

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY
ADMINISTRATION

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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June 1, 1999

Agenda: June 15, 1999

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: Santa Cruz County Emergency Medical Services Plan

Dear Board Members:

The State of California Emergency Medical Services Authority (**EMSA**) requires counties to file an emergency medical service plan with the State. The format for the plan is specified by the State. The County's plan is being presented to you today for your review and information. To develop a plan that has the support of the EMS community and is acceptable to the State **EMSA**, HSA has been working primarily with the Emergency Medical Care Commission and its Prehospital Advisory Committee, although others have been involved. Though the plan is in a "final" form for State submission, HSA anticipates the plan may require some revisions prior to State acceptance. Once **EMSA** review and acceptance occurs a completed copy will be returned to your Board and the Clerk of the Board. After that time periodic updates and revisions will be made to the plan to reflect changes in State regulations and in the County's EMS program.

Development of the Santa Cruz County EMS Plan **has been underway** for many months. The plan has undergone a number of revisions. **Consensus** on several elements of the plan has been **difficult** to achieve in part due to the variety & opinions in the local EMS community regarding the purpose of the plan. Some feel that this State required document should be utilized as an opportunity to identify all local deficiencies in system organization and resources. Shortcomings identified in the plan would then serve as the justification for the need for additional funding. These deficiencies could also serve in the traditional planning sense to direct the efforts of the EMS Agency toward aspects of the plan deemed to be performing below the standards held by EMS community members.

HSA feels that as a State-required document, the plan should be completed and filed with **EMSA** indicating compliance with standards when it is reasonable do so. This position holds that local planning and advocacy can best be accomplished through other mechanisms more suitable to the specific needs of Santa Cruz County's EMS program. The format required by the State, while comprehensive, is cumbersome, makes for an overly lengthy document, requires duplication of information, and does not lend itself to

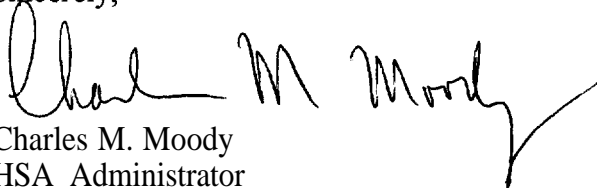
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prioritizing activities. HSA agrees with the necessity and importance of defining and advocating for local needs, but does not feel that this document is the appropriate vehicle for those efforts.

The two most significant community-perceived deficiencies in the current Santa Cruz County EMS program are the interrelated problems of adequate data and staffing. Many community members believe there is not sufficient data available to properly support quality assurance and program planning activities. With regard to staffing, the EMS program has been, in effect, without a program manager for almost a year. A new half-time data position that was added to the program this fiscal year has yet to be filled. This leaves the EMS program without adequate cohesion and personnel to maintain the high standards that the EMS community has set for itself. HSA will continue to work with the Emergency Medical Care Commission, the Prehospital Advisory Committee, the EMSIA, and other interested groups in order to provide the EMS community and your Board with a functional EMS planning document. In the interim, it is important and necessary to file with the EMSA the EMS Plan in the required format.

It is, therefore, RECOMMENDED that your Board accept and file this report concerning the Emergency Medical Services Plan.

Sincerely,



Charles M. Moody
 HSA Administrator

RECOMMENDED:



Susan A. Mauriello
 County Administrative Officer

CC: County Administrative Officer
 Auditor-Controller
 County Counsel
 HSA Administration
 EMCC