



**2016–2018**

**WISCONSIN  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES  
PLAN**



Wisconsin  
Department of Health Services

Office of Preparedness and Emergency Health Care  
EMS Section  
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## 2016–2018 WISCONSIN EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES STATE PLAN

The 2016–2018 Wisconsin Emergency Medical Services Plan is prepared in accordance with Wis. Stat. § 256.08, which directs the Department of Health Services (DHS) to prepare a state emergency medical services plan and to identify priorities for changes in the state’s emergency medical services system for the two years following preparation of the plan. Under § 13.172 (2) of the statutes, the Department shall provide a copy of the state emergency medical services plan biennially to the legislature.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) national *EMS Agenda for the Future*, and the Wisconsin State Health Plan, *Healthiest Wisconsin 2020*, provided the guidance and vision for the 2016–2018 Wisconsin Emergency Medical Services Plan. The plan supports Wisconsin’s overall goal for the future, to achieve an effective, efficient, and integrated Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system for the state.

There are 10 essential components of an optimal EMS system. Listed below are each of those components, a description of each component, and the plan for priorities to improve Wisconsin’s EMS System. Issues identified as priorities in earlier plans but not yet resolved are incorporated in this plan for continued attention.

The following plan is based on a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) assessment conducted in June of 2012. This assessment identified 53 recommendations for improvement of the EMS system. These recommendations were then reviewed by DHS, the EMS Board, and stakeholders throughout the state to identify the most important recommendations. This 2016-2018 plan incorporates these priorities.

### 1. REGULATION AND POLICY

#### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Standard:**

“Each State should have in place comprehensive enabling legislation, regulations, and operational policies and procedures to provide an effective statewide system of emergency medical and trauma care.”

#### **Priorities for Improvement**

- Identify sources of funding for the EMS and trauma system to help ensure sustainability.
- Provide authority to establish minimum standards related to system elements such as personnel, services, specialty care facilities and regional systems and identify penalties for noncompliance;
- Provide for an injury/trauma prevention and public education program;
- Continue to develop, in cooperation with EMS stakeholders and the Department, an initiative to support a stable infrastructure of the Wisconsin EMS system.

## 2. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Standard:**

“Each State EMS lead agency should identify, categorize, and coordinate resources necessary for establishment and operation of regionalized, accountable EMS and trauma systems.”

### **Priorities for Improvement**

- Develop programs for continuing the recruitment and retention of volunteer EMS personnel.
- Verify submitted ambulance service operation plans through periodic, on-site evaluations.
- Collaborate with the preparedness and trauma programs in the development of healthcare coalitions.
- Explore and assist areas of the state that have difficulty staffing ambulance calls and explore regionalization options.
- Identify best practices that may be used to establish, maintain and promote recruitment and retention.

## 3. HUMAN RESOURCES AND TRAINING

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Standard:**

“Each State should ensure that its EMS system has essential trained and certified/licensed persons to perform required tasks. These personnel include: first responders (e.g., police and fire), prehospital providers (e.g., emergency medical technicians and paramedics), communications specialists, physicians, nurses, hospital administrators, and planners. Each State should provide a comprehensive statewide plan for assuring a stable EMS workforce including consistent EMS training and recruitment/retention programs with effective local and regional support.”

### **Priorities for Improvement**

Assure statutory authority, rules and regulations to support a system of EMS personnel licensure that meets or exceeds the national EMS Scope of Practice Model, new National Education Standards, as they are available, and other aspects of the EMS Education Agenda for the Future

- Identify the process required to change Wis. Stat. ch. 256 and Wis. Admin. Code ch. DHS 110 when deemed necessary based on changes that occur within the Wisconsin EMS System.
- Continue to investigate and prepare recommendations on the concept of minimum competencies versus curriculum adherence.
- Support the training centers in obtaining and/or maintaining paramedic program accreditation in preparation for the transition to the national education standards.
- Work with the Wisconsin Technical College System to identify alternative clinical locations.

- Develop and deploy an instructor evaluation system that involves both the EMS office and the Wisconsin Technical College System Office.
- Continue working to establish National Educational Standards for training and education.

#### **4. TRANSPORTATION**

**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Standard:**

“Each State should require safe, reliable EMS transportation.”

**Priorities for Improvement**

- Assure coordination of all emergency transports within the EMS system, including public, private, or specialty (air and ground) transport and including center(s) for regional or statewide EMS transportation coordination and medical direction if appropriate; and
- Develop regulations to ensure ambulance drivers are properly trained and licensed.
- Continue to work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to revise Wis. Admin. Code ch. TRANS 309 to adjust the ambulance equipment standards.
- Investigate the effects of the implementation of emergency vehicle operation and driver safety training policy as required in Wis. Admin. Code § DHS 110.35(2)(a) and whether this has improved ambulance driver safety and reduced ambulance crashes.

