



NAEMT Position Enhanced Educational Requirements for EMS

Statement:

NAEMT believes in enhanced educational requirements for the EMS workforce that support the evolving role of EMS. Additional educational requirements should focus on expanding the knowledge and skills of EMTs and paramedics to support their ability to fully provide emergent, urgent and preventive patient care in the out-of-hospital environment.

Building a stronger, more broadly skilled and educated EMS workforce will support the ability of communities to respond to ongoing changes in the healthcare needs of their residents, and provide a flexible and adaptable healthcare component that can be called upon in public health emergencies and disasters.

Background:

The publication of the [EMS Education Agenda for the Future](#) in 2000, the [National EMS Core Content](#) in 2005, the [National EMS Scope of Practice](#) in 2007, and the [National EMS Education Standards](#) in 2009 created a national framework for an integrated education system for EMS. This system serves to ensure that EMTs and paramedics receive a standardized body of training to allow them to provide traditional emergent and urgent patient care.

However, over the past several years, EMS agencies have been expanding the services they provide to communities and healthcare systems, adding the services envisioned by the 1996 [EMS Agenda for the Future](#) for overall community health and patient navigation, in addition to emergency response and transport.

To realize the potential value of EMS as a provider of emergent, urgent and preventive healthcare in the out-of-hospital environment, the EMS workforce must be adequately trained to provide the full spectrum of medical services that meets the particular needs of their communities. These value-added services may include:

- Ambulance Transport Alternatives – the response, assessment, treatment and referral to definitive medical care, which may or may not include ambulance transport to an emergency department.
- Alternative Response – an EMS response tailored to the anticipated needs of a patient, including the response of specially trained EMS practitioners to navigate patients with low-acuity medical issues.
- Community Paramedicine – the proactive use of a specially trained EMS practitioners to assist with patient education on social determinants of health, chronic disease management, engagement with patient centered medical homes, and connections with relevant community resources.

To remain relevant and valued as our nation's healthcare paradigm continues to change, EMS agencies should consider offering their communities an enhanced menu of emergency and preventive medical services. Even agencies that receive tax-based support will need to demonstrate added value to their community leaders in this new era of healthcare. This evolving role in the local community's healthcare system will require an EMS workforce with enhanced knowledge and skills.

NAEMT encourages all EMS practitioners to seek out additional education opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills.

The EMS community must work collaboratively to identify and understand the additional knowledge, skills and abilities that EMS practitioners need to successfully evolve as a profession, including the costs associated with this additional education and how it will be funded; and then identify and/or develop relevant training, including the possibility of degree programs, that would teach the additional knowledge and skills to our nation's EMS workforce.

Adopted: January 18, 2019