



## North Coast EMS Agency

### Agreement #C21-009

### 3rd Quarter Task Report January 1 - March 31, 2022

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*Below each bulleted item, include a summary of the activities that have taken place during the quarter related to the individual tasks.*

#### **Component 1 - System Organization and Management**

Objective - To develop and maintain an effective management system to meet the emergency medical needs and expectations of the total population served.

Tasks: The responsibilities of the EMS agency, at a minimum, include:

- Staff development, training, and management

North Coast EMS personnel virtually participated in the following state EMS activities: EMSAAC Leadership, EMSAAC Open Session, EMSAAC Joint, EMSAAC Closed Session, EMSA/LEMSA, EMSA/Regions, EMSA/EMDAC, EMSC Technical Committee, EMSA Trauma Regulation Workgroup, CDPH HPP Disaster, State Health Officer Budget, OES Medical Health, MHOAC, Regional EMS, North-Regional RTCC; and, in the following local EMS meetings and other activities: Humboldt/Del Norte Medical Advisory Committee (MAC), Lake County Emergency Medical Care Committee (EMCC), Lake County Inter-facility Transfer, Lake County Priority 1, Med Surge Coordination, Lake HPP, EOA Contract (Humboldt), EOA (Del Norte), EOA (Lake), COVID Behavioral Health, Del Norte County COVID, DNA EOA request, Humboldt- Del Norte Redwood Coalition, COVID and OES, Behavioral Health COVID, Humboldt COVID, OES Partners, HPP Team, Staff and Contractor Communications (Medical Director, Regional EMS Coordinator, Fiscal Manager, Trauma, EOA, STEMI/Stroke, Behavioral Health, IT, EMSC, HPP Liaison), Adventist-Health Possible Trauma Center, Humboldt County Child Death Review Team, Humboldt County Child Passenger Safety Committee, IT, Humboldt, Del Norte and Lake County Fire Chiefs Association, Lake Leadership Meet and Greet, Hospital Council Meet and Greet, Drug Shortages, Humboldt Alert Medical Focus Behavioral Health, EndpointEMS, Del Norte County EOA, Lake Leadership Ordinance, and other meetings. Specific to the ongoing CDPH HPP Disaster grant, we completed the FY 21-22 Mid-Year Report. Along with the four other State funded regional Agencies, we have been working closely with the EMSA to potentially secure a badly needed State GF annual augmentation of \$255,000 beginning next fiscal year to add staff, ensure that we retain a prudent fiscal reserve, consider competitive salaries, etc.

- Allocating and maintaining office space, office equipment, and office supplies



North Coast EMS routinely maintains office space, equipment and supplies.

- Executing and maintaining contracts with member counties, service providers, consultants, and contractual staff

We executed or continued administrative contracts with: EMSA General Fund, JPA member counties, the HPP disaster medical grant with CDPH, Dr. Karp as Regional Medical Director, Rita Henderson as EDAP and Trauma Nurse Contractor, ePCR IT programmer Jay Myhre, Ezequiel Sandoval - Office IT, Moss Levy and Hartzhiems - Fiscal Audit, Stayce Curry - Behavioral Health/5150 contractor, Dennis Louy, Patrick Lynch and Kimberly Baldwin as County HPP Liaisons for Del Norte Humboldt and Lake County respectively, Selinda Shontz – STEMI and Stroke, Pam Mather - EOAs and CQI, ICEMA – Image Trend management; and Coastal Valley's EMS re: C.A.R.E.S. This quarter we also executed a contract with EndpointEMS to assist with the assessment of a potential Competitive EOA process in DNC. All contractors are part-time, independent, may engage in other contracts and provide expert services otherwise not available to North Coast EMS staff. North Coast EMS continued to receive from, and distribute by request, Pediatric Maddy Funds in all three counties. We continued contracts with seven designated Paramedic Base and Receiving Hospitals, 14 Paramedic Service Providers, numerous First Responder agencies, three Emergency Medical Dispatch Centers, seven EDAPs, four Trauma Centers and one STEMI Receiving Center. This quarter, we initiated the process to update five Annual EMS Plan Updates for submission to EMSA: the Regional EMS Plan, the Trauma Plan with the state required Fiscal Utilization Report; the EMSC Plan with the EDAP Trust Fund Report; the STEMI Plan and the QIP Plan. These will be submitted next quarter.

