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Winter/Spring 2011

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN HOSPITALS AND EMS

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This edition is sponsored by:

Polk County Emergency Management Agency



Polk County Multi-Casualty/Patient Incident Plan

by David Edgar, Operations Committee Chair - Central Iowa EMS Directors Association

n October 2010 the revised Polk County Multi-Casualty/Patient Incident Plan was approved by the Polk County Emergency Management Commission. This final plan was the culmination of a two year process involving EMS Agencies, Hospitals and Communication Centers. While no plan can cover every possible scenario or meet everyone's exact needs, the new plan has made great progress in meeting the needs of all affected agencies and brings us into compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). NIMS standardizes incident management for hazards across all levels of government through the use of the Incident Command System (ICS). This plan meets requirements outlined in ICS 420, Chapter 20 "Multi-Casualty" (2004).

We are now entering a transition phase where most organizations may have the new Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) Plan but it has not been put into practice yet. We have notified Emergency Department Leadership for all of the local hospitals that there may be some use of both plans until the education process is complete.

We are currently developing three separate training modules to help educate Communication Centers, EMS Providers and Hospitals. Once completed, the training will either be available by video or possibly through trainers that will be present to individual organizations.

The general concepts of the plan remain intact from the previous plan. The following changes are the most obvious and will have the biggest impact.

• The radio channel used to communicate with area hospitals will remain CMED. Polk County Communications manages the communication to the hospitals in the event of an MCI. The primary dispatch center for each jurisdiction will be responsible to notify Polk County Communications with the details of the event and then Polk County communicates with the hospitals via CMED. The primary dispatch center is responsible for coordinating the incident communications. (The main

point here is that the primary communication center handles all items related to the incident, but they do not contact the hospitals. CMED does all hospital communications.)

- Many of the previous job descriptions have been altered to be NIMS compliant. Most changes won't be noticeable such as Medical Group Leader vs. Medical Command or Triage Unit Leader vs. Triage. (new vests are being ordered to replace existing MCI vests with these new descriptors) Additional positions such as Medical Branch Director and Medical Communications Coordinator have also been added to the plan for larger scale incidents.
- Pre-notification: A new pre-notification process has been added to the plan to allow notification to all metro hospitals that a potential MCI exists. This pre-notification process can occur once a potential MCI is identified by the primary communication center either through reports they are getting by the initial calls or once the first responding unit arrives on scene. An example of this would be a 911 report of a Greyhound Bus that has rolled down an interstate embankment. The potential is high for a multi-patient incident so the dispatch center would notify Polk County CMED of a "Potential MCI". Once the incident commander is on scene and establishes that MCI criteria has been met then a full MCI declaration can be made to CMED or the pre-notification can be cancelled.
- As triage is completed and transportation is determined, the Transportation Unit Leader is responsible for notifying the dispatch center with the number of Red, Yellow and Green patients each hospital will receive. CMED will then communicate this to the hospitals.
- All Red Patients will be divided among the two main trauma centers. If they reach capacity, the red patients will have to be distributed to other hospitals by the two main trauma centers.

START Triage Simple Triage And Rapid Treatment

is an acronym for Simple Triage And Rapid Treatment. It is a triage system that was established by the Newport Beach (California) Fire Department in the mid 1980's. START is widely used in many EMS systems, and was adopted by the Iowa Bureau of EMS in the state protocols.

The system uses the mnemonic RPM to help sort injured patients by priority, where R stands for respiratory rate, P for perfusion, and M for mental status. The system is

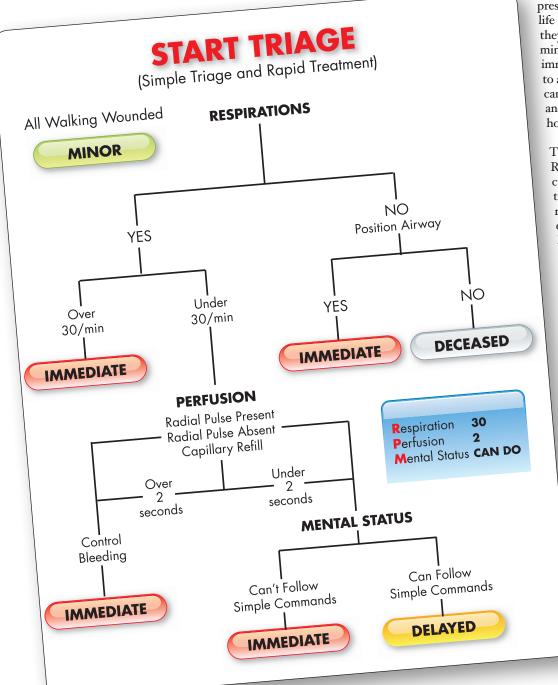
based on the premise that patients injured in a multiple casualty will exhibit signs and symptoms immediately after their injuries are sustained. The system works well for the initial triage of large numbers of patients. However, patients must be re-triaged after they have been moved to treatment areas to ensure that life threatening injuries have not been missed.

The first step in START is to remove the "walking wounded" from

the scene. Anyone who can get up and move to another location are presumed not to have immediate life threatening injuries, and so they are triaged into the green or minor category. Rescuers should immediately direct these patients to a treatment area where they can be re-triaged more accurately and prioritized for transport to a hospital.

The second step is to apply the RPM mnemonic to those who cannot remove themselves from the scene. Any patient who has a respiratory rate greater than 30, or perfusion measured by capillary refill greater than 2 seconds, or cannot follow simple commands due to altered mental status are triaged into the red or immediate category. Any remaining patient who did not meet any of the above criteria will fall into the yellow or delayed category.

