



The Monitor

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

March 2022

COMMAND: Dr. Haake wanted to thank you all for your continued efforts through the COVID pandemic. Remember the COVID-19 protocol is still in effect. Continue to wear a minimum of a surgical mask when treating patients. Screen your patients for exposures and symptoms and use full PPE when they screen positive or when performing an aerosol generating procedure. Please review protocol B-36 to make sure we continue to take the appropriate measures.

FINANCE: The IDPH EMS Assistance Grants were reviewed by the regional committee and submitted to IDPH. The EMS System Coordinators are not notified of the grant awards. So, if your agency is awarded, please share the good news with the EMS Office.

If you are part of a public agency, have a discussion with the administrative leaders about the possibility of utilizing ARPA funds. There are many restrictions on the use of ARPA funds, but some units of government have found ways to support their EMS agencies.

LOGISTICS: Per IDPH emergency rule, Illinois EMS agencies must have all EMS personnel fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or tested for COVID-19 on a weekly basis. When the county of the EMS agency is listed by the CDC as a high or substantial transmission area, the non-vaccinated must be tested twice weekly. While this rule is still in effect, most counties in Southern Illinois have dropped below the high or substantial transmission rate threshold set by the CDC. When your county is below the high or substantial transmission classification, the requirement for testing non-vaccinated employees drops from twice a week to once a week. The county check function is right on the front page of the CDC's website, [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov). Contact the EMS Office with any questions.

In February, the EMS Office was notified of a shortage of epinephrine 1:10000 prefilled syringes for cardiac arrests. The EMS Office released a guidance document for diluting epinephrine 1:1000 to the 1:10000 concentration. View the guidance document at [Epinephrine 1:10000 Shortages - SIREMS](#)

Also in February, Ambulance services and the hospital pharmacies started to experience shortages of Dextrose 50%. Our EMS System protocol already addresses treatment of hypoglycemia during times without D50. [Dextrose 50% Shortages - SIREMS](#)

The Regional EMS Advisory Committee approved a regional education plan at the January meeting. The continuing education piece is the same as our current EMS System policy, following the state recommendations for hours in specific topics. The plan also states you must renew with your system of primary affiliation (the EMS System where you work the majority of your hours) and provide your CEUs to the other EMS Systems where you function. Contact the EMS Office with any questions.

Non-Transport Agencies- It's that time of the year again, time for the annual self-inspections of EMR non-transport vehicles. Even though IDPH now issues EMR agency licenses in 4 year increments, the self-inspections are due every year. The EMR non-transport inspections are due back to the EMS Office on April 11, 2022. The link to the inspection form is below. Contact the EMS Office with any questions.
[opr-non-transport-inspection-form-provider-050516.pdf \(sirems.com\)](#)

The EMS Office has worked with the EMR and BLS agencies to call in prescriptions for epinephrine auto injectors at CVS pharmacies throughout the region because of the significantly lower prices on their generic versions. CVS has severed their relationship with that manufacturer and the costs have greatly increased. We are working to find less expensive options, but have yet to find a comparable product/solution. So, if your department utilizes epinephrine auto injectors, prepare for your replacement costs to be approximately double the previous prices.

The Save the Date has been released for the Memorial Hospital of Carbondale and SIU School of Medicine Spring Trauma Symposium. The Symposium is on Wednesday, April 13, 2022 from 0800-1600 at Walker's Bluff Tasting Room. The schedule and topics will be released soon. Questions can be directed to Amy.Essick@sih.net or Gene.Brandon@sih.net.

OPERATIONS: The EMS Office is seeing issues with refusals. There are a few points that need to be remembered.

- The patient must be provided an assessment that include the points in the "Patient Refusal Checklist"
- Medical Control must be contacted when...
 - The condition indicates medical care is needed
 - The patient is incompetent
 - Refusal of treatment/transport could further harm the patient
- DO NOT make statements to the patient that can be interpreted as a diagnosis or could discourage them from seeking treatment at the emergency department, like the examples below.
 - I don't see a heart attack on the cardiac monitor.
 - The stroke scale is clear, I don't think you are having a stroke.
 - The hospitals are full.
 - You will sit in the waiting room for hours before you will be seen.
 - We can take you if you want, but your medicine hasn't had time to work yet.
- Sadly, each one of those examples are cases that have occurred and the EMS Office has reviewed.

[A-6.1 PATIENTS RIGHT OF REFUSAL \(sirems.com\)](#)

ALS Agencies- Please make every effort to include the cardiac strips and 12 lead ECGs to the patient care report. Make it a habit to print a hard copy when the tracing is captured, especially on 12 leads. We should be interpreting 12 leads on paper, not on the monitor screen. If your agency's monitor digitally syncs information onto the PCR, please also print copies in the event the sync fails.

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

March 13:	SIREMS Triage Tag Day
March 13:	Daylight Saving Time Starts
March 17:	St. Patrick's Day
March 17:	IDPH Trauma Advisory Council – WebEx
April 01:	April Fools Day (be nice out there, folks)
April 13:	SIH/SIU Spring Trauma Symposium – Walker's Bluff

TIP OF THE MONTH: Pay attention to the labels on containers of cleaning solution or wipes. Take the following into consideration:

- Is the cleaner approved by the equipment manufacturer?
- Is the cleaner rated for the viral, bacterial, or fungal contaminant you are trying to eliminate?
- What is the time the cleaner must be left on the surface to properly work?
- Does the cleaner/wipes contain bleach?
 - If so, and you are unaware, you can end up with some unwanted permanent alterations (stains) to your uniform.

If you have any questions or information for "The Monitor", please contact me at Brad.Robinson@sih.net or SouthernIllinoisRegionalEMS@gmail.com (03-08-2022).