



County of Santa Cruz 0129

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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JANET K. BEAUTZ
FIRST DISTRICT

ELLENPIRIE
SECOND DISTRICT

MARDI WORMHOUDT
THIRD DISTRICT

TONY CAMPOS
FOURTH DISTRICT

JEFF ALMQUIST
FIFTH DISTRICT

AGENDA: 1/29/02

January 17, 2002

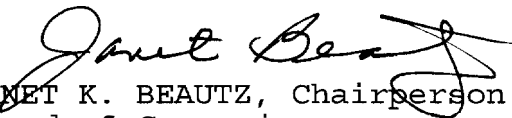
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMISSION

Dear Members of the Board:

Attached is the Annual Report of the Emergency Medical Care Commission for calendar year 2001. I recommend that the Board accept and file this report and direct the Chairperson to thank the members of the Commission for their efforts on the County's behalf.

Sincerely,


JANET K. BEAUTZ, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors

JKB:ted

cc: Emergency Medical Care Commission

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EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES

County of Santa Cruz

0130

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

POST OFFICE BOX 962, 1080 EMELINE AVENUE SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061-0962
(831) 454-4120 FAX: (831) 454-4272 TDD: (831) 454-4123

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMISSION

January 14, 2002

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Members of the Board:

RE: Emergency Medical Care Commission Annual Report – 2001

Attached to this cover letter is the 2001 Annual Report from the Emergency Medical Care Commission. It has been an active year for the Commission, which continues to help establish the direction for EMS in the new millennium.

Responses to terrorism, planning for a potential flu pandemic, the ambulance request for proposal, hospital diversion, and trauma planning have been important service delivery issues and challenges for the commission. EMCC also sponsored the second annual EMS forum.

On behalf of all the Commission members, I would like to express our appreciation to the Board of Supervisors for the opportunity we share in providing input and oversight of the County's Emergency Medical Services system.

Sincerely,

Terry Lapid, MD, Chair
Emergency Medical Care Commission

Cc: Rama Khalsa, HSA Administrator
EMCC Correspondence file

Attachment



County of Santa Cruz

Q131

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

POST OFFICE BOX 962, 1080 EMELINE AVENUE SANTA CRUZ, CA 95061-0962

(831)454-4120 FAX: (831) 454-4272 TDD: (831) 454-4123

EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT

2001

Role of the Commission

The role of the Emergency Medical Care Commission (EMCC) is to act in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors and the County Health Officer on all matters relating to emergency medical services, to review the EMS related activities in the County, to provide residents of the County an opportunity to participate in the making of policy for the emergency medical services system, and to report the Commission observations and recommendations to the designated regulatory bodies.

Meeting Dates, Times and Locations

During calendar year 2001, the Commission meetings were held at 8:30 a.m. on the second Wednesday of the month. The meeting location alternates between Dominican Santa Cruz Hospital, Watsonville Community Hospital, the Aptos/La Selva Fire Department, and the County Health Services Agency. There was no meeting held in July.

Commission Structure

There were several changes to the membership of the Commission during 2001. Jason Hajduk joined the Commission as the field care representative in September. Dr. Terry Lapid was re-elected to chair the Commission in June. Chief Gary Smith was re-elected to serve as Vice Chair. Both Watsonville Community Hospital and Dominican Hospital are now permanently represented on the Commission.

Supervisory Appointees

First District:	Rayette Andrews, RN, Dominican Hospital
Second District:	Ira Lubell, MD, Medical Director, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center
Third District:	Jeanette Applegate, Vice President/Clinic Operations, Santa Cruz Medical Clinic
Fourth District:	Gary Smith, Chief, Aptos/La Selva Fire Department
Fifth District:	Lisa Angell, RN, Watsonville Community Hospital

At-Large Appointees**Representing:****Hospitals**Carol Adams, VP, Dominican Hospital
Barry Schneider, CEO, Watsonville Hospital**Ambulance Service:**

Robert Zuckswert, AMRW

County Medical Society:

Terry Lapid, MD, Medical Director, Dominican ED

County Fire Chiefs Association:

Ron Prince, Chief, Santa Cruz Fire Department

Law Enforcement Chiefs Association:

Dave Stuflick

Consumers:

Sylvia Knapton, Retired journalist

Field Care:

Jason Hajduk

County Support Staff

David McNutt, MD, County Health Officer

Vol Ranger, EMS Administrator

Kent Benedict, MD, EMS Medical Director

Ruth Shugart, TCIII

Attendance

See Attachment

2001 INITIATIVES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**Accomplishments for the Year 2001****1. Terrorism**

Commissioners met on September 12, 2001 immediately following the twin towers incident in New York City and received a briefing on County Emergency Operations Center activity resulting from the event. After anthrax cases on the East Coast were confirmed by the Centers for Disease Control, the Health Services Agency, EMS, First Responders, County Emergency Services, and Environmental Health participated in the development of a county-wide Bioterrorism "Biological Hazard First Responder Protocol." The protocol was distributed to the EMCC, County and municipal law enforcement, fire, medical, and environmental health agencies and shared with neighboring Counties. Terrorism and disaster response planning is continuing and updates are provided to Commissioners on their regular agenda.

