



Steven Kroll

Position Sought: Northeast Region Director

Candidate Q&A

1. How would you describe your leadership style, and how has it influenced your work in EMS?

I lead by example. My parents taught me the value of hard work, to treat others in the manner that you want to be treated, and to build relationships. Having been given the privilege of leading an EMS agency has never taken me away from the core of what we do as EMS professionals. I remain a frontline EMS responder and ride a shift on the ambulance each week.

Leading an EMS organization is a team endeavor, not an individual opportunity. I believe in giving people the tools, support, expectations, and mentoring to achieve success. We have significantly grown my EMS agency through the creation of leadership opportunities and guiding people through measurement of results rather than rigid process directives. I derive great career satisfaction through the growth and success of my colleagues. My greatest reward is not individual, but rather the success of members of my team.

A Board member must be passionate about the mission of the Association. I have the privilege of serving on several NAEMT committees and served on the NAEMT Board during 2022-2023. I strongly believe in NAEMT as a leader in excellence, education, advocacy, and innovation for the membership.

Board members must be excellent listeners and life-long learners and I consider myself both. It is the collective experiences and needs of that membership that must guide the Board in their governance role. I am privileged to have experience working with volunteer, commercial, and municipal EMS services so that I bring a comprehensive understanding to the Board of Directors.

I have had executive leadership roles in three quality EMS organizations. I have held regional and statewide governance positions in EMS and have served on numerous not-for-profit boards, including a hospital board. These experiences have helped me build a solid foundation in both executive and governance leadership.

Leading NAEMT requires consensus building. The Board of Directors is faced with circumstances that will require the melding of different perspectives to arrive at the best possible outcome for the membership. I pride myself on being a consensus builder. I enjoy working through complex problems in collaboration with others to arrive at the best possible solution.

I am a firm proponent of innovation and change in EMS and believe my experience in this area will make me an asset to the Board. NAEMT has the opportunity to have a seat at the table for health system change and advocate for the sustainability of our profession. There is an old saying, if you don't have a seat at the table, you may end up being the meal.

The Board has fiduciary responsibility for the Association, and I serve on the NAEMT Finance Committee and have executive and governance level experience in overseeing the finances of large trade associations.

Representation and advocacy are key to NAEMT's success. Having spent a good part of my career as a federal lobbyist, I am positioned to guide and contribute to NAEMT's advocacy success.

2. In what ways do you advocate for EMS? What strategies would you recommend for NAEMT to strengthen its advocacy efforts and gain recognition for EMS as an essential service?

The sustainability of the EMS profession is one of our greatest advocacy challenges and is tied to the need for EMS to be considered an essential service. Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial payments to emergency medical services must be adequate to cover the cost of service and contribute to the cost of readiness. In addition, reimbursement policy must incorporate payment for all clinical services provided and not be limited to circumstances in which transportation is provided to an emergency department. This includes proposed reforms to the Medicare fee schedule, state Medicaid payments, and the commercial insurance marketplace.

This past year has seen increasing membership engagement in NAEMT advocacy. We had record participation in 2026 EMS on the Hill Day and have seen significant growth in the NAEMT Advocacy Coordinator network. Achieving public policy change will require members of Congress to understand why EMS is essential. One of the best ways for that to happen is for NAEMT members to tell their stories to Congress.

By increasing the reach of our advocacy through member engagement and partnerships with other stakeholders, we can make Congress understand that the sustainability of EMS organizations is necessary for the NAEMT member and EMS responder to have the equitable compensation, benefits, equipment, training, and support services that would truly recognize us as essential. This includes legislation, regulation, and funding to support programs that protect the health and safety of the EMS responders and support recruitment and retention.

A sustainable EMS community contributes to the overall health and safety of communities which is why I want to help NAEMT reach beyond our normal group of stakeholders and bring new partners and community members to the table as advocates in helping us be considered essential.

A new Congress will convene after the election, and I look forward to helping NAEMT advocate for essential service initiatives that will increase Medicare payment rates to address the inadequacy of the current Medicare fee schedule. This includes incorporating funding for Treat-in-Place (TIP), transport to alternate destinations (TAD), and Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) into future payment policy. These care modalities are vital to the well-being of patients and communities and will only succeed if they contribute revenue to EMS agency financial sustainability. NAEMT is also advocating for payment systems to incorporate a timely methodology for incorporating payment for new clinical advances and innovations. Pre-hospital administration of whole blood and blood products is a current example.

I dedicate considerable time to EMS advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels. I have been a member of the NAEMT Advocacy Committee for several years and have served as the 2025-2026 Chairperson. As a committee member I have been active in developing NAEMT's advocacy messages and materials and the EMS on the Hill program. It has been a privilege to help NAEMT lead on advocacy for Medicare payment, MIH, CP, TIP, and TAD. This has been done and must continue to be done by building coalitions with other EMS stakeholders such as AAA, NAEMSP, and IAFF.