- Attending or participating in a minimum of 3 EMSA/LEMSA meetings annually (following advance notice and reasonable justification provided by the LEMSA, EMSA will make a determination on the flexibility of the attendance requirement on a case-by-case basis, and in the event the quarterly EMSA/LEMSA meeting is canceled, attendance at the meeting will not be counted for/against the LEMSA)

This quarter North Coast EMS attended the state level meetings listed above. This quarter, we participated in all EMSA/LEMSA associated meetings.

## **Component 2 - Staffing and Training**

Objective - To ensure LEMSA authorized personnel functioning within the EMS system are properly trained, licensed/certified/authorized and/or accredited to safely provide medical care to the public.

Tasks: The responsibilities of the EMS agency, at a minimum, include:

- Ongoing assessment of local training program needs

North Coast EMS has numerous mechanisms for determining training program needs, including: meetings where EMS system and training needs are or can be discussed; staff attendance at state and federal meetings where state and national standards and best practices may be reviewed; communications with regional EMS instructors; review of quarterly QIP reports from base hospitals and providers as staff time allows;



input from stateholders, etc. This quarter we initiated discussion on Behavioral Health First Aid training given the increasing number of violent attacks in Emergency Departments. Contractor Curry continued to take the lead on development or distribution of tools to support the management of 5150 and psychiatric patients especially during the pandemic.

- Authorizing and approving training programs and curriculum for all certification levels

North Coast EMS has numerous approved training programs that have been verified to meet or exceed state minimum standards, including curriculum and instructor requirements. These programs include: Public Safety, First Responder, EMT-I, Paramedic, continuing education, etc.

- Providing training programs and classes as needed

We continue the process to approve Public Safety First Aid and coordinating First Responder courses as needed for the three counties. We initiated the process to assess local Behavioral Health First Aid training.

- Providing ongoing certification/authorization/accreditation or personnel approval of local scope of practice for all certification levels

North Coast EMS issues numerous EMT-I certifications, paramedic accreditations and MICN authorizations annually. We have policies specific to BLS and ALS scope of practice and numerous continuously updated protocols and policies specific to the EMT-I and EMT-P scope of practice. We continued to work closely with Public Health and other EMS partners to ensure ongoing assistance with COVID related policies. This quarter we opened discussion thanks to stakeholder input on ways to streamline the paramedic accreditation process, which usually take about three working days, by eliminating the PCMD signature requirement; and, the internship review process to ensure that new accreditations are clinically competent, compliant with state standards and are not unnecessarily held up.

- Developing and maintaining treatment protocols for all certification levels

North Coast EMS has numerous policies specific to the BLS and ALS scope of practice and continuously updates protocols and policies specific to the EMT-I and EMT-P scope of practice. We continued to update, add and modify policies and protocols in concert with the Policy Review Committee. We are also discussing ideas to help streamline our internal policy review process.

- Maintaining communication link with Quality Improvement program to assess performance of field personnel

North Coast EMS has extensive QI policies and draft the Annual QIP Plan Update, soon to be submitted to the EMSA. We previously approved all base hospital and ALS Providers QIP Plans and require all approved ALS providers and designated base hospitals to submit quarterly QIP reports summarizing activities in each of the QIP regulation required categories. We also select a focused review topic each quarter as staff time allows.



- Conducting investigations and taking action against certification when indicated

North Coast EMS did not take any actions against a certificate holder and participated in case reviews this quarter. Regional EMS Coordinator continues the process to review PCRs and maintain the case review log to ensure loop closure.

- Authorizing, maintaining, and evaluating EMS continuing education programs

North Coast EMS has approximately 33 approved CEU providers and policies are in place to authorize new and review existing providers if needed.

### **Component 3 - Communications**

Objective - To develop and maintain an effective communications system that meets the needs of the EMS system.

