



NLCERA EMS Committee – August 12, 2015

Greetings NLCERA EMS Committee & Stakeholders:

Please review these notes from our first meeting of the committee for accuracy. Please contact me with any questions you may have, or additions for clarification.

Thank you, Bill Salmon

First Meeting of the NLCERA EMS Advisory Committee:

Stakeholder Representatives: Letitia Betchel (Wellington FD), Art Flippin (Glacier View FD), Mike Gavin (PFA), Mike Gress (PFA), Robert Isaacson (Glacier View FD), Steve Main (UCH/PVH), Mary Makris (PFA), Bill Salmon (PFA), Adam Smith (CSU PD), Justin Smith (LCSO), Darren Tremblay (UCH/PVH), Diane Webber (LCSO), Justin Whitesell (LCSO), Carol Workman (Fort Collins PD/911),

Agenda:

- 1) Greetings: Mike Gress brought the meeting to order and greeted everyone in attendance. Mike shared an overview of the scope of the EMS Advisory Committee, which is to consistently improve the EMS system in Northern Larimer County Emergency Response Area (NLCERA).
- 2) Introductions: Each stakeholder representative in attendance was asked to state their name and affiliation to complete introductions.
- 3) Format of Meeting Agreement – Discussion (1.5 Hour – hard stop): Agendas and NLCERA Zone maps were distributed to all in attendance. Basic ground rules of the meeting were presented: respect for all, everyone will be heard, we will honor our time frames. All were in agreement.
- 4) EMS Advisory Committee Roles: Mike Gress shared that this NLCERA EMS Advisory Committee is a guiding entity only, and has no actual powers of voting controls.
- 5) Discussion of meeting frequency – Quarterly (Open for discussion): By consensus, the meeting frequency was set at bi-monthly for the immediate future.
- 6) Discussion of Possible 30,000' NLCERA EMS improvements needs views from each representative (See Map): Bill Salmon led a discussion about how the zones on the NLCERA Map were established, and Mike Gress and Mary contributed to the groups understanding as they were part of the effort to drive and establish the zones based on drive-times.

Each stakeholder present was asked to describe, from a 30,000' view, what their current situation was and what needs they see for the EMS system:

- Steve Main began with a description of the changes in UCH/PVH EMS since the EMS Contract was established. He described how three new ambulances were purchased, with two here now and one still being constructed. They are hiring many new paramedics, so there are many new faces on the streets. UCH/PVH now has an ambulance in Wellington - 24/7. A new Controller position will be hired to better manage dispatching of transfers and assist supervisors with system management.. A critical care transport ambulance has been added to the system, which has been utilized for long distance transfers and will back up the 911 system if needed. A 12 hour transfer car has been added, which should enhance the 911 ambulance availability. Steve described how Part of these additions are in service now, but he anticipates all to be in place by the end of September, 2015.



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- Carol Workman described how she and her staff have been working with UCH and PFA to develop the areas required as a result of the EMS Contract. Carol described how Amy Huff, dispatch supervisor, is working with UCH/PVH to establish a dispatching site with Command CAD capabilities at the UCH/PVH Harmony campus. The Harmony campus site will allow managing of transfers so the dispatch center does not have this as an additional load. Carol described the EMS Contract required a contract with Fort Collins Dispatch, which would result in a new dispatcher position in 2016. Chief Gress added how the new data we are developing within PFA has already prompted a change in dispatching procedures which is showing significant turnout time and response time improvements. Further discussion showed the benefits of having this group of stakeholders gathered to develop common understandings.
- Justin Smith described, as Sheriff, he is a significant stakeholder who has three ambulance districts to coordinate with (Estes, Thompson Valley, and UCH/PVH). Sheriff Smith related to the group that he had not had an opportunity to have a voice in the RFP process regarding areas of the county where no fire district is established then falls to his responsibility. Sheriff Smith described how there has been no process through the contract to discuss dispatching and billing for services from the LCSO Dispatch center. These points were well received and acknowledged as future discussion points as we move forward as a committee.
- Diane Webber addressed some of the concerns from the LCSO Dispatch perspective. A brief discussion of EMD protocol changes, disagreements, and sources of research information was respectfully exchanged. Carol agreed to send out copies of a guiding document which was being discussed. Further discussion is needed at future meetings, and again was an example of the positive ability of this group to discuss operational needs and current information. Additional discussion centered about when calls came to LCSO which were located in the county and how they were communicated to Fort Collins Dispatch.
 - Justin Whitesell added that his view of the NLCERA Map revealed areas where changes might be considered by this group to provide improved service levels. Access was mentioned as significantly challenged in some of the current TVA ambulance areas which could be and are often serviced by UCH/PVH. Bill Salmon explained that the Zone Map is one area where the NLCERA EMS Advisory Committee was going to be asked to provide input. Changes were anticipated, so this is an excellent observation for our first meeting.
- Darren Tremblay expressed that Weld and Larimer Counties are two of the fastest growing counties in the US. The added growth will add additional requirements for services and associated challenges for protocols to keep up with changes. Consistency among all pre-hospital responders is and will be an ongoing challenge for all involved. Dr. Tremblay expressed, as medical director for the QRT's, how training is a key element that assures consistency whether career or volunteer, and that much of the rural is served by volunteer responders.
- Letitia Betchel described how having the UCH/PVH ambulance in Wellington 24/7 is a bit awkward while establishing their working relationships. They have been used to waiting longer periods for an ambulance, and now they are always there with WFD. Letitia



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described communication issues when they responded into Weld County or with Cheyenne, Wyoming. This discussion showed a definite need to work with these other systems to ensure interoperability. Letitia explained that Wellington FD has two paramedic students in St. Anthony's Paramedic program. UCH/PVH supports Wellington's move to establish paramedic engine capabilities. Bill Salmon explained how having the fire based ALS medic can stop the contract response clock, which is a benefit for both the patient and ambulance service.

