

## Role of the State EMS Medical Director Position Statement

*A Joint Statement by the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP),  
the National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP), and the  
National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO)*

Dedicated and qualified medical direction is required to ensure safe and quality patient care. Medical direction is a fundamental element of the emergency medical services (EMS) system. It is essential that the lead agency for EMS within the fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the territories of Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, has a state EMS medical director.

The state EMS medical director provides specialized medical oversight in the development and administration of the EMS system and is an essential liaison with local EMS agencies, hospitals, state and national professional organizations, and state and federal partners. The state EMS medical director provides essential medical leadership, system oversight, coordination of guideline development for routine and disaster care, identification and implementation of best practices, system quality improvement, and research. The state EMS medical director is essential to the comprehensive EMS system at the local level by promoting integration of direct and indirect medical oversight for the entire emergency health care delivery system.

The state EMS medical director should be a physician with extensive experience in EMS medical direction and an unrestricted medical license within the state. Ideally, the state EMS medical director will be a board-certified emergency physician.

State EMS medical direction requires political, administrative, and financial support to achieve these goals. The foundation of the relationship between the state EMS lead agency and the state EMS medical director, including the job description, responsibilities and authority, should be clearly defined within legislation, regulation, or a written contract. The state EMS medical director should be provided with mutually agreed upon compensation for services, necessary materials and resources, and liability protection specific to the unique duties and actions performed.

In summary, ACEP, NAEMSP, and NASEMSO strongly encourage the establishment of a regular full-time position for a state EMS medical director in all fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the territories of Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands.

*Approved by NASEMSO Executive Committee and NAEMSP Board of Directors 2/12/09*

This position statement replaces the 2005 ACEP/NAEMSP/NASEMSO position statement: Role of the EMS Medical Director. *Prehosp Emerg Med.* 2005; 9:338.