#### **5. FACILITIES**

**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Standard:**

“It is imperative that the seriously injured (or ill) patient be delivered in a timely manner to the closest appropriate facility.”

**Priorities for Improvement**

- Develop and publish a list of hospitals and their specialty care designations. Specifically identify those facilities designated as primary stroke centers, S-T elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) centers, and trauma-designated facilities.
- Continue to foster development of specialty care systems of care such as stroke, S-T elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI), and trauma.

## 6. COMMUNICATION

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Standard:**

“An effective communications system is essential to EMS operations and provides the means by which emergency resources can be accessed, mobilized, managed, and coordinated. Each State should assure a comprehensive communication system.”

### **Priorities for Improvement**

- Continue to help develop an interoperable system that enables communications from dispatch to ambulance, ambulance to ambulance, ambulance to hospital, hospital to hospital and ambulance to public safety communications.
- Develop dispatcher training and certification standards.
- Finalize the revisions to the State EMS communication plan and disseminate to EMS providers.
- Continue to support the implementation of dispatch training and certification.

## 7. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Standard:**

“Public awareness and education about the EMS system are essential to a high quality system. Each State should implement a public information and education (PI&E) plan.”

### **Priorities for Improvement**

- Develop a broad-based public information and education plan that would target, in part, policy makers and the general public, to garner support for the Wisconsin EMS system. Among other topics, this should address emergency medical services and trauma systems.
- Continue to develop the EMS website to be the primary source of information regarding Wisconsin EMS.
- Leverage data system reports to create fact sheets for public dissemination to help educate the public on the EMS system.
- Identify funding to promote and educate the public about Wisconsin EMS.

## 8. MEDICAL DIRECTION

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Standard:**

“Physician involvement in all aspects of the patient care system is critical for effective EMS operations. EMS is a medical care system in which physicians oversee non-physician providers who manage patient care outside the traditional confines of the office or hospital. States should require physicians to be involved in all aspects of the patient care system.”

### **Priorities for Improvement**

- Continue to enhance the required credentials of EMS medical directors, based upon the level of the EMS programs involved.
- Discuss development of regional EMS systems and regional medical directors.

- Develop periodic, statewide and regional forums for local EMS medical directors to meet with the state EMS medical director and other bureau staff, discuss common issues, share solutions, and utilize electronic options for facilitating continual interaction among EMS medical directors.
- Translate the current medical director course into an interactive and measurable program that can generate a course completion certificate.
- Collaborate with EMS for Children on issues related to children.

## 9. TRAUMA SYSTEMS

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Standard:**

“Each State should maintain a fully functional trauma system to provide a high quality, effective patient care system. States should implement legislation requiring the development of a trauma system.”

### **Priorities for Improvement**

- Support the state trauma system with the promotion of the updated triage and transport guidelines.
- Support continued collaboration with the WI trauma system.
- Manage better dissemination of EMS data between services and hospitals to increase efficiencies in patient care and treatment.

## 10. EVALUATION

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Standard:**

“Each State should implement a comprehensive evaluation program to assess effectively and to improve a statewide EMS system.”

### **Priorities for Improvement**

- Provide summary feedback information, derived from submitted data, to the state’s EMS provider agencies.
- Develop a process (evaluation tools) to evaluate all EMS system activities and incorporate into existing committee work.
- Complete the transition from the National EMS Information System data set version 2.0 to 3.0.
- Create standard reports of system data to be used as indicators of the EMS system status.
- Publish statewide EMS data that can be utilized by stakeholders, providers, and services.
- Identify the use of data to help promote support for the Wisconsin EMS system.
- Provide courses that will help promote the use and application of WARDs Data to support continuous quality improvement for optimal patient outcomes.

## **Special Component - PREPAREDNESS FOR LARGE SCALE EVENTS (Public Health Emergency)**

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Standard:**

“EMS is a critical component in the systematic response to day-to-day emergencies as well as disasters. Building upon the day-to-day capabilities of the EMS system, each state should ensure that EMS resources are effectively and appropriately dispatched and provide prehospital triage, treatment, transport, tracking of patients and documentation of care appropriate for the incident, while maintaining the capabilities of the EMS system for continued operations”

### **Priorities for Improvement**

- Assure state and regional involvement of EMS in emergency response plans and exercises
- Prepare and disseminate proper guidance to the EMS community in response to any declared public health emergency. Assure continued involvement in after-action planning activities that result from evaluations of operations to better prepare for future events.
- Assure EMS services are involved in disaster and emergency response, including involvement in the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS).
- Encourage EMS services to participate in their regional Health Care Coalition to assist with the development and drilling of emergency response plans that EMS would be involved in during and after a local and/or state emergency event.