

1. Once again, COVID pushed SEMSCO and SEMAC meetings into cyberspace. They also shrunk to a single day; most Committee work was postponed as DOH staff are largely assigned to COVID response duties. The whole kit and kaboodle is archived under January 4th at www.health.ny.gov/events/webcasts/archive/. Suffice it to say, these notes will be equally short.
2. Med Standards spent an hour and a half debating what to do with the Viral Pandemic Triage Protocol. Since its release in March 2020, the protocol has variously helped and hurt EMS Operations. There is statewide consensus that change is needed, sooner than later. Watch the webcast if you want gory detail but suffice it to say there were dozens of little devils in the details. Following further debate, proceeded by equally lengthy discussion at SEMAC, somewhat palatable modifications were achieved and the revisions are hopefully off to the Commissioner for her approval which, if experience holds true, will probably come after the pandemic ends. Stay tuned...
3. In the brief time left for other business, Med Standards and SEMAC approved a kewl study in the Buffalo region using age (instead of weight) based dosing in pediatric seizure management, part of a national research endeavor. They also approved a pilot opioid withdrawal protocol using EMS initiated Suboxone® and a prehospital referral protocol to direct certain patients with persistent v-fib or v-tach to an ECLS (extracorporeal life support) capable center. They also looked at a couple advisories from the Monroe-Livingston Region forwarded to SEMAC at the behest of DOH legal eagles for reasons that miffed those present. These were emphatically determined, “advisory only” and well within the purview of Article 30, Section 3004-A, allowing REMACs to address specific local conditions. The advisories in question provided a geriatric tele-consult option and alternative transport of behavioral health patients to a behavioral health facility rather than an ED. Apparently, someone was not picking up what MLREMS was putting down.
4. The migration of CME paperwork submission to an on-line portal is working nicely. Submissions can be done by individuals, agencies, or course sponsors at <https://apps.health.ny.gov/pubpal/builder/survey/cmeportal>.
5. Under the current Executive Order, students can once again elect to take the National Registry exam in lieu of the NYS exam. Once they pass, there is an electronic portal through which they can request a NYS card: <https://apps.health.ny.gov/pubpal/builder/survey/nr-exam-reciprocity-form-submiss>.
6. Speaking of electronic correspondence, instructors (CLI/CIC) seeking renewal of their credentials should email their paperwork to EMS.Instructors@health.ny.gov. The turnaround on my CIC certificate using this address was less than 24 hours!
7. From the October Training & Education Committee meeting, instructor retention will get a lift once the Bureau is able to reprogram their tracking software to allow a 60-40% split in CIC duties per course. This will allow job sharing between two CICs, greater opportunity to fulfil teaching requirements, and more support for longer length courses.
8. DOH has once again activated the National Ambulance Contract to move patients between facilities and load balance hospitals based on COVID surges which vary from region to region. There are presently 42 ambulances in NYS, some of which are also being used to

- support EMS response at the request of local officials. The Surge Operations Center is overseeing ops, phone 917-909-2676 or DOHSurgeOps@health.ny.gov.
9. Vital Signs 2021 in Saratoga was quite successful with 530 in-person and 300 on-line attendees. Vital Signs 2022 will also be hybrid, in Albany October 26th to 30th. Call for presentations is open at www.vitalsignsconference.com.
 10. This year's EMS Memorial will be held at the Empire State Plaza on May 17th. Nine names will be added; some quick legwork is needed as the Tree of Life is currently full.
 11. Where are the EMS providers? Multiple states have compared their numbers of certified providers to PCR completions and consistently seem to be missing about half of their providers. NY had 80,000 certified providers in 2020 and 67,000 in 2021. Subtracting CFRs (which numbered 36,000 in 2020 and 30,000 in 2021), fully 50% of the remaining providers did not show up on a PCR during 2021. Where they are, nobody knows for certain. Maybe working in hospitals or other healthcare settings?
 12. To address the workforce shortage, DOH will be funding a series of academy style EMT classes, some for the National Guard, others open to the public. These start shortly and will be largely completed by May, many prior to that time. Keep an eye out for these; there are some in each region. There is no cost to students, even if they are not affiliated with a recognized EMS response agency.
 13. DOH is recruiting a State Council Health Program Specialist. This will lift some work from the heavily weighted shoulders of Valerie Ozga and speed up the processing and dissemination of protocol revisions. Yay!
 14. Three new Policy Statements were just released, posted to www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/policy/policy.htm: #22-01 on BLS FR requirements to remain in the CME recert program; #22-02 revising EMS Instructor requirements; and #22-03 on ADA Accommodations for EMS certification exams. Scope 'em out – there are tidbits of knowledge for just about everyone in these.
 15. EMSC (that's EMS for Children) has released a survey they would like each EMS agency to complete. Go to www.emscsurveys.org/, select NY then your County then your agency. It should take you only 5-10 minutes to complete the survey.
 16. NHTSA recently released the 2021 update to the EMS Education Standards. These set minimum competency objectives for entry-level personnel at each level of EMS practice in accordance with the National EMS Scope of Practice Model. Download these from: www.ems.gov/pdf/EMS_Education%20Standards_2021_FNL.pdf.
 17. Several years of research have finally resulted in the release of an EMS specific fatigue risk analyzer. Information and access to the tool is at <https://emsfatiguerisk.ibrinc.org/>.
 18. Finally, the Chairs of SEMSCO and SEMAC have been granted an audience with the Health Commish. That meeting will happen the last week of January. They certainly have a lot to discuss...
 19. If you have not scoped out Governor Honchul's 2023 Budget, you probably should. It makes some very broad and sweeping changes to Article 30 of Public Health Law. Start at www.budget.ny.gov/pubs/archive/fy23/ex/index.html then drill down to the Health and Mental Hygiene PDF; Part F is called, "Modernize EMS" (see:

www.budget.ny.gov/pubs/archive/fy23/ex/artvii/hmh-bill.pdf). The psychic hotline predicts there will be some very pissed off people after reading this modernization initiative.

20. SEMSCO conducted elections for 2022 having received nominations including: Mark Philippy: Chair; Mike McEvoy: First Vice Chair; and Jason Haag and Teri Hamilton for Second Vice Chair. Teri Hamilton withdrew her name and one vote was cast for the remaining characters to take their respective seats. Former First Vice Chair Steve Cady will be assuming the chair of the Safety Committee. Both SEMSCO and SEMAC appointed Dr. Yedidyah Langsam from NYC as Parliamentarian for both groups, likely owing to the near fisticuffs regularly arising at meetings.
21. SEMSCO will meet again April 12-13 in Meeting Room 6 at the Empire State Plaza. Keep in mind April Fools comes before then. LOL.

These notes respectfully prepared by Mike McEvoy who serves on SEMSCO representing the NYS Association of Fire Chiefs. Contact Mike McEvoy at mmcevoy@saratogacountyny.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.