Tasks: The responsibilities of the EMS agency, at a minimum, include:

- On-going assessment of communications status and needs

North Coast EMS previously approved, jointly with Napa County, the Emergency Medical Dispatch program at CALFIRE ECC in St. Helena, which is the 9-1-1 dispatch center for Lake County. Other EMD providers include Eureka Police Department and CALFIRE ECC for Humboldt/Del Norte Counties. We also previously approved the air medical dispatch plan for Lake County to utilize a single dispatch frequency by REACH Flight Guard upon activation by the St. Helena ECC. The CALFIRE ECC in Fortuna is approved as the Del Norte and Humboldt air medical dispatch center. We also understand that Del Norte Ambulance is planning to shift to an Oregon based EMD dispatch center at some point.

- Assuring appropriate maintenance of EMS related communications systems

We plan to continue to work with each county, hospital and provider to help ensure future Med Net and/or field to hospital Communication Systems integrity. We also participated in ongoing communications to help improve 12-lead ECG transmission to the STEMI Receiving Center in Humboldt County.

- Approving ambulance dispatch centers

All three counties have centralized and North Coast EMS approved dispatch centers for ambulances. City Ambulance of Eureka is the primary ground ambulance dispatch center in Humboldt County, although Hoopa {K'ima:w} Ambulance may occasionally be dispatched through a separate process. The Del Norte County Sheriffs Dispatch Center is responsible for ground ambulance dispatch in Del Norte County, although this may be in the process of shifting as noted above. Lake County utilizes the CALFIRE ECC in Napa County for ambulance dispatch. CALFIRE ECC in Fortuna and CALFIRE ECC in Napa County are the North Coast EMS approved air medical dispatch centers in Del Norte/Humboldt and Lake respectfully.



- Providing acceptable procedures and communications for the purpose of dispatch and on-line medical control

Communications procedures and medical control policies have been in place for decades and are updated as needed. As the EMD oversight body, we are available to QI any and all EMD related issues.

- Approving emergency medical dispatch (EMD) training and/or operational programs

North Coast EMS continues to approve the EMD training programs at the Eureka Police Department, the CALFIRE ECC in Fortuna and the CALFIRE St Helena ECC (jointly with Napa County EMS). CAE may soon be submitting an EMD program approval request.

#### **Component 4 - Response and Transportation**

Objective - To develop and maintain an effective EMS response and ambulance transportation system that meets the needs of the population served.

Tasks: The responsibilities of the EMS agency, at a minimum, include:

- Designating EMS responders including first responders, Limited Advanced Life Support (LALS)/Advanced Life Support (ALS) providers, ambulance providers, and Prehospital EMS Aircraft providers

North Coast EMS designates First Responder training programs (see 2.1 above). The Humboldt and Lake County County Board of Supervisors adopted ambulance ordinances that allow Public Health to issue permits or contracts with ambulance providers. Del Norte County has a contract with DNA. All ambulance providers, four non-transporting providers and one air medical provider are North Coast EMS approved ALS Providers. North Coast EMS has policies and ongoing MOUs specific to in- and out-of-area EMS helicopters.

- Monitoring local ordinances related to EMS

Humboldt and Lake County ambulance ordinances are approved by the respective Boards of Supervisors and enforcement is the responsibility of the Public Health Departments with the assistance of North Coast EMS as needed. Lake County is interested in revising their ordinance. The North Coast EMS participated in all previous ordinance updates as is required by statute.

- Establishing policies and procedures to the system for the transportation of patients to trauma centers and/or specialty care hospitals as needed

North Coast EMS has established and periodically updates policies and procedures for the transportation of patients to trauma and other specialty centers. North Coast EMS currently has four designated trauma centers, one in Del Norte County that receives all injured patients, two in Humboldt County with triage and destination criteria, and one in Lake County with triage criteria identical to Coastal Valley's EMS.



We also have a STEMI destination policy that sends all transported Humboldt County STEMI patients directly to the designated STEMI Receiving Center in Eureka. Substantive policy changes are reviewed through our Policy Review Committee process prior to adoption.

- **Implementing and maintaining contracts with providers**

All North Coast EMS authorized ALS Providers have executed contracts.