2. Flu Pandemic

Commissioners noted that a flu pandemic resulting from a novel virus would be a disaster. Planning for a potential flu pandemic is in process at the county, state, and national levels. Planning for a flu pandemic is important because the health delivery system is easily overwhelmed by a lot of people being sick at the same time, including the caregivers. The hospitals reach near-capacity even in a normal flu season. In previous pandemics, people were prohibited from congregating. Schools and work places have been closed. A flu pandemic would be enormously disruptive to society.

The local flu pandemic planning group has representatives from OES, Public Health, physicians, clinics, law enforcement/jail, first responders, schools, and the Red Cross. The committee has incorporated information gained from disaster planning and bioterrorism response in crafting its response strategy. Increasing public awareness, prevention, the methods of personal protection and decontamination, and EMS system response are areas to be considered. Dr. David McNutt, County Health Officer; Betsy McCarty, Chief Public Health Nurse; and Vol Ranger, EMS Administrator have provided updates on flu pandemic planning to the Commission.

3. EMS Forum

On October 10, 2001 the Emergency Medical Care Commission sponsored a community Emergency Medical Services Forum that was held at the EMCC Meeting. The forum brought together over seventy-five participants including paramedics, medical intensive care nurses, American Medical Response, Fire, volunteers, California Department of Forestry, government representatives, HSA staff, emergency physicians, and citizens.

During this Forum, Dr. Kent Benedict, EMS Medical Director, presented a “snapshot” of the EMS system as it exists currently. Dr. Benedict said EMS is a huge conglomeration of people who are all doing their job as best they can and when an emergency arrives, they work together as a team and this teamwork is the key to success in emergency medical services. Everyone together makes EMS.

Diane Akers, EMS Consultant, discussed future trends in EMS, including the potential loss of revenue to the system from changes in Medicare reimbursement for ambulance transportation; the impact of hospital diversion; nursing and medical personnel shortages; terrorism; the next health insurance model and the uninsured; and EMS system governance.

A panel discussion of stakeholder perspectives on challenges for the future followed. Board of Supervisors Chair Tony Campos asserted that the system works great and that we need to work together to continue to build on our successes. Dr. Terry Lapid, Emergency Department Medical Director for Dominican Hospital, discussed hospital issues including staffing; reimbursement; on-call physician coverage; legislation; and health career partnerships to increase the supply of trained workers. Barry Schneider,

Chief Executive Officer of Watsonville Community College, discussed hospital issues including an increase in Emergency Department visits, intensity, and length of stay; longer waiting times; increased levels of uncompensated care; shortages of nursing and support staff; and less willingness on the part of physicians to provide ED back-up coverage. Bob Zuckswert, Vice-president for Coastal Operations for American Medical Response, discussed ambulance industry issues including system funding; staffing; and governance. Mike McMurry, Fire Chief of Scotts Valley Fire Protection District and Vice-president of the Emergency Medical Services Integration Authority (EMSIA), discussed Fire Service issues including the future vision for a patient-centered system; integration between EMSIA and the ambulance provider; the need for training and public education; and public-private partnerships. Rama Khalsa, Administrator of the Health Services Agency, discussed the responsibilities of the County in planning, implementing, and evaluating the EMS System; challenges for the future; and the need to maintain and strengthen the collaborative relationships among EMS stakeholders.

Questions from the audience to the panelists included the motivation for the RFP process and whether the cost is justified; will the County assist hospitals caring for the uninsured and under-insured; what the revenue loss to the system from the new Medicare fee schedule will be; how the cost of living in this area can be addressed to recruit and retain health care workers; if a profit-driven health care system is the best model or could profits be returned to the system; what strategies could be taken to improve ambulance service to rural areas; would staffing with one EMT and one paramedic improve our system; is "code red" wholly a negative situation; and who pays for fire costs in EMS.

Diane Akers then asked members of the audience individually for their comments about what the system does well. The most frequent comment was the high degree of professionalism displayed. Other comments included the emphasis on patient care and quality assurance, quality people, the experienced work force, excellent relationships and the ability to resolve conflicts among agencies, in summation that we are the "Disneyland of EMS Systems."

