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SOUTH DAKOTA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

# PULSE SD



SD Dept. of Health — Office of EMS & Trauma

OFFICE OF EMS & TRAUMA'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

March 2025

## Administrator's Update

By Marty Link, Deputy Division Director for the Division of Healthcare Access, Office of Rural Health and EMS & Trauma Administrator

Welcome to the March edition of PULSESD. The beginning of 2025 is off to a busy start, and we wish you a year of health and abundance. As of this writing, the 100<sup>th</sup> legislative session is nearing its end. This year brought forth several EMS bills raising awareness of our profession and highlighting future discussions focused on sustainable solutions.

I wanted to share some exciting news occurring within the Department of Health (DOH). Effective February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, internal restructuring combined the Office of Rural Health with the Office of EMS and Trauma. This new structure will also include our newest initiative in creating a Stroke System of Care. Over the past several weeks and the foreseeable future, our new office will focus efforts in establishing a new office name, renewed strategic purpose and goals for 2025. My position has changed as I will now serve as the Deputy Division Director for the Division of Healthcare Access and overseeing not only our Office of EMS and Trauma but also the Office of Rural Health teams.

In alignment with the Department of Health's strategic vision, "Every South Dakotan Healthy and Strong," our combined office structure will focus intently on working with vested and visionary partners seeking a brighter future and ensuring quality and timely access to healthcare for every South Dakotan. This includes reimagining EMS 2.0.

We've been blessed across this great state to have such a dedicated and passionate pre-hospital workforce. We've embraced the transformative pioneering initiative Telemedicine in Motion which has seen over 1600 activations connecting EMS personnel in the field with paramedics, nurses, and board-certified ER physicians with Avel eCare, and our Regional Service Designation grants have distributed several million dollars towards the advancement and sustainability of EMS.

As we look into the future of our new office structure, our team plans to meet with EMS leadership, rural health clinics, facility administration, medical providers, and local leaders dedicated to having meaningful conversations around rural health needs, identifying healthcare gaps, and embracing future change.

Thank you for your continued dedication and we look forward to working together well into the future.

Marty

## EMS Day at the Capitol

By Jamie Zilverberg, Trauma Manager

Emergencies can strike without warning, and when they do, help may not always be nearby. Having the ability to respond quickly with the right skills can make a huge difference in a life-or-death situation. Whether it's stopping severe bleeding, administering Naloxone to reverse an opioid overdose, or performing CPR with an AED during a cardiac arrest, each of these skills empowers you to act when every second matters.

On February 3rd, 2025, EMS Day at the Capitol offered individuals the chance to learn these life-saving techniques. Participants were not only trained in critical skills but also took home a Stop the Bleed kit to be ready in emergencies. In addition to the trainings, heart and vascular screenings were available on-site to promote health awareness.



## Inspiring the Next Generation of Healthcare Professionals

By Amber Hodgin, Office of Rural Health



Scrubs Camps and Camp Med introduce middle and high school students to exciting healthcare careers through interactive, one-day events held during the school year. These camps feature breakout sessions led by healthcare professionals who share their career journeys, daily responsibilities, and hands-on demonstrations that leave a lasting impact.

Survey results show a growing interest in EMT/EMS careers across the state. While this year's presenters are set, opportunities to participate next year are available!

With a goal of reaching 5,000 students annually, we've already engaged 4,634 students for the 2024-2025 school year. And with 15 more camps to go, we're on track for another successful year! For more information about these camps, please contact Amber Hodgin at [Amber.Hodgin@state.sd.us](mailto:Amber.Hodgin@state.sd.us). If you would like to more information regarding the remaining camps and their dates, please visit the following link: <https://doh.sd.gov/programs/scrubs-camp/camp-schedule/>

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## SDAHO Award Additional Funding for EMS Regional Service Designation Grant

By South Dakota Association of Healthcare Organizations

The South Dakota Association of Healthcare Organizations HRET is excited to announce they have been awarded the Regional Service Designation Grant. Funding is provided by the American Rescue Plan Act, aimed at supporting Emergency Medical Services (EMS) across South Dakota.

The goal of the project is to Successfully implement a statewide interfacility transfer software platform for hospital and ambulance services by the end of November 2026.

SDAHO is partnering with Dell Rapids and Sioux Falls (Patient Care) Ambulance Services, focusing on improving the interfacility transfer process. This project will create a single portal where neighboring ambulance services can view and select available transfers.

The first phase of this grant was awarded to SDAHO in April 2024, for \$50,000. The first three months of this project focused on planning, identifying key stakeholders, holding listening sessions, and selecting software.

The most recent award is part of the second phase of funding, with SDAHO being awarded \$500,000.

The initiative stems from the [Regional Services Designation](#) analysis of 2023, which offered \$7.5 million for EMS providers to enhance their services.

