Happy Holidays!

I hope each of you had the opportunity to celebrate Thanksgiving in a positive way.

Even though life throws us some curveballs from time to time, recognizing things that are positive and celebrating those moments can often help “fill your tank” when we need it the most. We have so much to be thankful for each day—sometimes we just need to look a little harder than others.

In early December, Governor Noem proposed a significant investment for Emergency Medical Services in South Dakota during her budget address. Of course, this investment must be approved by the SD legislature during the 2022 legislative session. We will be monitoring this closely and will share more details as they emerge.

The proposed budget highlighted telehealth services for EMS, monitor/defibrillator upgrades, and a comprehensive study of EMS followed by planning grant opportunities.

We are very thankful that Governor Noem proposed these initiatives for EMS and are hopefully optimistic they will move forward.

Marty Link

EMS Program Director
Communications and Service Contacts
Marty Link, EMS Program Director

I wanted to reinforce to you the importance of having your ambulance service director information updated on a continual basis within our Image Trend License Management System (LMS). This includes the primary contact, phone number, and email.

There have been recent grant opportunities available to EMS agencies as of late. Some of these grant opportunities are time-sensitive with a very short turnaround time. Our main form of communication is through your agency service director.

It is equally important to review your roster and personnel access to your agency’s LMS and electronic Patient Care Report (ePCR) systems. Personnel who are no longer affiliated with your agency should have their login access restricted. We encourage your agency to initiate policies around these security features if you have not done so already.

We cannot express how important this will be as we move into 2022.

Community Health Worker Grant
Marty Link, EMS Program Director

By the time this newsletter is published, we will have up to eight EMS providers complete the Community Health Worker (CHW) training through Lake Area Tech in Watertown. We are extremely pleased for the hard work and determination these folks have put into this coursework.

Following completion of this course, CHW certificate recipients working for an ambulance service can apply to be a CHW agency through SD Medicaid. SD Medicaid will in turn reimburse up to $40 per hour of CHW service provided. This is a huge step forward, and we are extremely proud of the ambulance services who are spearheading efforts in providing CHW services for their communities.

If your agency is interested, please have them contact me at Marty.Link@state.sd.us.

Digital Radio Grant
Marty Link, EMS Program Director

In the last newsletter, we wrote about a statewide grant to supply ambulance services with new P25 compliant digital mobile radios. The Department of Health, along with Motorola, has held several meetings in preparation for this project. Many services have already begun the conversion process to the new digital radios. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this project, please reach out to Bob Hardwick at 605.773.4440 or Bob.hardwick@state.sd.us.
**EMT Recertification**  
Lance Iversen—EMS Data Manager / Education & Professional Standards Coordinator

For EMTs whose SD EMT Certification will expire on March 31, 2022, you can begin submitting your online recertification application now.

Recertification is done online, via your SD E-Licensing account (https://southdakota.imagetrendlicense.com/lms/public/portal#/login).

If you need assistance, we have detailed step-by-step instruction guides on our website, EMS.sd.gov. Click here to go to the instruction guide for recertification.

Before you start your application, please be sure you have the required hours in the different topics in your E-Licensing account (Education – My Report). Applications without the required hours in the topics and required documents will be denied.

If you will be using your National Registry certification to renew your SD EMT certification, please wait to do your application until you receive your new National Registry card, as you will need to upload a copy of your new NR card in your application.

**Please Note:** Renewing your National Registry certification does not automatically renew your SD EMT Certification. Everyone must apply for recertification via their E-Licensing account.

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**2021 SDEMSA Conference—Pierre**  
Julie Smithson — Western EMS Specialist

Congratulations, Bob Hardwick!

Bob received the 2020 EMT of the Year for outstanding service. He was unable to receive it last year during COVID-19, so it was presented to him this year at the 2021 SDEMSA conference in Pierre.

Bob is our Central EMS specialist with the South Dakota Department of Health, Office of Rural Health - EMS Program.

