

# PHHS BLOCK GRANT SUCCESS STORY 2016

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## EMS HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE

### HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE IMPROVES PATIENT CARE AND OUTCOME.

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**Issue:** Through the exchange of health information between Emergency Medical Services (EMS) responders and the hospitals, patients in California have a higher chance of receiving appropriate timely care, while allowing EMS providers and hospitals to better communicate to improve patient outcomes.

For example, as a young family travels from Northern California to visit their family for the holidays in Southern California, they are involved in a car accident, and Emergency Medical Services are dispatched to respond to the family in need of medical care. All passengers appear to be in fair condition except for an unconscious child, who was not properly wearing a seatbelt. As EMS providers begin to take vitals and provide critical care to the patient, the ambulance dispatches to the hospital to alert them of their transport and the current status of the pediatric patient. The hospital then gives medical instructions back to the provider in real-time, allowing for a quicker transfer of care. When the patient is transferred at the hospital, all pertinent information is passed electronically from the EMS provider to the hospital. This health information exchange (HIE) informs the hospital practitioner about the prehospital care already administered; this gives the practitioner guidance as to how to further treat the patient. In the case of this pediatric patient, the timely and effective care administered led to a positive outcome.

#### **Intervention:**

1. PHHS Block Grant funding allowed for EMSA to host a two-day HIE Educational Forum in April 2016. The EMSA-sponsored event brought together over 175 attendees made up of federal, state, and local partners representing EMS providers, hospitals, local EMS agencies, and software vendors. This educational event further propelled HIE to the forefront in the EMS field in California. For those unable to attend the HIE Educational Forum, EMSA made all materials and presentations available on the EMSA website.<sup>1</sup>
2. PHHS Block Grant funding enabled EMSA staff to facilitate an HIE Advisory Meeting that hosted HIE leaders from local and federal partner organizations who are focused on California HIE efforts as well as assisting in the development and deployment of successful HIE models.

**Impact:** EMSA recognizes the importance of innovation and improvement in EMS and works with EMS stakeholders to take advantage of equipment and software enhancements to foster HIE to further ensure the administration of quality patient care to everyone in California. PHHS Block Grant funding is essential to EMSA's leadership in developing and implementing HIE systems to cover California's diverse landscape and population. A successful, California's HIE model could be deployed to other states. HIE advisory meetings and educational forums, such as those hosted by EMSA through PHHS Block Grant funding, foster collaboration and innovation in the EMS HIE field statewide and across the nation.