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Notes from the Director's Desk

It's that time of year again when we will get winter weather. CMH EMS will continue service regardless of bad weather. Be prepared because you will be expected to drive in bad road conditions. The development of winter driving skills is learned over time, so please talk to more experienced crew members and listen to their advice. Speed can be your enemy. We have policy PHS 01-33 in place regarding discontinuing LDTs under extreme conditions, but we must use it responsibly. Please review the driving policy PHS 01-01. Be careful at all times.

When dispatched to a call, either emergency or non-emergency, respond as soon as possible. Our goal is to be en route in less than 60 seconds 90% of the time on all emergency dispatches. If the call is a LDT, we need to be on the road as soon as possible. When you report to work, you must be prepared to respond immediately to any call dispatched to your unit. **Do not** delay your response to take a meal break before the LDT.

If you have an equipment failure, including an ambulance break down, you need to fill out an Event Report in the QRM Module in MediTech. This will help us track these events and collect data.

Fleet Management AVL:

We are looking at Fleet Management Software for several reasons. In the next few months, we may be installing hardware to try different types of AVLs.

Why: This is to assist dispatch maintain situational awareness. Dispatch will be able to see the locations of trucks and send the closest truck to an emergency call. We will be able to retrieve information from the trucks computer to send mileage directly to Fleet for maintenance. This will improve our efficiency in managing an ever growing fleet of ambulances. If we go to a system like this, we will communicate the polices and expectations as well as demonstrate the system to staff. And yes, AVL systems capture MPH. That should not be a problem as long as everyone is following the driving policy we have in place.

Subject Matter Experts in an area of EMS or Protocol's

I challenge you to become an expert in EMS or a specific protocol. As you do the research and gain knowledge and follow changes in an area, you will become a more rounded EMT or Paramedic. This, in turn, will make you a better provider to patients. You will also become a resource for the department and fellow co-workers as well as enhance your career. If you are interested, please talk to myself or Theron.

Becky and I would like to invite you and a guest to dinner at El Rodeo in Bolivar on Wednesday December 17th at 1800. Please RSVP to Neal by December 16th. We look forward to celebrating the holidays with you.

Everyone have a wonderful Holiday session and enjoy your family.

St. Clair County/Osceola Don Stockton

New supplies and equipment continue to arrive on a daily basis. We have a continuing challenge storing everything with the limited space we currently have available. Everyone is upbeat and positive about the way we are progressing and each new toy builds on the already elevated morale. The staff and I are still dealing with frequent tech outages and failures but the IS team is getting on top of it all.

The GMC ambulance is back from fleet after they conquered the electrical gremlins. I will be road testing it extensively over the coming weeks before a final decision is made.

1760 is averaging 2-3 calls daily and the community response has been positive to our presence thanks mainly to the number of familiar faces they are seeing. Our progress in the transition has greatly exceeded my wildest dreams and expectations. I have nothing but positive thoughts moving forward.

HealthEMS Update: Morgan Young

Hooray!! Standby season is over!

Here are some suggestions for using HealthEMS that will help make your life easier:

-  **Please turn off the ambulance internet routers at the ambulance station**
-  **Make certain that HealthEMS shows "Forms to Sync 0" before signing out of HealthEMS**
-  **Don't forget the "How to" pdf's are in the folder: <F:\Depts\Pre-Hospital\HEALTHEMS\How to PPT's>**

Make certain your chart actually syncs is vitally important. This will ensure you will not have to write another chart or lose any data you have already entered into the chart.

Merry Christmas from Hickory County: Alice Roberts

Another year has flown by! Christmas and New Year is just around the corner and a very busy time of year with shopping, family and, of course, work.

This past year, Ebola and now, riots are top stories. Remember to suit up or just get out. Your safety comes **first** in both situations. To use one of Morgan's statements: "Watch your back. Watch your partner's back"

Hickory Crews: What a year it has been! We have been extremely busy this summer. We may have another record breaking year in the number of calls to which we have responded. I greatly appreciate your dedication to keep the county covered as safely as we could. The winter lull seems to have hit the past few weeks so enjoy your down time while it lasts. Please remember to check the door in the office for special notes or announcements. You will also find the truck deep cleaning schedule. Also, it's that time of year where we need to go through our store room as well as both ambulances and pull our expired supplies. A box will be set up in the storeroom for collection of these items.

Room for Improvement: We need to work on our LEM scores. We scored a "2" for patient satisfaction and a "1" in the OT section. Both of these areas are departmental scores. We need to do our part in raising these scores. Remember to use **AIDET** with every one of our patients. To decrease our OT, work your shifts as scheduled or trade shifts within the same week. If you need to give up a shift completely, find someone to cover that will not be in OT.