We are so proud of you, Bob!
SDAA Conference
South Dakota Ambulance Association

South Dakota Ambulance Association Conference
February 12 & 13, 2022
AmericInn Lodge, Ft. Pierre, SD

For more information, go to South Dakota Ambulance Association - (sdambulance.org)

SDAA Pre-Conference - CADS
South Dakota Ambulance Association

Certified Ambulance Documentation Specialist (CADS) certification
February 11, 2022
AmericInn, Ft. Pierre, SD

The Certified Ambulance Documentation Specialist (CADS) certification is the first offered by NAAC that is specifically geared for EMTs, paramedics, and other EMS field practitioners. It is also appropriate for EMS QA/QI personnel, supervisors/managers, compliance officers, billers, and anyone else involved in EMS clinical care or any aspect of the ambulance service revenue cycle.

Every one of your agency’s EMS field providers should take the CADS course. Having providers at your agency with the CADS credential shows a true commitment to quality care and top-notch documentation by your agency.

The CADS certification can give providers the edge by:

- Opening new doors
- Advancing their career
- Improving their status as a healthcare professional

The CADS course is designed to be completed in 5-6 hours of course instruction, followed by a final exam. The CADS certification is a lifetime certification with no annual recertification requirements. Well worth the investment for a lifetime of better documentation.

For more information, go to South Dakota Ambulance Association - (sdambulance.org)
Supervisor’s Toolkit Leadership Class

February 11, 2022
AmericInn, Ft. Pierre, SD

For more information, go to South Dakota Ambulance Association - (sdambulance.org)

Medicare Cost Reporting Presented by the American Ambulance Association

February 12, 2022
AmericInn Lodge, Ft. Pierre, SD

Starting January 1, 2023, selected ground ambulance organizations are required to report cost, utilization, revenue, and other information to CMS. Organizations that fail to report may be subject to a 10% payment reduction.

The presentation includes examples to help different types of ground ambulance organizations understand how to collect and report data for their paid and volunteer staff.

For more information, go to South Dakota Ambulance Association - (sdambulance.org)
2022 EMS Day at the Capitol
Maynard Konechne

EMS Day will be held on Monday, February 14, at the Capitol in Pierre.

- Committee meeting 7:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
- Possible picture with the Governor
- Session starts at 2:00pm
- Social at Ramkota Lake Sharpe Room 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

EMS personnel welcomed.

Homeland Security Grants
June Snyder, South Dakota Office of Homeland Security

Homeland Security Grants -
Open Application Period Starts January 1, 2022

Applications for Homeland Security grant funding are being accepted from January 1 - February 18 at 5 p.m. central time. The South Dakota Office of Homeland Security provides grant funding through an application and award process to a variety of organizations including emergency medical services. Funding will be awarded for one-time projects that have a connection to Homeland Security by protecting against terrorism threats.

Examples of allowable expenses for public or private, non-profit Emergency Medical Services include P25 radios compatible with the State Radio system, pagers for 1st responders, radio signal amplifiers, repeaters, specialized medical equipment, training, and exercises.

Awards are competitive and will be based on recommendations of regional review committees. Funding for projects will become available on or about Sept. 1, 2022. Award agreements will be generated after funding becomes available; projects cannot start before the award date.

Questions? Find more information on the South Dakota Homeland Security Grants webpage or call 605-773-3450.

