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June 30, 2008

Bonnie Sinz, R.N., Chief
EMS Systems Division
Emergency Medical Services Authority
1930 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-7043

Re: EMS Plan: Trauma System Status Report

Dear Bonnie:

The North Coast EMS *Trauma System Status Report* is attached.

Please note the following changes since our last revision was submitted:

- 1) North Coast EMS executed and submitted updates to your office of Trauma Policy #7000, which was revised to minimize on scene confusion between North Coast EMS and Coastal Valley's EMS personnel in Lake County. Revised Policy #7000 eliminated the need Policy # 6543.
- 2) The Lake County Trauma Advisory Committee has been convened roughly every other month, although our ability to monitor the Trauma System has been limited by the upcoming State General Fund budget reduction for EMS regions.
- 3) All trauma center designation efforts in Humboldt County have been discontinued, although we are pleased that your office invited key personnel at St. Joseph to the State Trauma Summit scheduled for July 24, 2008.
- 4) Thanks to Jonathan Jones of your staff, we are currently working with the State of Oregon and Sutter Coast Hospital representatives to assume responsibility for formal designation of Sutter-Coast Hospital in Del Norte County as a Level IV Trauma Center. We plan to participate in the late July Oregon site visit and will transition to formal California designation over the next fiscal year.

We look forward to your positive review of our Trauma Plan update.

Sincerely,

Larry Karsteadt, Executive Director
North Coast EMS

c: JPA Board Members and Alternates

Lake County Trauma Advisory Committee Members

County Health and Human Services Administrators and Health Officers

Kelly Mather, CEO, Sutter-Lakeside Hospital

Bruce Dees, M.D., Trauma Medical Director, Sutter-Lakeside Hospital

Mary Cardinale-Stein, R.N., Trauma Coordinator, Sutter-Lakeside

John Menaugh, CEO, Sutter-Coast Hospital

Beth Brown, R.N, Sutter-Coast Hospital

North Coast EMS Plan: **TRAUMA SYSTEM STATUS REPORT**

June 30, 2008 – Larry Karsteadt, Executive Director

This **EMS Plan: Trauma System Status Report** is based upon the Emergency Medical Services Authority, *Trauma System Plan Revision & Annual Trauma System Status Report Guidelines*, dated November 2006.

I. Trauma System Summary:

North Coast EMS covers Del Norte, Humboldt, and Lake and southern Trinity Counties.

Since the early 1990's, Sutter Coast Hospital in Del Norte County has provided trauma care as part of the Oregon Trauma System as a designated Level IV trauma center.

More recently and with state fiscal assistance, North Coast EMS developed and updated an EMSA approved Regional Trauma Plan and formally designated Sutter-Lakeside Hospital in Lakeport as a Level IV Trauma Center. Since then, we have coordinated ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the trauma system with the Sutter-Lakeside Hospital Trauma Coordinator, Mary Cardinale-Stein, R.N. and the Lake County Trauma Advisory Committee. Most of the trauma patients meeting Trauma Triage Criteria are directly flown out of Lake County to Level I or II trauma centers in Sacramento or Santa Rosa. North Coast EMS has MOUs with Coastal Valley's EMS and Sacramento County EMS regarding quality review, and the trauma care system in Lake County appears to be working effectively.

II. Changes in Trauma System:

Since the initial Trauma Plan Revision was submitted last year, North Coast EMS participated in several Lake County Trauma Advisory Committee meetings, although our travel funding is limited due to the State General Fund cut to EMS regions.

We recently modified the Trauma Patient Triage/Destination Policy #7000 to more closely match Coastal Valley's EMS policy and minimize onscene confusion between ground and aero medical personnel. This eliminated the need for Policy #6543.

Over the last year, our Regional Medical Director was Rob Headley, M.D., who has since moved out of state. Dr. Ken Stiver, who was our Medical Director for 17 years, was reinstated this month. Also, we continue to be unable to afford a Trauma Coordinator contract position.

Finally, we have recently initiated efforts to assume responsibility for designation of Sutter Coast Hospital in Crescent City as a California Level IV Trauma Center. As reported previously, Sutter Coast has long been designated by the State of Oregon, but Oregon is no longer able to continue this oversight for an out-of-state facility. Also, this will allow the hospital to secure additional funding as a California designated Trauma Center. We plan to participate in the Oregon site visit this July and will proceed with the transition between July 2008 and June 2009, thanks to the efforts of representatives from the EMSA, the State of Oregon and Sutter Coast Hospital

III. Number and Designation Level of Trauma Centers:

The North Coast EMS region has two designated **Level IV Trauma Centers**, one designated by us (Sutter-Lakeside Hospital, Lakeport, CA) and the other by the State of Oregon (Sutter-Coast Hospital, Crescent City, Ca). We plan to assume formal designation responsibility for Sutter Coast Hospital over the coming fiscal year.

