



## **2017 Questions to NAEMT Board Candidates**

*Please include your response (500 words or less) below each question. Thanks.*

**Candidate: Charlene Cobb**

1. Describe what you feel should be NAEMT's role in advancing the EMS profession.

NAEMT continues to be an industry leader in promoting the advancement of the EMS profession through our educational programs, advocacy and affiliations.

I feel education is of utmost importance in the advancement of our field.

As a provider of standardized evidence-based education, NAEMT helps EMS providers become even better clinicians, which results in better patient care, better patient outcomes and additional professional respect. The NAEMT Instructors Course has become the industry standard for those that wish to advance their practice and join the EMS educator profession. And, NAEMT has shown that it is continuing to stay relevant with new material, such as the RECERT program, which offers high-quality continuing medical education online.

NAEMT must continue to help us advance our profession through advocacy.

NAEMT has created a strong advocacy presence with local, state and federal leaders and educates these leaders about issues important to the EMS profession and provides resources such as the NAEMT's Grassroots Advocacy Guide, which helps members understand the issues impacting EMS and how to become advocates for the profession themselves. We need to continue this momentum and encourage more members to learn about the issues and changes that will be affecting us in the near future. NAEMT position statements and "Day on the Hill" continue to bring awareness to legislators and has been successful in advancing the Veterans Emergency Medical Technician Support Act of 2016. We also need to continue to build our membership so we may have a stronger presence and voice.

NAEMT has built important affiliations with both the national and international EMS community as well as developing strategic partnerships in the business and medical field. By fostering these relationships, NAEMT can work toward standardizing our profession and gaining respect for EMS.

While NAEMT has had many successes, it is important for the organization and its members to continue to advance the profession. NAEMT must remain the catalyst for advancement and address topics that are affecting EMS professionals, such as post-traumatic stress, suicide,

violence against providers and unsafe work practices. We must continue our work on bills that are relevant to EMS and stay current with changes that are coming from the Center of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

2. Ethics – One of NAEMT’s core values states that the association “shall conduct all aspects of our business with integrity and transparency, and adhere to the ethical standards of our profession.” What does this statement mean to you? Describe how you will work as a member of the NAEMT Board to safeguard this value.

Having served as a board member for the past two years, I have learned the value of transparency as we worked through some difficult multifaceted issues. I believe that you cannot have integrity without transparency. It is important to have guiding principles based on core values and ethics.

I strongly feel that NAEMT has an obligation to its members to represent them in a just manner and to have all the facts on the table when deciding what the best action will be. This is one reason I feel strongly about attending our annual meetings. During this time, members may meet with the board and voice their questions, concerns and opinions.

Often the decisions that are being made at a board level are not as simple as yes or no, or what is right or wrong. Frequently, there is much discussion on what affect the decision will have on our organization as well as the EMS community. It is also important to have a clear understanding of the repercussions and what the consequences will be in the future.

As a board member, I do not bring bias or personal agendas when in a position of representing the members. Successful board members must have a strong moral compass and the ability to consider the greater good.

As a board member, I will continue to bring attention to discrepancies within the board or from the NAEMT staff and continue to speak up if I feel we are not maintaining NAEMT’s core values. I take this position very seriously and take pride in the trust that is bestowed upon me to represent the members.

3. Describe what you see as the opportunities and challenges that the US healthcare transformation poses for EMS, and what you see as NAEMT’s role in this transformation.

Change is inevitable, and I see many opportunities for sustainability of EMS as we move away from a fee for services model to a patient-centered, data-driven model. EMS must seize the opportunity of adding new services to accompany EMS and transportation for long term survival. Such services as Community Paramedicine and Mobil Integrated Healthcare will allow us to stay under the auspice of EMS, yet still become more diversified in our field.

Unfortunately, change can create challenges for some agencies. These changes may produce some financial burdens from costs associated with new software, program funding, additional resources and reduced payments to name a few. Value-based reimbursement may also be problematic if an organization is not prepared when the government enacts these changes.

I feel NAEMT has already taken the lead on healthcare transformation as it applies to EMS and is prepared for this change. Guidance and resources are available to members, such as the online Knowledge Center which provides current information, toolkits to navigate through the changes, and contacts for networking.

NAEMT's 3.0 Transformation Summit brings experts to provide perspective from organizations that have already begun the process and what to expect in the future. NAEMT will also play a role in the development of specialized curriculum for new service lines.

These types of benefits should continue, as they help members navigate the changes ahead.

4. Professionalism – Describe what “EMS professionalism” means to you and how NAEMT can positively impact the public’s perception of the EMS profession.

I feel our NAEMT code of Ethics and EMT Oath very clearly address what EMS professionalism is. I would also add transparency, demonstrating integrity and empathy, being accountable, showing diplomacy, being a lifelong learner, taking pride of your appearance and the organization you represent.

NAEMT is already putting strong work into public perception. On a professional level, NAEMT is engaging with other associations in the medical community. They are changing EMS culture through education, quality, expertise, technology and reliability, all of which the public associates with professionalism.

So often we are fighting the battle of bad press and entertainment media, which still needs some work. Past are the days of Mother, Jugs, and Speed when many thought of nurses as women in white hats that could not think independently and EMTs as ambulance drivers.

To increase awareness and respect of our profession, we should also engage directly with the public, local elected officials and local media. NAEMT has resources for raising awareness but it is up to the membership to reach out on a local level to their communities to build inclusive relationships to gain their respect and trust.