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Institute of Medicine Report on Emergency Medical Services

The National Association of EMS Physicians™ (NAEMSP) is an organization of physicians and other professionals partnering to provide leadership and foster excellence in out of hospital emergency medical services. An effective EMS system is essential to any emergency response, both on a daily basis, and in response to disasters and other public health crises.

The Institute of Medicine report about Emergency Medical Services confirms the need to for strong EMS systems. However, EMS resources are limited, thus affecting the ability of EMS to respond. EMS should be actively supported and funded. In order to develop high quality EMS, the National Association of EMS Physicians believes that consistent funding is essential to ensure the viability and effectiveness of these systems.

NAEMSP strongly supports the IOM recommendation that EMS systems greatly benefit from physician oversight to ensure quality care and patient safety. Medical directors should have authority over all clinical and patient care aspects of the EMS system or service, with the specific job description dictated by local needs. EMS leaders and policy makers should use evidence-based decision-making based on a strong scientific methodology.

The report also addresses emergency department overcrowding and the resultant ambulance diversions. When ambulance patients are diverted to other hospitals because of overcrowding, it delays care for patients, and creates an unsafe health care environment. Overcrowding ties up staff and resources that could be used to care for additional patients. Physician medical directors stand ready to improve the systems, and have long focused on patient Care.

The National Association of EMS Physicians™ applauds the efforts of the Institute of Medicine in issuing this Report on Emergency Medical Services. For further information, contact NAEMSP President, [Dr. Robert O'Connor](#).

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