IV. Trauma System Goals and Objectives:

- 1) *Assure that a comprehensive system of emergency medical and trauma services are available to the residents and visitors of North Coast EMS. This will be monitored on a continuous basis through base hospital, trauma center and the quality assurance/ system improvement process.*

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation is conducted by North Coast EMS in conjunction with Sutter-Lakeside Hospital and the Lake County Trauma Advisory Committee, although our role has been limited by budget issues.

- 2) *Provide impartial and objective administration of the EMS and Trauma System. This will be monitored by system review based upon compliance with established policies and system standards. This will be done routinely as issues arise and at regular intervals through the quality assurance/ system improvement process review.*

North Coast EMS continues to meet this Objective relative to the Trauma System only in Lake County. Relative to the EMS System, this Objective is met fully in the region. We recently revised Trauma Policies # 7000 to address trauma system needs in Lake County.

- 3) *Promote system cost-effectiveness and economic viability. This will be accomplished at the facility level by continuous review for cost effective care delivery practices, then shared through the system multidisciplinary review committee. At a system level this is accomplished through collaborative EMS leadership, in combination with trauma committee leadership, to monitor program costs and pursue appropriate funding sources.*

Relative to the Trauma System, this Objective continues to be met at the designated trauma center and regional levels in Lake County. North Coast EMS is not directly involved with these efforts in Del Norte County at this time but is planning to do so in the future. Relative to the EMS System, this Objective is met fully in the region.

- 4) *Coordinate local trauma services with trauma services in adjacent regions and counties. This is accomplished through the agreements with out of county trauma centers and air ambulance providers. When care coordination issues arise, resolve is obtained through the out of county provider involvement in the QI process.*

This objective continues to be met in Lake County where Trauma MOUs with neighboring counties are in place that insure coordination of QI issues. North Coast EMS also authorized the Lake County located REACH Aero Medical Unit, which operates by MOU under the Coastal Valley's EMS medical control system. Policy #7000 is now identical to the Coastal Valley's EMS policy, which enhanced onscene coordination of trauma patient care. North Coast EMS is not involved with the Sutter-Coast Hospital and State of Oregon trauma system coordination or review process at this time, but is in the process of assuming this responsibility.

- 5) *Provide accountability and objective evaluation of the trauma care system through data analysis utilizing the trauma registry. This will be accomplished through the quarterly audit and review process at the trauma facility and the EMS system trauma audit committee.*

North Coast EMS purchased, with state fiscal assistance, trauma registry hardware and *Collector* software and a digital recording system for Sutter-Lakeside Hospital. The Lakeside Trauma Coordinator enters registry data according to State Inclusion Criteria, and utilizes the recorder and electronic PCR system (EPCIS) to review and audit trauma patient care. All written complaints specific to trauma cases are confidentially reviewed at Lake County TAC meetings and quarterly QIP Reports from Sutter-Lakeside include trauma system information. North Coast EMS is not involved with the Sutter-Coast trauma center review, auditing or evaluation process conducted by the State of Oregon at this time, but plans to address this in the future.

- 6) *Promote public awareness and information regarding trauma services and injury prevention. This will be accomplished, as funding and staffing allow, through health fairs, public service announcements, and injury prevention outreach programs.*

North Coast EMS is unable to participate in these activities due to budget constraints.

V. Changes to Implementation Schedule:

Submitted to EMS	(last revision)	June 29, 2007
Continue to work with the hospitals in the region to reach the requirements for trauma center designation*		Designation of Sutter-Coast by June 30, 2009

*All future interest in trauma center designation by North Coast EMS will require formal notice, including a written pre-commitment by the CEO, Chief of Staff, Chief Nursing Officer, Trauma Medical Director, ED Director and Medical Staff by each interested facility. Unless other new funding is available, interested facilities will be expected to pay an initial trauma designation fee and ongoing annual designation fees to North Coast EMS to cover all North Coast EMS associated costs, including the site survey (unless the latter is covered by another entity and approved by North Coast EMS).

VI. Progress on Addressing EMS Authority Trauma System Plan Comments:

All recommendations identified by the EMSA in the letter of September 29, 2004 and since have been submitted and approved.

VII. Other Issues:

The Sutter-Lakeside Hospital Trauma Coordinator needs to routinely submit to North Coast EMS Trauma Registry data for review. This should include Lake County TAC review of registry data and Trauma QI Policies to ensure all appropriate cases and outliers are reviewed at meetings. We understand that difficulties with the Collector program persist.