) quality and EMS Innovation will delve into ET3, Community Paramedicine, Treatment In Place (TIP), among other innovative EMS ventures.
28. The AHA published, “Interim Guidance for EMS Management of Out-Of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest During the COVID-19 Pandemic” in July 2021. See www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/CIRCOUTCOMES.120.007666.
29. NEMSIS (the people who collate the voluminous ePCR data you produce) released their 3rd public reporting database on our compliance with NEMSQA (National EMS Quality Alliance) metrics. The dashboard is at <https://nemsis.org/view-reports/public-reports/version-3-public-dashboards/v3-public-performance-measures-dashboard/>. To see the measures you are being scored on, check out www.nemsqa.org. There are also a host of other EMS Quality measures available on the NEMSQA site.
30. The Page, Wolfberg and Wirth (PWW) EMS Law Firm collaborated with NHTSA to produce a neat HIPAA poster. Misinformation about, and misuse of HIPAA continues. See <https://nasemso.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=bdaf9a0cf267d423437d7b149&id=bba57130a4&e=50561d16e8>.
31. Speaking of legal issues, body worn cameras are making their way into EMS, for a variety of reasons. The feds recently released a comprehensive quick start guide on legal considerations: <https://nasemso.us13.list-manage.com/track/click?u=bdaf9a0cf267d423437d7b149&id=9aae999a43&e=50561d16e8>. If you think body worn cameras aren't coming, think again. Times, they are a changin'...
32. Vital Signs was kyboshed by COVID last year and, God willing, has been rescheduled in Saratoga this year, November 11-14 (www.vitalsignsconference.com). One precon of note will feature the NY Chapter of the National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP, which actually accepts EMS providers as full members). The NAEMSP precon is scheduled for November 12th, featuring the best and brightest docs in NY! If you have not noticed, Vital Signs Academy has been offering FREE on-line CME three times a week throughout the pandemic and it continues. Check out their weekly of noted national presenters at <https://vitalsignsacademy.com/calendar/>. You would ordinarily pay big \$\$ to hear many of these folks.
33. SEMSCO conducted elections for 2021 having received an astounding number of zero folks interested in running for the positions. Hence the current slate was reelected: Mark Philippy: Chair; Stephen Cady: First Vice Chair; and Mike McEvoy: Second Vice Chair.
34. Since the Executive Order expired, SEMSCO will meet in person October 19 and 20, 2021 at the Empire State Plaza Meeting Rooms by the Egg Theater. Ditching the virtual platform will certainly make the meetings more delightful.

These notes respectfully prepared by Mike McEvoy who serves on SEMSCO representing the NYS Association of Fire Chiefs. Contact Mike McEvoy at mmcevoy@saratoga-county.ny.gov. If you want a personal copy of these “unofficial” SEMSCO minutes delivered directly to your email account, go to <http://eepurl.com/iaXHY> to put yourself on the list (or adjust your delivery settings). Also, past copies of NYS EMS News are parked at the bottom of the EMS News page at www.saratogaems.org. Feel free to download any notes you missed. Tell your friends. The more, the merrier.

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