

**Gage County EMS Advisory Committee**  
**Beatrice, Nebraska**  
**December 11, 2008**  
**8:00 a.m.**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

Don Harmon  
Gary Williams  
Larry Stanosheck  
Mark Meints  
Ron Miller  
Brian Daake  
Dan Hawkins

**Absent:**

Dawn Hill  
Rex Adams  
Dee Fritch  
Dennis Byars  
Jane Witthoff  
Alan Fetty

**Staff Resources:**

Robyn Henderson  
Doug Fuller  
Richard Mettler  
Don Rice, MD

**Guests:**

Matt Bauman  
Jeannie Bomeyer

**Call Meeting to Order**

Don Harmon called the meeting to order and asked members to introduce themselves.

**Approve Minutes**

Motion made and seconded to accept agenda and minutes, motion approved.

**Physician Medical Director Update**

Dr. Rice has met with all departments. One concern heard was whether the units would have to transport all patients to Beatrice. Station audits done/will be done for several of the departments. On quality assurance, he is looking at call reports from Beatrice and getting good information from ER in Beatrice. He has also met with some of the county supervisors and is investigating the option of paying for paramedics through RHCs. The county also needs to work through tiering plan to create more efficiency and to ensure appropriate level of care, especially for ALS calls.

Don Harmon noted that the group is very concerned about processes and services towards “something” What are we trying to achieve—current level of care (BLS) or ALS for all.

Dr. Rice commented that there is a moral obligation to provide services and that the goal should be ALS. Owners of residences expanding outside Lincoln city limits have expectations of appropriate care. This can be put into place by analyzing call data to determine where and when to have FTE paramedic available (peak hours). We should be able to achieve the EMS report recommendations, although a key challenge is keeping quality up. Transition year will be tough, but it can be done.

Why is there such a push towards ALS? Federal agencies are pushing states to change their regulations to be more restrictive and limit who can provide what level of care (scope of practice). The primary concern is about lack of proficiency by paramedics and EMTs.

## **Ambulance District (AD)**

Members have been concerned about having the appropriate data to substantiate need for changes; however, using Beatrice as an example, members looked at that variety of data available from eNarsis and how it can be used.

Financing concerns:

- Adding a surcharge on utilities has been looked at, but was assured it would be vetoed.
- EMS Billing (service) takes 15% of claims processed.
- Everybody has to be billed. It is illegal to do variable billing (not charging some patients, but charging others.)
- Also have problems with non-payment from patients
- Can't bill for BLS and ALS for same call- so if tiering, the ALS service will be reimbursed

## **Questions for the Lawyer:**

Some questions still exist around billing – centralize through Beatrice Hospital has problems especially if patient doesn't go to Beatrice hospital. Dr. Rice had some questions about way departments are billing CMS – they may be able to bill for more services.

Please get exactly worded questions to me by January 12. We will make every effort to have lawyer at the February meeting.

Hospital really beefing up Emergency care and staff training to help family docs; reduce agency nurses from 10 to 2; have interim ER director; have trauma preceptorship with BryanLGH West; arrangements with St. Elizabeth's for certified ER docs.

## **Comments from Subcommittees and Others**

Meeting between Finance and Systems committee hadn't been held. Brian will get a hold of Rex to set up meeting.

County Board agreed to open contracts for Adam, Clatonia, and Courtland. Have 90 days to comment.

It would be helpful to have county-wide equipment inventory. It will help with budgeting and showing what the money is going for

Doug Fuller will check licensing bureau to see if Barnston has signed on with Dr. Rice. All others have

## **Next steps**

Brian will get a hold of Rex to set up meeting.  
Mark will work on equipment inventory

**With no other business, meeting adjourned.**