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### Status Update on E-Licensing and the EMT Intermediate Level

In this edition we would like to discuss a couple of items in the forefront of concern. These are the E-Licensing System and the Intermediate EMT level. We want to first convey our appreciation for your understanding during this transition from a paper to an electronic format. We are aware that in these economic times people need their licenses to obtain employment. However, please also realize that the only thing that has changed for the moment is that we are not accepting paper applications. This actually saves at least two days of mail time and the time it takes to obtain the signatures on the application before you submit to our office. By administrative rule we have 60 business days from the date of receipt of a complete application to issue or deny the license.

Typically it takes about two weeks to process a license. However, since we have had some down time transitioning to the new system, we are currently at a processing time of about four weeks. We are working very hard to catch up from the backlog. When the system is fully functional most licenses will be processed in real time, which means that you will submit your electronic application and within minutes have your license available to print. Until that time we have to manually verify the application information in the system before a license can be issued. We would appreciate that individuals keep checking their electronic account information for applications status. If more than four weeks have passed and you are concerned, you may send us an e-mail to check status. For those having difficulties getting into the system or who need other assistance we suggest that you keep calling the office rather than leave phone messages. This will actually get your issue resolved much quicker because of the volume of messages. These types of transitions are never easy but we hope to get past these problems

and to a system that is fast, friendly, and efficient. We have much yet to develop, but are targeting full implementation and functionality by July 1, 2010. So, as they say, please pardon our dust as we seek to provide a better system for all to enjoy.

This brings us to the second topic of discussion. There has been much discussion about the national scope of practice and Wisconsin's adoption. Specifically, questions are being raised regarding the EMT intermediate level. For those who may not be aware, the national scope of practice, being implemented across the nation, results in a document that will attempt to set national standards of uniformity of practice. The hopes are to allow easier credentialing and interoperability in cases of national disasters where deployment of EMS workers would be necessary. This is slated to be in place nationally by 2012. The document helps define the minimum skills and medications in which each level will be trained. In addition, it renames the current levels to more uniform names: Emergency Medical Responder, Emergency Medical Technician, Advanced EMT, and Paramedic. These names should not seem foreign since they have been discussed for the last several years.

In Wisconsin we have decided to maintain our current scope of practice and just rename our levels. The reason is simple; our scopes of practice are considerably greater than those being implemented at the national level. Since this is a minimal scope, the EMS Board has been tasked to work with the Wisconsin Technical College EMS Advisory Committee to help identify how Wisconsin will deal with the testing gap between what Wisconsin is teaching and what the national exam is testing.

So the question remains, what's happening with the intermediate level? There are only 18 services offering this level of service. Initially the discussion was to just allow the level to continue to operate until resources were no longer available. The services at this

level feel it is the right level for them and many communities that cannot afford paramedics find this a very valuable level. After comments were received during the town hall meetings for the administrative rule changes and several legislative inquiries, the proposed administrative rule will allow for the level to continue indefinitely. However, there are two problems that will need to be resolved: how will the level be tested and what will be the availability of training.

The National Registry will stop testing this level in 2012. If Wisconsin continues with this level, we will be forced to develop our own licensing exam. The state office does not favor being in the exam business, but it will do what is in the best interest of the EMS system. However, the other major issue is supply and demand. The training centers generally offer training based on the demands. There has been little demand for this level of provider, and the few services wishing to advance to this level are finding it hard to meet the class size requirements for the training centers. If the class size cannot be met, the training center will hold the class for a higher cost which typically is prohibitive for the service.

The EMS Section does not discourage services from advancing to this level; however, we will share the above information to the services inquiry and let the local community decide what is in their best interest. Services are welcome to continue to this level if they feel it is the best fit for them and their community. After all, it is about the patients. ♻️

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