- Adam Smith described how his organization (CSU PD) has a long history of supporting EMS response wherever and whenever on CSU property. He explained how CSU PD wishes to “unify the missions” of all response to CSU to ensure responses are as efficient as possible. Adam stated that training is a key area he hopes to see happen in the future to establish and develop relationships. Adam shared a bit of philosophy: “loathes, we have always done it this way.” Adam and Carol discussed the fact that CSU PD has encrypted radios which can prevent communications while responding to CSU. Apparently all CSU officers can turn off their encryption when responding with outside agencies. PFA seems to be the most affected during EMS responses, since UCH/PVH has the encryption key with their radios. According to Adam, CSU officers can hear when encryption is activated, but have to turn it off to be heard. Discussion agreed that there is more training needed by CSU and agencies this affects.
- Robert Isaacson opened by stating he had been in contact with the mountain fire chiefs of the NLCERA, and he was representing them at this meeting. Chief Isaacson described there are many issues regarding EMS and the mountain departments. Training of BLS and ALS medics is an issue. Getting information for training based on patient outcomes has been a problem for the mountain departments. Communications seemed to be the most significant issue for the mountain departments, and dispatch centers since they were asked to relay communications due to poor radio reception. At issue is the lack of handheld radios in the ambulances, as well as 800 meg and VHF mobile radio reception. Discussion about the staging of ambulances on the main roads, and zone time frames may be a point of discussion in the future. Apparently mountain fire departments are transporting farther down the mountain than in the past, with more medics getting lost while responding. A question of helicopter launches being more frequent, and were they necessary?
 - Sheriff Smith described the process they have been dealing with to have the Bald Mountain 800 meg tower installed. Apparently this has been over 10 years in the making, and he hopes there will be movement soon (next 12-18 months) to get it completed. Apparently power to the tower is the issue, with 12 miles of power lines to put in place. He explained that the coverage map has been verified by actual equipment which was brought in to test coverage from the Bald Mountain location. It should be effective once in place to assist with 800 meg communications.
- Art Flippin explained QRT meetings are now being rescheduled. He explained there is a vital need to have consistent training between UCH/PVH and the mountain departments. Steve Main explained that they will be getting the Wellington ambulance



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for response, so crews and training may stabilize in the future. Steve stated he would check about any mobile radio issues in the ambulances.

- Robert Isaacson asked Steve Main about UCH/PVH's training person, Kevin, and who his replacement would be. Training at the mountain departments is needed to support ALS departments. This led to a discussion about ALS capabilities at the mountain departments and if this stopped the clock for the EMS Contract. Bill Salmon explained this was called a coordinated compliance, and per the terms of the contract was not automatic but needed to be established between an entity and UCH/PVH. Again, the best interests of the patients was at the heart of establishing a coordinated compliance capability.
 - Mary Makris expressed concern as PFA's infectious disease control officer, about how NLCERA medics are following up on patients with suspected infectious diseases? She can be an information resource to help develop these capabilities in the future.
 - Mike Gavin expressed the view from emergency management, as moving towards regional planning and application. Mike wanted the group to know that there are many plans in place and they can be a resource when considering EMS response in the NLCERA.
 - Justin Whitesell described the issues of today, with training of responders and law enforcement being a significant need. Through this group, each stakeholder can bring their issues forward. Justin expanded on how After Action Reviews can be a significant source of valuable information for training and solutions. There is a need for a liaison with the QRT's, and Dr. Tremblay is the liaison, to ensure training and meetings take place. Justin offered that there are many other response groups such as search and rescue, dive team, and LC parks units that play a valuable role in EMS response. All of these groups should be considered by this group as we move forward.
 - Mike Gress concluded our stakeholder input by emphasizing recognition as a key focus for each of our organizations. We should be looking for ways to recognize excellence, and not just for problem areas. Mike explained that our EMS Compliance form used by the firefighters has recognition as the first choice before compliance issue. There was agreement among the group that 99% of our organizational efforts fall into the recognition category.
- 7) Discussion of needed data or information for next meeting agenda – assign duties: Bill Salmon asked the group if there are any data needs to help move us forward? Mike Gress suggested we assemble the information from this meeting, and other meetings to form an agenda for our next meeting. Bill to assemble the topics and develop a preliminary agenda to send out. Stakeholder members can add to the agenda prior to the next meeting. Mary Makris suggested that a website be formed or use an existing one to share information among this committee. More on this as it develops.
- 8) Set next meeting date: The next meeting was scheduled for October 14, 08:30 – 10:00, PFA Administration Conference Room.

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