3. How can NAEMT better support and develop the EMS workforce, considering generational differences? How would you convey the value of membership to both current and prospective members?

The job of EMS responders requires knowledge, competence, dedication, and perseverance. Standards don't change with a responders age, but how we achieve those standards requires innovation and evolution.

EMS leadership has to make efforts to meet our intergenerational workforce in their skill zones. Our more seasoned EMS responders began their careers with policy manuals, protocol books, and rigid training schedules that mirrored the educational system of their youth. Our newer EMS responders grew up in a more digital environment and consume material differently. On the frontlines the generations learn from each other and somewhat cross the digital divide on their own. I know this firsthand because I have a 19-year-old son who just completed EMT class. When I helped him study, we looked at the EMT book. When he reviewed material alone, I observed him using video-based material in small chunks on the cell phone. We both benefit from a broad spectrum of learning.

As EMS leaders we have to know our workforce to help them prosper. This requires understanding how they consume information, what they value, and how to motivate them. The workforce at my agency spans 50 years with a few 18-year-olds and a few senior responders in the neighborhood of 70. We listen to them and give them opportunities to guide management and leadership. Whether through individual dialogue, focus groups, or other input opportunities we have figured out how to grow our organization by being a place that young responders want to be and more senior responders feel comfortable. Our young responders will benefit from a bunk-in program, scholarships, and a digital agency management platform. Our older responders benefit from equipment updates and time requirement changes.

As an aside, sometimes the generations will surprise you and you can't lump everyone into an age category. I have some older EMS colleagues that have embraced and become expert in the digital world and some younger EMS colleagues that perhaps have an "older soul".

NAEMT has already begun work to convey the value of membership to providers that span generations. NAEMT communication vehicles are being audited and changes are being considered to ensure we reach out to people that don't wait for paper newsletters and magazines to arrive. This digital transformation has to continue beyond the distribution of information. We have to ask new EMTs and Paramedics what they want from NAEMT and how they want to consume it. This should inform the next generation of NAEMT educational programming, member benefits, member engagement, and advocacy opportunities.

NAEMT's advocacy for Mobile Integrated Health /Community Paramedicine provides new opportunities for our intergenerational workforce. Career options are expanded for Community Paramedics who may find fulfillment in working with a chronically ill population through community-based visits. This same opportunity may help extend the careers of older EMS responders that are ready to use their accumulated career skills in a non-emergency environment.

4. What is a pressing issue currently facing EMS, and how could NAEMT help address it?

The future of the career and volunteer EMS workforce is a critical issue for NAEMT. NAEMT has the opportunity to continue developing a multi-faceted approach to the workforce as outlined below:

Advocacy: NAEMT has workforce advocacy positions that include protecting the health and safety of the EMS responders, supporting equitable compensation for EMS professionals, accurately counting EMS professionals, promoting personal resiliency, and addressing ambulance deserts. Regulatory and legislative advancements in these areas are important for the recruitment and retention of EMS professionals. NAEMT should continue to develop and coordinate advocacy for proposals for regulatory flexibility, provider safety, workforce enhancement funding, rural and urban sustainability, and ensuring

EMS responders receive the medical treatment and benefits they need. While some of these topics may also be addressed at the local level, federal action can be a critical component.

Learning, Education, Information Sharing, and Recognizing Excellence: EMS workforce shortages are having different impacts on different communities and these communities are responding with a multitude of retention approaches. We in the EMS community can learn from what our colleagues have done in other places and NAEMT should continue facilitating education, information, and best practice sharing. NAEMT policymaking will be informed by learning from EMS professionals about what would be valuable in retention. NAEMT's award programs that recognize excellence can highlight retention strategies as best practices. NAEMT's leadership training programs can influence the next generation of EMS leaders. The member benefits/discounts made available to members by NAEMT and private enterprises, through NAEMT membership, are also of value.

Provider Wellness: An inadequately sized workforce has an impact on the physical and mental health of EMS responders. Awareness must be communicated and resources made available to ensure EMS responders in need of assistance receive that assistance. NAEMT education and information sharing can focus on helping EMS responders manage stress and anxiety. Solutions could be local or regional and NAEMT can be part of the support network that facilitates their development. NAEMT and the EMS community must also cope with our losses. We must honor and remember those EMS responders who have died in the line of duty.

Public Affairs: First responders have long-established themselves as community heroes. But, with the competition for attention in the cluttered media world, our EMS community heroes can get lost in the crowded public affairs landscape. We have the opportunity to respectfully make the public aware of the on-going dedication and sacrifice of EMS responders and the circumstances leading to people leaving the EMS field, which must be addressed.

Preparing for the Future: Advocacy, education, and public affairs around expanding the role of EMS providers in the health care system can be an important retention opportunity. EMS providers have shown how much they can do to improve the health of communities through Mobile Integrated Health Care initiatives. Creating new career pathways for EMS professionals can be a rewarding retention and recruitment opportunity.