



SHOCKING NEWS



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MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S NOTES



BY DR. STACEY GOUZENNE, MD

Well, what a difference a month makes. Thank you all for signing up for the OR. Have you heard? Everyone's talking about it...what a great experience it has been. LMA's are on the trucks and have been used...also great! Lennie and I are putting together the criteria for instituting RSI. They will be limited, and strictly adhered to. I will personally review all RSI cases...for at least the first six months. If it appears there is a negative trend we will abort the process.

Thank you for cooperating with the LASS...great job.

I am going to the upcoming EMD course, we have succeeded in decreasing the response level for DNR patients in arrest or near arrest. But, apparently, we will still need to respond emergently to respiratory or other complaints.

While we have an "trucks out of town policy", it is not in writing, making it just a good idea and not really a policy. Your leadership team is in the process of putting it on paper. When we have a final draft AND the list of alternative transport agency options, I will present them to RRMC administration. We will need to send copies to all hospitals to which and from which we transport. I expect there will be further discussion and we may need to visit other institutions before we get all the wrinkles ironed out.

I would like to institute a review process. I would like, in writing THIS MONTH, your thoughts on "What makes a good/excellent paramedic?" Watch the folks you admire...think are doing a good job, what do they do well...what makes them successful...put that into words. I don't want an "administrative review"...

"An elementary particle is not an independently existing, unanalyzable entity. It is, in essence, a set of relationships that reach outward to other things." - H.P. Stapp, twentieth-century physicist

FROM THE EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTOR'S DESK



HAIL CAESAR !

BY FRANK THOMASON

It's been yet another busy month for all of us. The recent National Incident Management System (ICS) training at RCCC was well received by those who were able to attend. I received many positive comments from several of you. The payoff was instantly seen in the recent train/vehicle incident on Henderson Grove Church Rd. Incident command flowed and worked extremely well at this incident - to the credit of this training. We will be offering additional opportunities for this type of training in the future. I encourage everyone to take advantage of it, even if you have been through it before. I've been around ICS for years and it was great for me to get a refresher into the process and work closely with other agencies during the training.

Kudos continue to everyone for the hard work on EMS documentation. Drastic improvements are being made and seen. THANK YOU!

In the coming months we will begin a long term process to develop/review goals for the department. This will ultimately transition into a working document that we will use to move our department into the future with fire, EMS, and emergency management. YOUR input is very necessary and desired. As I have mentioned to some of you individually, we need your input. Don't be dismayed or disappointed because an idea, suggestion or request is seemingly delayed or ignored. That is not the case. Many good ideas take periods of time to work through the process. Sometimes it becomes a rather long hill to climb - but in the end it's worth the work you put into it.

We are in the process of working on several grants on the fire side of the house that will have positive potential department wide. Still no new news on the 2004 HRSA grant - but I'm hopeful that we will soon hear about it so more of our technology project for EMS can press forward.

MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER



BY BETH CONNELL

(READ AT YOUR OWN RISK!)

“Shocking Paperwork”

August was a busy month with 899 call reports written. The medic who ran and wrote the most ACRs is.....Chad LaTurno. Thirty-six ACRs were written with an excellent accuracy rating of 98%!

A shift's most prolific writer was TJ Brown with 33 reports and 96% accuracy. The B shift paramedic with the best accuracy rating is Althea Smith with 99%! Skipper Davis on C crew wrote 39 reports with 95% accuracy. Derek Tilley is distinguished for his 99% accuracy rating! Perhaps the best news is that all full time employees have accuracy ratings in the 90s!

Missing insurance information was the most common deficient item. Remember to ask for insurance on treat no transport cases. These often do not have any insurance information. The second area of concern was documentation. If the patient's condition or the reason for an ambulance is not clearly stated, it counts as a documentation error. Whenever I mark a deficiency, there is a note on the call for the Assistant Supervisor. The Assistant Supervisor and the employee should fix correctable errors and missing information before the ACRs go to Ambulance Billing and Collections.

Thank you for working so hard to turn our paperwork problems around!

Many of you were unable to attend the recent benefits talks arranged by county administration. Let me fill you in on the most important changes to our health care plan.

First, participation in the Health Risk Management Program is voluntary. The aim is to reduce any identified health risks. To determine what your health risks are there will be a health risk assessment done in January 2005. Each employee with health care benefits who fully participates in the Health Risk Management Program will continue to have their insurance premium paid. Those of you who do not participate and comply with the risk reduction plan set up by your doctor or our nurse practitioner will begin paying a portion of your health insurance.

The health risk assessment will consist of a short survey about your risk factors. A blood sample will be drawn to measure blood glucose, triglyceride, and various cholesterol levels. Blood pressures, body mass index will also be measured. Men over 40 will have a PSA check for possible risk of prostate cancer.

In order to maintain your free individual health care, you must identify a primary care physician and complete the health risk assessment. If serious risk factors are identified for you, you must follow through with a plan to reduce these risk factors. Your compliance plan can be developed for free by our nurse practitioner or you may have your personal physician develop the plan. It will be obvious based on physicians' invoices and prescription bills which employees are not following their compliance plans. The penalty for failing to take responsibility for your health will be assuming a portion of your insurance premium. (If you have additional family coverage that will go up too.)