> The Central Iowa EMS Directors Association has purchased 9 START triage training kits through funding from the Polk County Emergency Management Agency. These kits are available to be checked out at no charge. The kits can be checked out by contacting any of the agencies where they are stored. This list can be found on the CIEMSD website at www.ciemsd.org under the "Resources" link on the left side of the page.



EMS "Strike Teams" Included in your TEAMS Cards

By Dan Gubbins, President –
Central Iowa EMS Directors Association

n 2009 a new program was launched for Ambulance Strike Teams in Polk County. Previously, the same strike team list was used for every agency when large quantities of ambulances were needed. The new system utilizes the already well known T.E.A.M.S. (Tiered Emergency Asset Management System) method of resource management. Each jurisdiction now utilizes an EMS TEAMS card to request resources. This method helps to eliminate duplication of services by only using the services available once, including those used on initial assignments. The biggest advantage to the new system is it allows for the resources closest to the incident to be dispatched first without depleting all resources in one geographic region.

In the event of a major incident in your jurisdiction, you simply request the appropriate alarm level based on the number of ambulances you need. Alarm levels 3-8 on your EMS TEAMS card each contain 5 ambulances. The MCI trailers are also included at alarm levels 3 and 5 automatically. It's critically important this procedure is followed during a large scale event in order to ensure we can still cover routine calls across the county.

With the new Polk County MCI Plan, the dispatch centers also have the ability to fill to certain alarm levels automatically based on the 911 information they are receiving. This will help get necessary resources started immediately to an incident based on the agency specific TEAMS card.

You can review your departments TEAMS cards on the Polk County Fire Chiefs website at http://pcfca.com/ then click on TEAMS Cards on the top menu. You can also review the MCI Plan at www.ciemsd.org.

Polk County Multi-Casualty/Patient Incident Plan

Continued from front page.

- Polk County CMED will no longer be gathering information from hospitals on how many and what type of patients they can take.
- Direct contact will not be made by ambulances with the hospitals unless it is medically necessary.

These are just the main changes and everyone should review the entire document and schedule a training session once they become available. The plan can be accessed through the Central Iowa Ems Director's website at www.CIEMSD.org



Polk County Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) Trailers

Polk County has two trailers designated for use by any department that may need more resources on an emergency scene. These trailers are housed at the Altoona Fire Department, and Clive Fire Department. These trailers have a variety of equipment that can assist departments on large incidents. Some of these items include: Long backboards, oxygen masks, dressings and bandages, stethoscopes, blood pressure cuffs, DRASH tent w/ heater, generator, and scene lights. For a complete inventory go to CIEMSD.org and click Resources. If your department would like to have the MCI trailer for some training contact: Ryan Young, Altoona Fire Department (ryoung@altoona-iowa.com) or Brian Helland, Clive Fire Department (bhelland@cityofclive.com).





Meetings/Events

Visit www.ciemsd.org for a full schedule of events, committee meetings, etc.

March 14, 2011:

Polk County Fire Chiefs -Windsor Heights (6:00 pm)

March 16, 2011:

Operations Committee -WDM Station #19 (1:30 pm)

March 17, 2011:

Polk County Multi-Disciplinary Committee - 1914 Carpenter Ave. (1:00 pm)

March 21, 2011:

Metro Trauma Committee -1914 Carpenter Ave. (12:30 pm)

March 28, 2011:

CIEMSD Regular Meeting (Polk City Fire Dept) (6:00 pm)

April 11, 2011:

Polk County Fire Chiefs - Polk City (6:00 pm)

April 20, 2011:

Operations Committee -WDM Station #19 (1:30 pm)

April 28, 2011:

Metro ED - Iowa Hospital Association (8:00 am)

CIEMSDA

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Visit us on the web at www.CIEMSD.org

MCI Training Aids Available

By Dan Gubbins, President - Central Iowa EMS Directors Association

new MCI plan for Polk County has been adopted. Within the plan are updates to streamline the process and to keep it NIMS compliant. Central Iowa EMS Directors Association is developing a plan to help train all departments on the new plan in 2011. There are several resources available for your department to utilize for MCI training at any time.

Polk County has a great deal of training aids available to departments at no cost. This equipment has been purchased through State and Federal grants. You can view a list of all available equipment by visiting www.ciemsd.org and clicking on the resources page. All equipment is stored throughout the county at various host sites.

MCI Training Aids Available: START Triage Training Kits:

- Ankeny Fire Department (Contact Frank Prowant – fprowant@ankenyiowa.gov)
- Altoona Fire Department (Contact Ryan Young – ryoung@altoona-iowa.com)
- Bondurant Fire Department (Contact Aaron Kreuder – ajkreuder@msn.com)
- Clive Fire Department (Contact Brian Helland – bhelland@cityofclive.com)

- Des Moines Area Community College (Contact TJ Carroll – tcarroll@dmacc.edu)
- Des Moines Fire Department (Contact Matt Porter – mlporter@dmgov.org)
- Polk City Fire Department (Contact Dan Gubbins – dan.gubbins@polkcityfd.com)
- Pleasant Hill Fire Department (Contact Reylon Meeks – meeksra@ihs.org)
- Urbandale Fire Department (Contact Mike Cardwell – mcardwell@urbandale.org)

Incident Command Training System (ICS Toolbox) & MCI Manikins:

 Polk County Emergency Management (Contact Peggy Reelitz – peggy.reelitz@polkcountyiowa.gov)

You can also request an on-site demo of one of the MCI trailers.

MCI Trailers:

- MCI 1 Clive Fire Department (Contact Brian Helland – bhelland@cityofclive.com)
- MCI 2 Altoona Fire Department (Contact Ryan Young – ryoung@altoona-iowa.com)

