COLORADO EMS REGIONAL MEDICAL DIRECTION
Guide for Program Positions, Roles, Responsibilities and Deliverables

Introduction:
Medical oversight, which includes protocol development and maintenance, education and training and CQI, begins at the agency level. As defined in Section 4 Medical Director Qualifications and Duties of the Department of Health, Chapter Two – EMS Practice and Medical Director Oversight Rules, EMS agency medical directors are responsible for developing and maintaining medical oversight programs for their agencies that ensure the competency of their EMS providers.

In order to assist the more than 100 EMS agency medical directors in Colorado who provide their services to ensure that quality EMS is available throughout the state, this regional medical direction initiative was created to provide the resources necessary to help EMS agency medical directors better perform their duties.

This program is meant to be a resource for agency medical directors and is not meant, in any way, to interfere with the relationship between any agency medical director and his/her EMS agencies, nor is it in any way meant to supplant the authority of the agency medical director. In addition, agency participation is voluntary. The program resources will be made available to assist agency medical directors in providing medical oversight, but each agency medical director will have the option to choose whether or not they utilize the resources. Whether an agency chooses to use the resources or not will not alter the agency medical director's responsibilities for providing appropriate medical oversight and ensuring continued competency of the providers working under his/her license, as defined in the Chapter Two EMS Rules.

The purpose of the regional medical direction (RMD) initiative is to facilitate a statewide coordinated process of EMS medical oversight. Because the RETACs are responsible for coordination of statewide EMS activities, a RETAC's RMD program, whenever possible, should be developed as a partnership between the RETAC and the RMD program. Typically, the RETAC coordinators are an integral part of the development and maintenance of the RMD programs, as they are normally involved in developing the proposals for funding, the scope of work and deliverables, hiring the RMD coordinator, completing administrative tasks, and coordinating the RMD program with other EMS programs within the RETAC including education, regional CQI and MCI programs, just to name a few.

Regional medical direction programs should be designed to:

1. Facilitate peer communication and cooperation
    a. Share ideas and practice concepts
    b. Provide updates and facilitate discussion regarding
        i. Chapter Two Rule Changes
        ii. Advances in EMS clinical practice
        iii. New developments in technology
    c. Discuss local and regional systems issues

2. Provide resources to EMS agency medical directors, which will enhance their ability to perform their job functions as agency medical director

3. Facilitate regional CQI activities
    a. Provide benchmarks against which agencies can evaluate their own status
    b. Develop regional CQI questions that are of interest to the region
    c. Discuss global data to determine opportunities for system improvement

4. Promote regional standardization
    a. Standardize protocols
    b. Standardize education and training

5. Facilitate communications between agencies and the state office

6. Facilitate communications between agencies and the healthcare community at large

Regional Medical Direction Program Positions:

1. Regional Medical Director / Regional Medical Direction Program Liaison

A. Qualifications:
- Physician who holds an active Colorado medical license
- Active involvement in EMS in the region
- Working knowledge of the CDPHE Chapter Two Rules
- Knowledge and experience in EMS medical oversight

B. Roles and Responsibilities
- Act as the liaison and promote communication amongst agency medical directors within the region
- Actively participate with regional EMS activities
- Organize and chair regular meetings of the agency medical directors within the region
- Act as the liaison between the Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Branch and agency medical directors within the region
- Attend informal meetings of the regional medical directors from across the state and provide bidirectional communication between the regional medical directors from across the state and the agency medical directors within the region
- Assist agency medical directors and agency CQI coordinators with ongoing development of the medical continuous quality improvement program for each EMS agency. The continuous quality improvement program must assure the continuing competency of the performance of that agency's department-certified EMS providers. This medical continuous quality improvement program shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, developing and maintaining assessment and treatment protocols, provision for medical care audits, observation, critiques, primary and continuing medical education and direct supervisory communications.
- Assist in the development of a regional CQI program
- Assist the region in its participation in the statewide CQI program
- Assist in the development and maintenance of regional and/or local protocols.