To apply for a Homeland Security grant, read through the application instructions and apply online by Feb. 18 at 5 p.m. CT.
The Gregory Ambulance Service includes EVOC drivers, EMRs, EMT – Basics, EMT – Paramedics, and Registered Nurses. Kimberly Bruns, EMT-B, Director; Aric Hamilton, EVOC, Assistant Director; Natalee Greasser, EMT – B, Secretary; Lorrie Sundquist EMT – B, Treasurer; Cheryl Clark, EMT- B; Carla Warnke EMT-B/RN; Roberta Spann, EMT – B; Treg Gruhn, EMT-B; Glenn Sealey, EMT-B; Greg Bammerlin, EMT- B; Chris Peteron, EMT – B; Katie Vedral EMT-P; Megan Warnke EMT – B; Sean Kelly, EMT – B/RN; Wes Schell, EMT – B. Kayla Warnke, EMR. Our EVOC drivers include: Dough Steffen, Mike Steffen, Troy Sundquist, Richard Bruns, John Roeder, Alex Hamilton, Brad Christensen, Gene Oproek, Kane Kortan, Mark Braun, Royal Archer, Blake Combs.

The Gregory Ambulance Service has 3 fully equipped ambulances and averages 350 calls per year, with a large portion of these calls being transfers to larger hospitals, such as Avera McKennan Hospital and University Center in Sioux Falls, Avera Heart Hospital in Sioux Falls, Sanford Hospital in Sioux Falls, Avera Queen of Peace Hospital in Mitchell, Avera Sacred Heart Hospital in Yankton, etc. The Gregory Ambulance also assists with flight team pick-ups to transport flight team members to the Avera Gregory Hospital to treat critical patients that require specialized care. The ambulance service also does standby at sporting events and assists the Gregory and Dallas Volunteer Fire Departments.

The Kotrba Funeral Home was one of the earliest providers of an ambulance service for the Gregory Community and surrounding area. For a few short years, the Fire Department provided the ambulance service. In the late 1960’s, the Volunteer Ambulance was organized, which leads us to the present-day service.

The Gregory Ambulance Department is located in the old fire hall. We have remolded, added a meeting room, office, and supply room.

In the upcoming months and years, the Gregory Ambulance Service plans to incorporate community education into its service list to aid the community in recognizing potentially life-threatening situations and what can be done prior to EMS arrival to the scene.

The Gregory Ambulance strives to provide high quality and compassionate care to the citizens of the Gregory and outlying areas.
It’s Time to Thrive
Resiliency in the palm of your hand

Download the Free CrewCare App
for first responders and healthcare providers

- Understand your stress triggers
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- Take action based on your results
- Access crisis and support contacts privately
- Contribute aggregated data to industry research

CrewCareLife.com
SDML Workers’ Compensation Fund Continues Grant Programs for 2022

For over a decade, the SDML Workers’ Compensation Fund has offered the Stryker EMS grant program to assist our members in purchasing a Stryker Power-PRO™ ambulance cot, Stryker Stair-PRO® stair chair, a Stryker Power-LOAD™ system or a Lucas®3, v3.1 Chest Compression System.

Because the Stryker EMS grant program promotes safety for our members, the SDML Workers’ Compensation Fund Board of Trustees approved the Stryker EMS grant program for the 2022 year on a first come first serve basis until the grant funds are exhausted. The 2022 grant period will open, and applications will be accepted beginning January 1, 2022. The grant pricing hasn’t been finalized but will be available by January 1st.

The Stryker EMS program intends to provide a safer workplace for the ambulance personnel, firefighters, law enforcement, and all local government employees that assist their ambulance services to provide emergency transfer of patients. These products have been proven to reduce and eliminate back injuries due to lifting patients. We have 1 member that prior to purchasing a Stryker Power-PRO™ ambulance cot, had 10 lifting injuries over 7 years resulting in over $150,000 in medical and lost-time expense. Since being awarded a grant, this member has not had a single lifting injury with over 18,000 patient transfers.

Stryker also reported a 100% reduction in back injuries in another service and a 62% decrease in the risk of developing a low back disorder when using these safety products during the loading process. Other relevant stats are:

- 69% of the US adult population is obese
- A typical strain injury cost $70,408 in direct and indirect costs
- The average age of an EMS worker is 40 years old
- Lower back strain is the cause of 78% of compensation days in the US
- 1 of 4 EMS workers suffer from a career-ending back injury within the first four years of employment

Lifting causes more than 70% of back injuries of EMTs. Stryker EMS has used the SDM Workers’ Compensation Fund grant program as a model of success and has rolled out similar programs in several other states.

