



The Monitor

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

October 2020

COMMAND: Dr. Haake wanted to remind everyone that we are not only entering the fall season, but we are also entering respiratory illness season. Respiratory issues can be caused by a number of viral, bacterial and other etiologies, but don't forget to always consider COVID-19.

Dr. Haake also wanted to remind us of the possibilities of carbon monoxide exposure. With ambient temperatures dropping in the month of October and gas furnaces being ignited/started for the first time in months, CO poisoning is a risk for our patients. Keep CO exposure in mind when your patients present with syncope, dyspnea, or headaches.

FINANCE: FEMA is accepting applications for the second round of the Fiscal Year 2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant – COVID-19 Supplemental Program (AFG-S). The deadline for receipt of AFG-S applications is Friday, November 13, 2020 by 5:00pm ET. The second round of the FY20 AFG-S grant is strictly limited to only fire departments classified as volunteer or combination departments.

IDPH is now accepting applications for the Fiscal Year 2021 IDPH EMS Assistance Grant. The EMS Assistance Grant must be applied for through the EGrAMS system by close of business on Friday, November 13, 2020. If you have any questions regarding the grant application process, contact Julie Havens at Julie.havens@illinois.gov or 217-785-9220.

LOGISTICS: Dr. Haake has approved a few new/updated protocols since the last newsletter. The first is a no smoking policy, B-37 NO SMOKING POLICY. It specifies that besides the \$100 civil fine from IDPH for smoking in an ambulance, EMS personnel that violate this policy will also be subject to system discipline and/or suspension. There is an additional provision banning smoking within ten feet of an IDPH licensed and SIREMS participating vehicle. Contact the EMS Office with any questions.

The next change was an update to A-10 ABANDONMENT/TRANSFER OF CARE and EE-27 ADULT PATIENT ASSESSMENT AND INITIAL CARE. The changes apply to ILS and ALS ambulances. When an ALS/ILS ambulance crew is considering treating a patient with BLS treatment only, an advanced level assessment MUST be completed before care is left with the BLS/EMT caregiver and documented on the patient care report. This concept was discussed in last month's newsletter, but the protocols are now updated and posted on www.sirems.com. Feel free to contact the EMS Office with any questions.

OPERATIONS: Please remember to leave your PCR's at the receiving hospital before you leave or as soon as possible. Besides being an IDPH requirement, failing to leave a PCR creates a serious gap in continuity of care. We receive requests "frequently" for PCR's from Emergency Departments, Cardiac Services, Neurology, and the Trauma Center. Please leave a hard copy or fax to the numbers below.

Memorial Hospital and St. Joseph's: 618-351-4893

Herrin Hospital: 618-988-6186

We feel like a broken record over here but PLEASE wear the appropriate PPE on our ambulance calls. According to the CDC recommendations, N95 respirators and eye protection should be worn when dealing with ALL patients. The CDC expounded on the eye protection, stating they were recommended on every call when you work in an area with community spread. Since that describes most of our region, eye protection should be used. The remaining piece of PPE is the gown. The gown should be donned when EMS performs an aerosol generating procedure or the patient fails the screening questions we initially ask before getting within six feet of the patient. So, if the patient is incapable of answering our COVID screening questions, we should consider that a positive screen and use full PPE. If there are any questions on this, please feel free to contact the EMS Office.

Any N95 respirators with exhalation valves should not be used for patient care or used in the ambulance bases or fire departments. The exhalation valves do not facilitate source control...doesn't filter the exhalation of the user. Contact the EMS Office with any questions on masks or respirators.

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

October 13: SIREMS Triage Tag Day

October 15: Region 5 EMS and Trauma Advisory Committees (virtual)

October 26: IDPH EMS Education Committee Meeting (virtual)

October 31: Halloween

TIP OF THE MONTH: EMS personnel should be wearing face coverings in the workplace, ambulance bases or fire departments. The vast majority of COVID cases that have affected EMS personnel have been community acquired. The source control provided by masks, along with distancing and hand hygiene, can reduce the chances of COVID illnesses and staffing shortages due to quarantines. I'm not going to say where...but I entered an ambulance base where three recliners were side by side, occupied by EMS personnel without masks. Why place our communities at risk??

If you have any questions or information for "The Monitor", please contact me at Brad.Robinson@sih.net or SouthernIllinoisRegionalEMS@gmail.com (10-08-2020).