



NAEMT Position Statement Principles of EMS Continuing Education

Statement:

Retention of knowledge and skills is a standard requirement of almost all professions. Emergency medical services (EMS) is no exception. Numerous studies have confirmed that professional knowledge and skills degrade over time.ⁱ Furthermore, prehospital medical care continuously evolves as new evidence and technologies emerge, and as the types of population illnesses and injuries change.

In response, the EMS workforce must maintain *continued competence – the ongoing acquisition and application of knowledge, and the decision-making, psychomotor, and interpersonal skills expected of the licensed EMS practitioner*. Continued competence requires critical thinking skills and supports prehospital and out-of-hospital medical care that contributes to the health and welfare of the patients served.

Background:

Mastering the knowledge and skills required within the changing EMS landscape is not possible without effective continuing education. The purpose of EMS continuing education is to *ensure that EMS practitioners at all levels have current proficiency of the knowledge and skills needed to effectively implement the latest evidence-based practices for assessing, treating, and transporting or navigating prehospital and out-of-hospital patients to the right care, at the right time, and at the right place*.

Goals:

EMS continuing education should facilitate the EMS practitioner's ability to

- Comprehend the current scope of knowledge for prehospital and out-of-hospital patient care at their licensed level.
- Rapidly and accurately assess and determine the appropriate treatment and transport destination for prehospital and out-of-hospital patients.
- Effectively apply knowledge, affect and psychomotor skills in a team environment.
- Demonstrate their cognitive, affective and psychomotor proficiencies through validated assessments. *Assessment validates practitioners' continued competency, the foundational purpose of all continuing education.*

ⁱ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1747938X19304026>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5757151/>
https://www.nursingcenter.com/journalarticle?Article_ID=4192226&Journal_ID=3425880&Issue_ID=4191994
<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/ijahsp/vol16/iss3/11/>
<https://www.emsworld.com/article/220286/perf-research-alert-measuring-skills-degradation-over-time>
<https://ajp.paramedics.org/index.php/ajp/article/view/653>
[https://www.americanjournalofsurgery.com/article/S0002-9610\(01\)00862-5/fulltext](https://www.americanjournalofsurgery.com/article/S0002-9610(01)00862-5/fulltext)