Members of the audience were then asked individually what we could do better or differently. Frequent comments included increasing community involvement in EMS by education about bystander care and early intervention, data collection and use, prevention, alternative deployment plans to reduce response times especially in rural areas, alternative dispositions for patients, alternative transportation for non-emergencies, the need to maintain perspective on the RFP process because one result of it is to reduce the risk of litigation, equipment maintenance and quality, and education of the public and government about how the system works and is maintained.

4. Request for Proposal for Ambulance Transportation

Members of the Commission met with Diane Akers, EMS Consultant, who is under contract to prepare the County's Request for Proposal for Ambulance Transportation.

Public and constituency group input is critical to the minimum requirements of the bid and interviews with key EMS system participants have been conducted. Prior to going to the Board of Supervisors for approval, the RFP document will be made available to the Commission during a period of public comment. Diane Akers has attended Commission meetings to give EMS long term strategic planning updates regarding the RFP process.

5. Hospital Diversion

The Commission reviews reports regarding hospital Emergency Department restricted status each month (Code Yellow and Code Red). In Calendar Year 2000, the total number of hours of hospital restricted status in the Santa Cruz EMS System was 71 hours and 32 minutes. However, hospital diversions have increased late in Calendar Year 2001. In August 2001-October 2001, the total number of hours of hospital restricted status in the Santa Cruz EMS System was 219 hours and **44** minutes. The primary reasons for the increased number of hours of hospital restricted status are that hospitals are at full capacity in hospital monitored beds and hospital lack of nursing and ancillary care staff. Ambulance diversions have occurred as a result of hospital restricted statuses and have been reviewed by the EMS Medical Director. The County's EMS Program policy number 1230 details the hospital diversion procedure.

The Commission reviews this issue as a standing item on its regular agenda and hospitals report their mitigation and response plans for those instances when they are overwhelmed by circumstances beyond their control and must request a restricted status within the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system in order to provide for the care and safety of all their patients. Broader solutions to the problems of Emergency Department access must include better access to outpatient care for patients, advocacy for legislation to improve coverage for the under-insured and uninsured, increased hospital specialty bed capacities, increased numbers of critical care nurses and increased specialty physician coverage, better reimbursement, and public education about the appropriate use of the emergency department.

6. Trauma Planning

The Emergency Medical Care Commission and the Health Services Agency track legislative efforts to improve trauma and EMS care and set advocacy priorities. Legislation to establish the Trauma Care Fund under AB430 was passed but the funds were subsequently frozen until the special session in January 2002. Santa Cruz County is potentially a candidate to receive one-time funding to develop and implement a trauma plan should the funds be made available. Commission members have participated in local and regional trauma planning meetings to set Santa Cruz County trauma goals, articulate expectations, and improve trauma care.

Standing: Committees**1. Public Information and Education**

The Public Information and Education Committee of the EMCC collaborated with liaison organization Traffic Safety Coalition to develop and distribute statistics on bicycle accidents in the County. The PI&E Committee is continuing to develop data on pediatric trauma, major causes of injury in seniors, and maps that depict the geographic dispersion of patients treated according to cardiac protocols.

The PI&E also developed a Spinal Cord Injury Prevention project with lesson plans, support materials, and videos to present the SCI program to high school students and audiences at surf shops, bike shops, junior lifeguards, and swim centers. Commissioners viewed a presentation of the material. The project has been funded by a grant from the Kids Plates Program.

COMMISSIONERS ATTENDANCE EMCC 2001
(No Meeting July & December)

0137

	J A N	F E B	M A R	A P R	M A Y	J U N E	J U L Y	A U G	S E P	O C T	N O V	D E C
Carol Adams	E	X	X	E	X	X		E	E	X	X	
Rayette Andrews	E	X	E E	X X	X	X		X	E	X	E	
Lisa Angell	X	X	E	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Jeanette Applegate	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	E	
B.J. Bartieson												
Jason Hajduk									**	X	X	
Sylvia Knapton	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	E	E	E	
Terry Lapid	X	X	X	E	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Ira Lubell	E	X	X	E	X	X		X	E	E	X	
Ron Prince	X	E	X	E	X	X		X	X	E	X	
Barry Schneider	X	X	X	X	X	E		E	E	X	X	
Gary Smith	X	X	X	X	E	X		X	X	X	X	
Dave Stuflick	E	X	X	E	X	X		E	X			
Ron Wernig	X	X	E									
Bob Zuckswert	X	X	X	X	E	X		X	E	X	X	

X = Present

E = Excused Absence

A = Absent

* First meeting as a Commissioner in December

** First meeting as a Commissioner in September