- **Creating exclusive operating areas**

EOA contractor Pam Mather and North Coast EMS finalized contracts with CAE and AMRA and implemented the EOA grandfathering process pursuant to EMSA approval of the Humboldt County Transportation Plan effective 1/1/2022. We continued to assess the Del Norte Ambulance EOA grandfathering request, and determined that they are eligible for grandfathering. In collaboration with Supervisor Darrin Short of DNC, we have initiated a process to also assess Competitive EOA or status quo options for presentation to the BOS. To assist with a potential Competitive Bid process in DNC, we entered into a contract with EndpointEMS. Also, we are again planning to conduct a grandfathering EOA process next fiscal year on behalf of South Lake County Fire Protection District. This was delayed by COVID, the Humboldt and DNC EOA processes.

- **Inspecting ambulance or LALS/ALS providers**

North Coast EMS conducts or delegates ambulance inspections to Base Hospital Prehospital Care Nurse Coordinator (PCNC)s for new ALS providers or for cause. No inspections have needed to be conducted this quarter. We are hopeful that the potential increase in the State GF allocation will allow us to add staff to potentially make these site surveys more routine once again.

- **Developing and enforcing performance standards as needed**

See above. We have developed ambulance performance standards associated with the Humboldt County Transportation Plan as part of the EOA grandfathering process. Response time monitoring has been initiated. Pending the outcome of the DNC EOA process options, similar monitoring criteria may be established for Del Norte Ambulance.

## **Component 5 - Facilities and Critical Care**

Objective - To establish and/or identify appropriate facilities to provide for the standards and care required by a dynamic EMS patient care delivery system.

Tasks: The responsibilities of the EMS agency, at a minimum, include:

- **Designating base hospital(s) or alternate base stations for on-line medical control and direction**

All seven base hospitals are designated by contract as Paramedic Base and Receiving Centers, six as "Modified Base Hospitals" that are no longer required to utilize MICNs.



We need additional staff time to adequately monitor base hospitals. The potential State GF allocation increase mentioned above should allow this to occur once again on a periodic basis. Also, we need to revisit the shift at Sutter-Lakeside Hospital to a Modified Base Hospital contract. This has been delayed by COVID and other priorities.

- Identifying ambulance receiving centers including hospitals and alternative receiving facilities in rural areas

All seven hospitals are designated Paramedic Receiving Centers; another is a state designated mental health receiving facility. We have two alternate receiving centers at two Standby Hospitals (Adventist-Clearlake and Jerold Phelps), both of which were approved by the EMSA and North Coast EMS as Alternative Paramedic Receiving Hospitals years ago.

- Identifying and designating, as needed, trauma centers and other specialty care facilities

Please see the soon to be submitted to EMSA Trauma Plan Annual Update. Three Basic Level IV trauma centers and one Level III trauma center are designated within the three county region, one continues under probation. Trauma Registry data transmission from all four trauma centers to the state repository continues and North Coast EMS works with each trauma center to ensure uniform and timely data transmission pursuant to state and ACS standards. This quarter we drafted the Annual Trauma Plan Update that will soon be submitted to EMSA.

North Coast EMS designated SJH as a STEMI Receiving Center, activated the Humboldt County STEMI system on 3/3/16 and we continue to oversee this program. A virtual site survey is planned for next quarter. A Humboldt County STEMI/Stroke Committee meeting was convened this quarter and CARES data was compiled and sent to Coastal Valley's EMS. We also received STEMI data from SJH and submitted APOT Reports to EMSA and distributed these to the region. This quarter we drafted the Annual STEMI Plan Update that will soon be submitted to EMSA.

The Core Measure Reports are also completed as requested by EMSA.

All seven hospitals are Emergency Departments Approved for Pediatric (EDAP) designated. Site survey follow-up reports were sent out and EDAP designation continues at all seven hospitals with follow-up reports in process from us. This quarter we drafted the Annual EMSC Plan Update that will soon be submitted to EMSA.

- Periodically assessing trauma system and plan as needed

See the recently completed Annual Trauma Plan Update. We conducted a Lake County TAC meeting this quarter.