(continued on next page)
Over the past 12 years, the SDML WC Fund has awarded 131 grants to our members that total $304,000. Congratulations to the latest grant recipients listed below:

- City of Bridgewater/Bridgewater Ambulance
- Butte County Ambulance – Belle Fourche
- Butte County Ambulance - Newell
- Clark County Ambulance
- Columbia Area Rural Fire Protection District
- Elk Point Ambulance
- Jones County Ambulance/Murdo
- Keystone Ambulance
- City of McIntosh/McIntosh VFD-Ambulance Svc
- City of Menno/Menno Ambulance
- City of White Lake/White Lake Ambulance
- Parkston Rural Ambulance District

(continued on next page)
Eligibility for the Stryker EMS grant is very simple. The applicant must be a member of the SDML WC Fund as of the date of the grant application and in the year the grant is awarded. Also, the member must meet several selection criteria, including compliance with Loss Control Safety Improvement Recommendations. The complete list of selection criteria is available on the application.

The SDML Workers’ Compensation Fund has always stressed the importance of using safety equipment and following safety procedures. There are many components to a successful safety program. Creating a culture of safety begins with leadership direction and support which then flows to the supervisors, volunteers and employees. It only takes one motivated person to change the culture of your entity. We look forward to more participation in these programs and the reduction of injuries to your volunteers and employees.

This grant program continues to be very popular. As of the date this article was written, the grant funds are exhausted for the 2021 grant year. If you are considering applying for a grant in 2022, we encourage you to send your application ASAP after January 1st, 2022.

If you have any questions or would like an application, please contact Brad Wilson, Kim Curry, Gary Drewes or Doug Kirkus at Insurance Benefits, Inc. Email: info@sdmlwcfund.com or Phone: 800-233-9073. The 2022 applications will also available on our website at www.sdmlwcfund.com.
New ePCR Form Coming—2022
Lance Iversen—EMS Data Manager / Education & Professional Standards Coordinator

As you may have heard, we have to create a new ePCR form to implement all the changes to the data elements, as required by NHTSA-EMS and in partnership with NEMSIS and the NASEMSO Data Manager group.

This has been a multi-year project, and all the States are working on creating their new ePCR forms. For South Dakota, we have been working on our new ePCR form since June and anticipate having this project completed by the first quarter of 2022.

For the most part, the ePCR form will have the same look as our current one, but hopefully, the flow will be a little better, more user-friendly.

NEMSIS added new data elements and retired some. You will see there are new sections added, primarily in the eDisposition section, breaking down data elements into more elements.

Some of you have noticed some slight changes in the current data elements that have changed in your ePCR form. Unfortunately, as we build our new off-line V3.5 form and activate new data elements, it is also updating some in the current ePCR form. There is nothing we can do to prevent this as it is an ImageTrend development issue and not sure if they will be able to prevent some changes affecting the current form.

Once we have the new ePCR Form completed, as well as the Print Form, we will notify all the ambulance services, and you and your crew members will be able to log into a Demo site to do practice charts, get familiar with the new data element fields, etc. before we turn off the current 3.4 ePCR Form and turn on the new 3.5 ePCR Form.

As we work on development, we will beta-test the new form with a handful of ambulance services using our ImageTrend Elite program.

Those SD ambulance services using their own ePCR product/vendor will need to work with their vendor on the new NEMSIS V3.5 elements and ready to import into our State Repository when we are ready to go live with our V3.5 ePCR form (anticipated go-live date of the second-third quarter of 2022).

More information to follow over the next several months.
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Websites

EMS Program Website
SD Dept. of Health Website
Trauma Program Website
E-Licensing Website
South Dakota Govt. Website