In developing the plan the most common causes of death and disability were studied. Our employee population is very similar to the nation. Obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer are the most serious problems. Research has very clearly shown the benefits of reducing blood pressure, controlling cholesterol and losing weight. People with chronic diseases like diabetes maintain their health and manage their condition better when they work closely with a nurse.

The county's new plan is a terrific improvement. Health risks will be identified. By following through on our individualized risk reduction plan, we can improve our health and keep low premiums. I encourage you to read the materials placed in your mailboxes. If you have questions please bring them to Frank or me. Thanks.

YO QUIERO TRAINING



BY LENNIE COOPER

I don't have a whole lot this month folks. First of all, thanks for getting your protocol tests in so that we could get out with the old and in with the new. How do you like them? We've found a few little things we overlooked in the process but we'll get it fixed. If you have any problems or questions about the protocols, please direct them to me so that I can put them on the list.

Secondly, has anyone had a bad experience in the OR? I haven't heard of anyone that hasn't enjoyed the time. I hope that everyone takes full advantage of this opportunity to get some good experience. They were great about making sure that I got what I needed and very friendly as well. They acted as if they liked having us there. What a great feeling. We still don't have a set Training Calendar for the next 2 years. The days will continue to be the same, the second Tuesday and the following Thursday from 1900-2200. I would like to add Wednesday from 0900-1200 if we can keep attendance up. I plan to start offering the Wednesday class but it is up to you to make sure it continues. See Ya!

FROM THE FIRE MARSHALL



BY ART DELANEY

If you've noticed the back room is clean. the Helping Our Own truck arrived a week or so ago and hauled off some \$60K dollars worth of surplus equipment. All of it will be rehabbed and given to needy departments across the nation.

The fair is almost upon us. The fire & rescue association has a booth this year. I am extending an offer to EMS to join us in providing fire and ems materials to patrons. Please let me know if you are interested.

Work is still in progress to provide a Paramedic level unit on all working fires. Discussion centers around the NFPA standard and the availability of units. Hopefully we can make this happen. It may sound selfish of me, but if one of my guys goes down at a fire I want the very best we have to offer working them.

The disaster trailers are becoming a reality. There was talk of putting medical supplies on board also. Hopefully we can pull this together soon.

That's all I have. If anyone would like to stop in the office, my door is always open.

WHERE'S THAT PEDIATRIC CALL!



BY CAROLE DELLINGER

Upcoming Events with Rowan SAFE KIDS

EMS is the sponsoring agency for our local chapter of SAFE KIDS. For those of you unfamiliar with SAFE KIDS, it is a national injury prevention group promoting safety for children under 14. Public education focuses on promoting correct use of car seats and bike helmets. Rowan SAFE KIDS is beginning its fifth year of service.

We have an active chapter with volunteers from fire service, law enforcement, the Health Department, Salisbury Parks and Rec and Rowan Partnership for Children. Several of our members are certified child passenger safety technicians. These certified members can teach correct car seat installation and run car seat checks.

Working with the children and their families is very rewarding. In the upcoming months we have many scheduled events. Rowan SAFE KIDS has a booth at the Rowan County Fair. Our booth will be staffed week days from 5 pm to 10 pm and all day Saturday and Sunday. Those dates are September 21 through 26. Please stop by our booth. You are welcome to visit and learn more about what we do. If you are interested in helping, free passes can be arranged. See me! EMS volunteer should wear their twentieth anniversary tee shirts.

At the fair we will be passing out information on all areas of child safety. Crayons and balloons and other materials are free to families. Bike helmets will be given away every night. To promote awareness of the new booster seat law taking effect January 1st, we are giving a booster seat away daily too.

I hope everyone will consider lending your support to Rowan SAFE KIDS. There are many ways to help. Invite us to present safety information for your church or child's school or daycare. Help us arrange a safety seat check. Come out to one of our events and play with the kids during the car seat checks. Hand out flyers. Want to be a radio personality? Do public service announcements for our local radio station. Every small act, every hour of time you give is for the safety of our precious children. We all know we don't want to see them hurt on one our missions. Thanks for your attention. Look for more SAFE KIDS news in upcoming issues.

SALUTATIONS FROM SYLVIA



BY SYLVIA

My comments are going to be short and sweet this month. I don't really have an issue to discuss but I want to contribute so here goes.

Hello to everyone. My 1st year anniversary with Emergency Services was in August and I just want to thank everyone for welcoming me into the department (family). This has been a great year for me and it is mainly because of everyone's support and kindness. I really feel that I have made some lifetime friendships and that is very special to me. I really appreciate the spirit of cooperation I have received from everyone. So, with that said, thank you for making my 1st year at Emergency Services a wonderful experience. Love and prayers to you all.

*** EDITORS COMMENTS ***



BY JERRY LITTLE

Not a lot to add this go-round. Seems our management is working as hard as we are to make things better and so far it looks like its working.

Remember the yahoo group is still up for anyone that wants to air a few thoughts.

A 'hard-copy' of the monthly newsletter will be posted at each base. Content for the newsletter can be left in my mailbox or sent to the following e-mail address:

littlejn@co.rowan.nc.us or med1171@aol.com

- Be safe - J. Little, editor