- Coordinating trauma patients to appropriate trauma center(s) or approved receiving hospitals



For Lake County, North Coast EMS has an approved Trauma Triage Policy that integrates with Coastal Valley's EMS policy and is very similar to the national standard. Patients meeting Trauma Triage Criteria are directly transported to our designated trauma centers, or in Lake County, by air to the closest higher level TC located out of county. Sutter-Coast Hospital in Del Norte County receives all trauma patients due to geography. In Humboldt County, higher level patients meeting critical trauma patient criteria are now triaged and bypass the Level IV trauma center in Arcata to the Level III in Eureka.

- Periodically assessing hospitals (e.g., pediatric critical care centers, emergency departments approved for pediatrics, other specialty care centers)

North Coast EMS continued to receive and distribute by request, Pediatric Maddy "Richie's" funding to our designated EDAPs upon request and review.

North Coast EMS continues to encourage best prehospital and hospital stroke patient management practices. Also, pending additional state funding, formal Stroke System development is targeted for next year.

North Coast EMS formally designated SJH as a STEMI Receiving Center in 2016 and continues to conduct HCCC (now STEMI/Stroke) meetings and monitor and enhance the STEMI system. A meeting was convened this quarter.

The 5150 Handbook is periodically updated and available on our web site – northcoastems.com. Behavioral Health contractor Stacey Curry continues to work on development of uniform medical screening criteria for Behavioral Health patients, standardize timelines for a 5150 hold, 5150 online training programs and we continue to support county Behavioral Health (BH) grants and Crisis Response Teams etc in each county. We also are assessing the feasibility of a BH First Aid program for EMTs/paramedics and are working with EPD, Humboldt Fire and St Joseph Hospital on a BH response team concept. We emphasize that up to 10 ED RNs were recently assaulted and violent BH patient volume appears to be increasing. As mentioned above, Stayce continues to provide critical local coordination of Behavioral Health/EMS serves.

- Completing hospital closure impact reports

None were requested or completed this quarter.

## **Component 6 - Data Collection and System Evaluation**

Objective - To provide for appropriate system evaluation through the use of quality data collection and other methods to improve system performance and evaluation.

Tasks: The responsibilities of the EMS agency, at a minimum, include:

- Reviewing reportable incidents





North Coast EMS reviews all discovered or received reportable incidents. During this quarter we took no formal action but reviewed disclosure protected cases during TAC and STEMI meetings, and as needed.

- Reviewing prehospital care reports including Automated External Defibrillators (AED) reports

These reports were discontinued by EMSA years ago. North Coast EMS participates in the C.A.R.E.S. program.

- Processing and investigating quality assurance/improvement incident reports

North Coast EMS oversees an extensive Quality Improvement Program and utilizes our Regional QIP Plan, which is soon to be submitted to EMSA. QIP Plans have been approved by North Coast EMS for all Base Hospitals and ALS Providers, who also submit quarterly QIP updates upon request. This quarter, we continued to coordinate a process to review, consolidate and update CQI Policies and are soon to complete the process to update the QIP Annual Plan.

- Monitoring and reporting on EMS System Core Measures by March 31<sup>st</sup> each year, and acknowledging completion of the monitoring and reporting as of March 31<sup>st</sup> each year

North Coast EMS submitted as requested the state requested Core Measures Report and APOT data. Our APOT averages fortunately continue to be relatively low.

- Providing data to CEMSIS monthly

See above. ImageTrend data goes directly to ICEMA upon completion of each e-PCR by EMTs and paramedics. Several other vendors e-PCR programs have been approved for use and data continues to be submitted to ICEMA by each ALS Provider. The North Coast EMS JPA Governing Board previously approved an Annual ImageTrend Base/Access Fee for all providers to cover our ICEMA ImageTrend access costs. All but one provider has reimbursed this statutorial required and JPA Board approved fee.

- Implementing Health and Safety Code Section 1797.227, including providing data using the current versions of NEMSIS and CEMSIS standards from Electronic Health Records (EHR)

All ALS Providers utilize NEMSIS and CEMSIS compliant EHR programs.

- Engaging healthcare partners and Health Information Organizations in your jurisdiction in discussions and planning efforts to integrate EMS into developing health information exchange networks according to the models being developed under the ONC grant

The EMS super-utilizers study being conducted in Lake County was completed a few years ago.