CMH EMS: Please have your availability for the new schedule turned in to me no later than December 3rd. The new schedule hits the newsstand (or in this case, your email) on December 12th.

In closing, the Hickory County Crews would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Cedar County: Tom Ryan

Another month has come and gone. We say goodbye to Fall and hello to Old Man Winter. We must take a moment, reflect on our trucks, and ask, "Are we really ready for WINTER?" With the cold temperatures ahead, we must remember when a patient is laying on the ground after a fall or MVC, that they can still suffer from hypothermia due to the cold ground temperatures, even if the day seems warm. We must remember to cover our patients A.S.A.P. Also, place a blanket under the patient and use warm IV's solutions. Make sure the IV warmers are plugged in, restocked, and in proper working order. In other words, do not just open the cabinet, take a look inside, and close it. Take a moment; place your hand in there and feel if the fluids are warm. Also, check your stock of heavy blankets and heat packs. A suggestion is to keep a couple of heavy blankets on the bench ready to deploy in a moment's notice. We might also check to see if we have a couple hospital gowns on board in case your patient is wet and cold. If you need to remove those wet clothes, you can place them in a gown and cover them with blankets and heat packs. Remember, do not place the heat packs directly onto the patient's skin. Make sure to monitor the patient's temperature often. During winter, dress appropriately for work and bring extra uniforms.

As we prepare for the holidays, school kids will be out on Christmas break soon. Families will be traveling to and from their loved ones and traffic will increase in each of our service areas. An increase of domestic violence occurs during the holiday season as well as an increase in suicide. Always remember to watch your back and your partner's back. You should also watch your partner - make sure they are acting normally. We have no way to know what's going on in someone else's heart and mind, so be alert. Talk to your partner. If you suspect something is wrong or off or if you are feeling hopeless, tell someone.

Personnel: I would like to send a sincere thank you to the crews who responded during the tragic event that happened with Officer Matthew S. Chism on November 2nd. We are very proud of the job you did that evening. After visiting with friends and family members of Matt Chism, they are deeply touched and proud as well. They know that you gave your all that night and wanted to thank you so very much! Tyler, Bruce, Mike M and Josh. Those of us in Cedar Co would also like to say thank you for the support from our CMH family that we received during the services and for taking time out of your busy life to come over and cover shifts and help with and/or attend services. When tragedy strikes, it is heartwarming to see when we all pull together to show support for our fallen "family."

Education/Clinical News: Theron Becker

Quality: Last week, Taney County Ambulance District and CMH EMS spent the day together talking about quality issues and sharing of data and ideas. It is truly remarkable how similar our two organizations are. We cover a larger area but total number of calls, vehicles, and employees are similar. In the next few months, plan on seeing some data and best practices from TCAD.

New hires / students: We still have seven new hires in orientation (six Osceola employees). Goldie Masters will be starting orientation next week and will be filling the open night EMT shift.

Upcoming training: No EMS education in December other than the typical education department activities.

Upcoming dates in EMS history:

12/7/1941: 2,402 Americans were killed at Pearl Harbor.

12/12/1831: Sisters of Mercy Founded.

12/30/1915: "Instructions and advice to chauffeurs and drivers in the ambulance service" was published being the first set of policies for EMS.

12/25/2004: George Watson, former chief of Pleasant Hope Fire Rescue and director for 12 years of CMH fleet services, lost his battle with cancer.

Polk County: Aaron Weaver

With Winter coming on, it's going to be colder more consistently. I would remind you all to keep the ambulances plugged in and make sure the fluid warmers are working correctly.

Thank You to everyone who helped cover the open Medic shifts this month.

Additionally, Thanks to everyone for continuing to keep things running smoothly in my absence.

Have a wonderful holiday season!

Happy Birthday!!

Congrats!!

Sarah McAntire 12/13 Kellie Burns 12/16
Tyler Slothower 12/23 Kyle Struckhoff 12/27
Eric Davey 12/30 Goldie Masters 12/31

Shawnda Dodson 10 years on 12/6
Aaron Dearing 8 years on 12/4
Kyle Struckhoff 4 years on 12/4
Bruce Fugate 3 years on 12/19

Welcome

Goldie Masters

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR DECEMBER

Dec 3 Deadline to provide availability to Alice for next schedule
Dec 13 **Deadline for registering for ITLS Class on January 13th**
Dec 17 Becky and Neal Taylor's Holiday Dinner for Employees at El Rodeo (R.S.V.P by 16th)
Dec 24 **Christmas Eve**
Dec 25 Christmas Day
Dec 31 **New Year's Eve**