

PHHS BLOCK GRANT SUCCESS STORY 2016

EMS FOR CHILDREN

REGULATIONS STANDARDIZE EMERGENCY CARE FOR CHILDREN.

Issue: Children requiring emergency care have unique needs, especially when emergencies are serious or life threatening. Emergency Medical Service (EMS) providers deliver the majority of prehospital emergency care to children, and hospital Emergency Departments (EDs) provide care once children arrive at the hospital. It is vital that EMS providers and hospital EDs have the appropriate resources and staff to provide coordinated, collaborative, and effective emergency care for children.

Legislation (California Health and Safety Code Title 2, Division 2.5, Section 1799.205) was enacted in 1996 to allow Local Emergency Medical Service Agencies (local EMS agencies) to voluntarily develop Emergency Medical Service for Children (EMSC) Systems of Care within their jurisdictions. As a result of this statute, some local EMS agencies have already developed and implemented local EMSC Systems of Care. However, regulations that establish specific requirements and standards for implementing EMSC Systems of Care do not exist. The lack of EMSC Systems of Care regulations has resulted in inconsistencies within the EMSC Systems of Care throughout California.

The proposed EMSC regulations outline resources necessary to ensure that prehospital providers and hospital EDs are adequately prepared to provide the appropriate medical services for children, from neonates to adolescents.

Intervention: EMSC regulations were developed in response to community need for continuity in medical treatment provided to children ages 0-14. The regulations were completed and submitted for internal EMS Authority review. Upon final approval of the EMSC regulations, local EMS agencies that establish an EMSC System of Care will be held to specific requirements and standards regarding medical care for children.

Impact: The proposed EMSC regulations will provide consistent, equitable, and standardized criteria for the implementation of EMSC Systems of Care statewide, and the resources necessary to prepare prehospital providers and hospital EDs to serve pediatric patients. Adoption of these regulations will assist with emergency care for children of all ages and, when appropriate, timely transfer to a facility with specialized pediatric services.