## **Component 7 - Public Information and Education**



Objective - To provide programs to establish an awareness of the EMS system, how to access and use the system and provide programs to train members of the public in first-aid and CPR.

Tasks: The responsibilities of the EMS agency, at a minimum, include:

- Information and/or access to CPR and first-aid courses taught within the EMS system  

North Coast EMS has approved several Public Safety First Aid training programs that include CPR and first aid training. We are currently assessing development of a potential new Behavioral Health First Aid CEU offering.
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- Involvement in public service announcements involving prevention or EMS related issues  

North Coast EMS staff members participated in local injury and illness prevention and children's safety programs.
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- Availability of information to assist the population in catastrophic events, as appropriate  

North Coast EMS participates in the HPP disaster grant program and is involved with COVID and medical disaster planning. Each county has PSAs and other means of providing information to the public during catastrophic events.
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- Participating in public speaking events and representing the EMS agency during news events and incidents  

None this quarter.
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- Seeking opportunities to collaborate with key partners, including local public health and other community organizations, to promote healthcare and injury prevention activities  

North Coast EMS continues to seek opportunities to collaborate with key EMS and Public Health partners to promote healthcare, HPP, the MHOAC program, and injury prevention activities.
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### **Component 8 - Disaster Medical Response**

Objective - To collaborate with the Office of Emergency Services, Public Health and EMS responders in the preparedness and response of the region's EMS systems in the event of a disaster or catastrophic event within the regions or a neighboring jurisdiction.

Tasks: The responsibilities of the EMS agency, at a minimum, include:

- Participating in disaster planning and drills as needed  

North Coast participated in numerous HPP COVID and disaster related activities, including planning and coordination with each region and county. We are planning to re-initiate a process to review and expand the Regional MCI Plan next fiscal year and will update related policies and protocols as needed. HPP required redundant radio drills were conducted or are planned, we participated in development of Burn and
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Infectious Disease Annexes, and North Coast EMS County Disaster Liaisons continue to be available to support the MHOAC programs and assist with HPP Deliverables. We plan to participate in the Lake County MCI drill next quarter.

- Identifying disaster preparedness needs

As part of our HPP disaster planning activities we continue to evaluate existing North Coast EMS and regional disaster preparedness needs with our HPP and Public Health partners. This includes review of numerous documents, attending meetings and working collaboratively with each JPA member county and the State. Through the North Coast EMS County Liaison contractors, North Coast EMS worked with our Public Health Departments to achieve the HPP Disaster grant deliverables and define supporting activities associated with the FY 22-23 HPP work plan. We completed the Mid-Year HPP Report and the 2022-23 Capabilities Survey last quarter and are planning to apply for the next four-year HPP grant next quarter.

- Coordinating the operational area disaster medical/health coordinator

North Coast EMS staff and HPP contractors coordinated with the MHOAC in each county, attended meetings, participate in local, state and Regional Medical Disaster meetings and events and participated or coordinated numerous state, regional and county COVID and non-COVID HPP related activities designed to support and assist each MHOAC.

- Coordinating the regional disaster medical/health coordinator system

See above.

- Developing policies and procedures for EMS personnel in response to a multi-casualty or disaster incident

North Coast EMS has MCI and disaster related plan and policies and updates these as needed. We plan to update the North Coast Regional EMS MCI Plan next fiscal year and related policies, if needed, although this was delayed by other priorities including the ongoing pandemic.

- Facilitating mutual aid agreements

North Coast EMS has historically facilitated development of mutual aid agreements and all ambulance providers have mutual aid arrangements with surrounding providers. North Coast EMS has no existing barriers to cross-jurisdictional utilization of paramedics provided state standards are followed. We also continue to participate in IFT discussions in Lake County that involves mutual aid. Recently, a mutual aid arrangement was established between the Lake County Fire Chiefs Association and CAE to staff two additional ambulances in or near Lake County, and we understand that IFTs issues have improved. Hopefully this will be sustainable.

- Collaborating with all EMS personnel on training of incident command and Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)



North Coast EMS supports ongoing ICS and SEMS training. Local training programs are conducted periodically and each approved Public Safety, First Responder, EMT-I and paramedic training program includes these topics.