- Participate in and assist with the implementation and monitoring of the regional trauma triage algorithm guidelines
- Participate in continuing education outreach efforts, and partner with facility EMS coordinators in providing continuing education to the rural areas
- Act as interim medical director for local EMS agencies, when requested, in the event of absence of the agency medical director due to emergencies, vacancies or temporary absences of their primary medical director.

2. Regional Medical Direction Program Coordinator

A. Qualifications:

- EMS provider who holds an active Colorado certification with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
- Active involvement in EMS in the region
- Working knowledge of the CDPHE Chapter Two EMS Rules
- Knowledge and experience in EMS medical oversight

B. Roles and Responsibilities, under the direction of the regional medical director

- Acts as the liaison and promote communication amongst EMS agencies within the region
- Active involvement with regional EMS activities
- Act as the liaison between the Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Branch and EMS agencies in the region with respect to medical oversight activities
- Attend informal meetings of the regional medical directors from across the state
- Assist agency medical directors and agency CQI coordinators with ongoing development of the medical continuous quality improvement program for each EMS agency. The continuous quality improvement program must assure the continuing competency of the performance of that agency's department-certified EMS providers. This medical continuous quality improvement program shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, developing and maintaining assessment and treatment protocols, provision for medical care audits, observation, critiques, primary and continuing medical education and direct supervisory communications.
- Assist in the development of a regional CQI program
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Suggested deliverables:

a. Tools to facilitate communication amongst EMS agency medical directors throughout the region and to promote EMS education of agency medical directors
   i. Regional medical direction meetings
      Set up regularly scheduled meetings that will facilitate communication between agency medical directors. The meetings should occur, at a minimum, once yearly. Optimally, more frequent meetings should be considered.
   ii. Regional medical direction newsletter
      Develop a newsletter to communicate important EMS happenings, educational offerings, changes in scope of practice, updates on clinical practice concepts and new developments in technology. Make the newsletter available through the RETAC web site or other appropriate venues.
   iii. Web-based communication of regional happenings
      1. Regional training and educational offerings
      2. Summary of happenings at the state
      3. Update on EMPAC

b. Promote regional standardization
   i. Develop/adopt a regional set of protocols
   ii. Regionalize education and training. Promote discussion and participation amongst agency medical directors to improve efficiency in the delivery of education and training

c. Facilitate CQI activities
   i. Acts as a resource for CQI education to agency CQI coordinators
   ii. Promote discussion amongst agency medical directors on development and maintenance of a regional CQI program
   iii. Act as a resource that facilitates EMS agencies ability to submit “clean” data to the state
   iv. Provide benchmarks (from state data) against which agencies can evaluate their own status
   v. Develop regional CQI questions that are of interest to the region
   vi. Discuss global data to determine opportunities for system improvement

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Table of Suggested Deliverables by Year of Program Development

Year	Regional Medical Direction Program Deliverables
1	**Appoint Regional Medical Director (Medical Direction Liaison)**
1	**Appoint Regional Medical Direction Program Coordinator**
1	**Facilitate Communication and Educate Agency Medical Directors**
1	Regional Medical Direction Meetings
1	Regional Medical Direction Newsletter
1	Web-Based Communications
	Regional Education and Training Opportunities
	State-wide EMS Events
	Update on EMPAC
1	Participate in EMPAC
2-3	**Promote Regional Standardization**
3	Develop / adopt regional set of protocols
2	Regionalize education and training
2-3	**Facilitate CQI Activities**
2	Provide CQI education to agencies
2	Promote development and maintenance of a regional CQI program
2	Ensure that all agencies are submitting data to the state
2	Promote / educate regarding clean data
3	Provide benchmarks (from state deidentified data) to agencies
3	Promote development of regional CQI questions
3	Discuss global data to determne opportunities for system improvement

Accomplishments:

This regional medical direction initiative is designed to provide resources for each RETAC to establish, support and successfully complete the objectives as suggested in this guide as well as those objectives and projects that may be developed to meet the individual needs of each region. Each program will be governed by a written agreement with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the successful completion of each year's objectives will be documented in accordance with the contractual reporting requirements.