



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National EMS Week Honors EMS Practitioners

Clinton, Miss. – National EMS Week, May 18-24, recognizes and honors the hundreds of thousands of emergency medical services (EMS) practitioners around the country. Now in its 40th year of celebration, EMS Week is a time for national appreciation of the daily life-saving service that EMS practitioners provide to their patients, and an acknowledgement of the important role of EMS in our nation's healthcare system.

National EMS Week was first authorized by President Gerald Ford in 1973. A lot has changed since then, and the role of EMS in our nation's healthcare system is changing fast. Today, EMS responds to a wide range of emergency medical conditions (including trauma, stroke and cardiac arrest) through first response, field medical response, and medical transport. EMS practitioners conduct nearly 25 million transports per year (predominantly by ground, but also by air), which represents more than 8% of the U.S. population.

EMS saves lives and is a unique and critical part of the healthcare delivery system. In every community in our nation, EMS is expected to deliver quality emergency medical care on a 24/7 basis to their residents, as part of a continuum of healthcare services provided to all patients with emergency medical conditions. EMS is very often a patient's entry into the healthcare system, resulting from an acute care episode. And with the new healthcare focus on improving patient outcomes and lowering costs, EMS is now collaborating with other healthcare providers to help navigate patients to the right care, in the right setting, at the right time.

Communities are encouraged to make plans to recognize and celebrate EMS practitioners during National EMS Week for the services they provide, and to recognize the vital role of EMS in protecting the health of community residents on a day-to-day basis and in response to disasters.

To support and promote National EMS Week 2014, NAEMT launched the 2014 EMS Week Ideas website (www.emsweekideas.org), which offers tools and resources to help EMS practitioners celebrate EMS Week, and prepare for the future of EMS. Hosted by NAEMT and sponsored by EMS World and Jones & Bartlett Learning, the EMS Week Ideas site offers ideas on how to recognize and celebrate EMS practitioners, and tips on raising awareness about EMS.

"We are seeing rapid changes in EMS and the demands of our profession are very different than they were a decade ago," said NAEMT President Don Lundy. "EMS is now on the front line of mass casualty and other disasters, and at the front door of entry into the healthcare system. I encourage all communities to take part in this special week – celebrate EMS and appreciate the commitment EMS has to providing emergency medical care to patients in their times of need."

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About NAEMT

Formed in 1975 and today more than 40,000 members strong, the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) is the only national association dedicated to representing the professional interests of all emergency medical services (EMS) practitioners, including Paramedics, advanced emergency medical technicians, emergency medical technicians, emergency medical responders and other professionals working in pre-hospital emergency medicine. NAEMT members work in all sectors of EMS, including government service agencies, fire departments, hospital-based ambulance services, private companies, industrial and special operations settings, and in the military.

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