

STATE OF ALASKA



A REASSESSMENT OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

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**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Technical Assistance Team**

**G. Paul Dabrowski, MD, FACS
D. Randy Kuykendall, MLS
Dan Manz
Curtis Sandy, MD, EMT-T, FACEP
Jolene R. Whitney, MPA**

Susan McHenry, MS - Facilitator
Janice D. Simmons, BFA - Administrative Consultant

procedures performed, chart review, and destination criteria for specific categories of patients.

The state established a scope of practice for each certification level but the agency medical director has the authority to expand this scope with EMS Unit approval. However, in an emergency, a physician can instruct an EMT to perform any procedure regardless of certification level.

The EMTI and ETT levels do not require medical direction. First responder agencies are unregulated. Testimony included concern that these agencies and ETT personnel are an integral part of the system but do not have the same level of oversight or liability protection as EMTs and Paramedics.

On-line medical direction is very difficult because of the limited communication infrastructure and vast geography of the state. This requires more dependence upon written standing orders to direct appropriate patient care. However, the quality of individual agency standing orders is diverse and non-standardized. There are model guidelines available from the Unit but these do not appear to be updated regularly.

The two hospitals in Anchorage that have PICU capability have offered to provide on-line medical control for pediatric patients across the state.

Agency medical directors are responsible for reviewing run reports of individual providers on a quarterly basis. These QA activities, however, are not protected from discovery. The charge to medical directors in regulation does not include agency or system performance improvement.

Recommendations

- The Legislature should ensure in statute the protection of quality assurance activities of EMS agencies and medical directors.
- The Section should clearly define in regulation the roles, responsibility, and authority of the State EMS Medical Director and the Regional Medical Directors.
- The Alaska Council on EMS (ACEMS) should establish a medical director subcommittee to include the State Medical Director, Regional Medical Directors and other agency medical director representatives.