



The Monitor

The monthly electronic newsletter for the Southern Illinois Regional EMS System.

April 2020

COMMAND: Dr. Haake wants to remind everyone to frequently check the websites from the CDC, IDPH, and SIREMS to stay current with the ever changing recommendations, guidance, and protocols on COVID-19 related topics. As always, please contact the EMS Office with any questions or concerns.

Please refrain from using Facebook as your COVID-19 data source. The data sources that should be utilized to find valid COVID-19 data is the World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control, Illinois Department of Public Health, and the EMS System Office. And, please refrain from sharing misinformation about COVID-19 on social media platforms. If you have any questions on the validity of information, please feel free to contact the EMS Office.

Dr. Haake wants to thank all of our EMS Personnel for their continued efforts during this pandemic crisis. Your hard work on the front lines of this ordeal are greatly appreciated! If you have questions for Dr. Haake, feel free to send an email to Joseph.Haake@sih.net and he will get back to you when his schedule allows. When a quick response is necessary, copy Brad.Robinson@sih.net or contact the EMS Office.

FINANCE: Congratulations to Benton Fire Department, Marion Fire Department, North Clay Fire Protection District, and SIH Offices of EMS and Disaster Preparedness for receiving the 2020 IDPH EMS Assistance Grants. I'm confident there will be delays in processing the awards due to COVID-19, but congrats on your successful applications!

LOGISTICS: **EMR Non-Transport Agencies:** Your EMR vehicle self-inspections are due by **April 24, 2020**. The EMR self-inspection form can be found on the IDPH website, www.dph.illinois.gov or on www.sirems.com under forms, at the bottom of the list. So far, only 3 non-transport agencies have submitted their self inspections. Please contact the EMS Office with any questions.

Like Dr. Haake said above, please check www.sirems.com before every shift to see the latest COVID-19 information released by the CDC, IDPH, or Dr. Haake. If there are any questions on changes or interpretations of guidance, please contact the EMS Office. Also, if you find information that is helpful to EMS that is not available on the system's website, please relay that information and source to the EMS Office.

For all EMS levels: The American Heart Association has extended the expiration dates for provider and instructor cards for 120 days beginning with cards that expired in March 2020. This covers CPR, ACLS, and PALS for our EMS Personnel. Further details for provider and instructor cards can be found in the newsfeed on www.sirems.com.

For EMS candidates waiting to test, the testing agency for National Registry is Pearson VUE. They announced on March 25th that a limited amount of testing locations would be opened during the COVID-19 pandemic to help continue the pipeline of pre-hospital care providers onto the front lines of this crisis. As of last check, Schaumburg and Buffalo Grove are the only locations available in Illinois. The EMS Office will continue to get updates on this issue and pass them along as received.

The National Registry of EMTs has announced all March 31, 2020 expiration dates have been extended to June 30, 2020. The EMS Office is also trying to work with NREMT to have Dr. Haake recognized as an EMS Medical Director on their website, which will facilitate electronic renewal capabilities for our SIREMS personnel.

IDPH has extended all expiration dates for EMS licenses expiring in March, April, or May 2020 to June 30, 2020. Contact the EMS Office with any questions.

IDPH is now offering a Provisional Certification for EMS agencies in Illinois. Any candidate for provisional certification must be sponsored by a SIREMS agency. The requirements for the EMS System, sponsoring agency, and the candidates are listed in protocol I-12 ILLINOIS EMS PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATIONS. If there are any questions about the requirements or qualifications for participation, please contact the EMS Office.

OPERATIONS: Lets run over the steps of treating patients covered in the COVID-19 protocol. Here are the step by step points listed in the updated protocol.

- Stay at least 6 feet away from the patient while asking the following screening questions.
- Ask about recent travel outside of Southern Illinois in the last 14 days.
- Ask if the patient has been in contact with someone that has tested positive for COVID-19, been in contact with someone tested and waiting on results, or exposure to someone tested or suspected of having COVID-19.
- If any of the above are positive and/or the patient is exhibiting signs consistent with COVID-19 (fever above 100.4, cough, shortness of breath), use appropriate PPE to get closer than 6 feet and/or treat the patient.
- Limit the number of EMS personnel that come into contact with the patient. It is preferable to have the driver of the ambulance not participate in the movement of or care of the suspected patient.
- If the driver must participate in the initial care, they should remove the PPE and perform hand hygiene before entering the cab.
- Family or others that have been in contact with the suspected COVID-19 patient shouldn't ride in the ambulance to the hospital, especially in the cab of the ambulance.
- Close the door or window between the cab and patient compartment.
- Place a surgical mask on the patient to contain droplets expelled during coughing.

- EMS personnel treating the patient should wear appropriate PPE
 - Disposable isolation gown
 - Disposable exam gloves
 - Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
 - Respiratory protection (N-95 or higher level respirator)
- Withhold aerosolizing procedures for ALL patients
 - No oxygen administration over 6 liters per minute
 - Only nasal cannula with surgical mask placed over the nose, mouth, and nasal cannula.
 - Only administer oxygen for hypoxia ($\text{SaO}_2 \leq 90\%$)
 - No nebulized medications
 - No positive pressure ventilation procedures (except with Medical Control approval)
 - BVM
 - CPAP
 - Intubation
 - BIAD
- Avoid contacting yourself or any unnecessary equipment with gloved hands during treatment and transport.
- Clean and disinfect the vehicle and equipment according to agency and equipment standards. All PPE required for treatment will also be required for disinfection, minus the N-95 respirator.
 - Remember cleaners and disinfectants have standards for use. Most require being left wet on surfaces for periods of time to successfully disinfect a surface. Please familiarize yourself with the products used by your agency.

If you believe you have experienced an exposure to COVID-19, please notify your supervisor immediately. IDPH released guidance on work exclusions and monitoring recommendations for Healthcare Providers and EMS. The chart can be found on the system's website and gives many scenarios with and without various levels of PPE. If there are any questions about a specific case or using the chart, please contact the EMS Office.

Guidance for reuse of N95 masks is available at www.sirems.com. The information is from IDPH but there's an active hyperlink at the bottom of the document that takes you directly to the CDC page on N95 reuse. Each department is weighing the pros and cons of N95 reuse during these times when supplies are very low. Contact the EMS Office with any questions.

A patient care report is required for every EMS response. No matter the type of call, if the ambulance or rescue vehicle leaves the station for a response, a PCR must be completed. The Illinois EMS Administrative Code says the following:

A patient care run report shall be completed by each Illinois-licensed transport vehicle service provider for every inter-hospital transport and pre-hospital emergency call, regardless of the ultimate outcome or disposition of the call.

One patient care report shall be provided (paper or electronic) to the receiving hospital emergency department or health care facility before leaving this facility.

PLANNING: Don't forget about our EMS Calendar at www.sirems.com

April 12: Easter

April 13: SIREMS Triage Tag Day

April 30: Scheduled Ending of Illinois Stay at Home Executive Order

TIP OF THE MONTH: Simply take care of yourself and help take care of each other during these stressful and unusual times.

If you have any questions or information for "The Monitor", please contact me at Brad.Robinson@sih.net or SouthernIllinoisRegionalEMS@gmail.com (04-08-2020).