For more information contact Mary Adams, RN, HRET Project Director, SDAHO

[Mary.adams@sdaho.org](mailto:Mary.adams@sdaho.org)

605-949-0465



# South Dakota Health Link Data Management

## By North Star Solutions South Dakota

**North Star Solutions**, formerly **Sage Project Consultants**, has partnered with **Faber Analytics**, **Julie Charbonneau**, and **South Dakota Health Link** to offer technical assistance to EMS and ambulance services. This initiative is designed to enhance data management, quality control, and financial sustainability through improved billing practices and diversified funding streams.

This program is fully funded by the EMS Regional Services grant and is available at **no cost** to South Dakota EMS/ambulance services.

## HOW WE CAN HELP

### Data Management & Analytics (ImageTrend)

- Faber Analytics, led by Justin Faber, will assist EMS agencies in making better use of their ImageTrend data.
- Justin will provide support in data entry, organization, extraction, and the creation of customized dashboards in Power BI.
- Agencies will be able to track key metrics, including but not limited to:
  - ◊ Call volume, response times, and incident types.
  - ◊ Geographic trends across cities, townships, stations, and zones.
  - ◊ Intervention counts and success rates.
  - ◊ ePCR validation scores and overall data entry quality.

### Billing System Optimization

- North Star Solutions will assess and enhance current billing practices to improve financial efficiency.
- Our team will collaborate with your agency and billing provider to develop optimized workflow solutions.
- We will also analyze insurance, Medicare, and Medicaid reimbursement processes to ensure your agency receives the maximum revenue it is entitled to.

### Revenue Stream Diversification

- North Star Solutions, in partnership with CHWSD, will assist agencies in establishing a Community Health Worker (CHW) program.
- We will provide support in the creation of an ambulance tax district to secure sustainable local funding.
- Our team will help draft grant applications and guide agencies in securing funding from counties and municipalities.
- Additionally, we will develop fundraising toolkits to assist agencies in generating additional financial support.

### Quality Control & Assurance

- Julie Charbonneau will provide quality control and assurance support to help agencies enhance patient care.
- South Dakota Health Link and Julie will work with each agency to:
  - ◊ Collaborate with medical directors, emergency rooms, and hospitals.
  - ◊ Review patient disposition data to identify areas for improvement.
  - ◊ Offer feedback and training to strengthen overall agency performance.

Contact [sharon@northstarsolutionssd.com](mailto:sharon@northstarsolutionssd.com) or [ben@northstarsolutionssd.com](mailto:ben@northstarsolutionssd.com).

## A message from the South Dakota Board of Medical and Osteopathic Examiners

As 2025 progresses rapidly, the busy legislative session has concluded. Here's a brief update on the bills passed affecting EMS licensees in South Dakota:

- **HB 1014.** In response to unforeseen consequences arising from the requirement that all EMS levels have a medical supervisor, this bill restored the supervision requirements for EMRs and EMTs to their status prior to July 1, 2024. HB 1014 included an emergency clause, making it effective immediately once it received all the necessary signatures. All signatures were received in February.
- **HB 1099.** Modified the statutory language for the community paramedic endorsement to allow for both education and exam routes to obtaining the endorsement, this mirrors the provisions outlined in the critical care paramedic statute. This change will take effect on July 1, 2025.
- **SB 77.** This bill will update the terminology in statute and rule from ambulance drivers to ambulance operators. This change will take effect July 1, 2025.

Please reach out with any questions by sending an email to [sdbmoe@state.sd.us](mailto:sdbmoe@state.sd.us) or calling (605) 367-7781. If you call and get a voicemail, please do leave a voicemail to assist with communication.

We look forward to a productive year of working together to enhance the health and safety of all South Dakota citizens.

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### EMS Advisory Council: Who, what, when, where, and why?

**Who:** Per SDCL 36-4B-37, the EMS Advisory Council is comprised of

- One EMT-B
- One EMT-I/85, EMT-I/99, or AEMT
- Two paramedics
- One physician trained in emergency medicine

**What:** The EMS Advisory Council assists the Board and makes recommendations in matters related to licensure, EMS practice, education, continuing education, investigation, discipline, and rulemaking.

**When and Where:** The EMS Advisory Council meets a minimum of twice per year and as necessary to conduct business. Meetings are virtual and open to public attendance. Details about the meetings can be accessed in the agenda available at <https://www.sdbmoe.gov/> under "Board Info" section and "Advisory Councils" option from the dropdown menu. Agendas are posted at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

**Why:** Each profession overseen by this Board has an Advisory Council. These councils serve as a valuable resource for the Board, as they consist of experts in their respective fields.

To contact the EMS Advisory Council, please send an email to [sdbmoe@state.sd.us](mailto:sdbmoe@state.sd.us) and include "EMS Advisory Council" in the subject line.



# Cardiac Ready Community & Campus Program

## By South Dakota Foundation for Medical Care

During a cardiac emergency, every second...every minute that passes without CPR or AED use can mean the difference between life and death. It can take an ambulance 30 minutes to respond in South Dakota's more remote areas.



The [Cardiac Ready Community \(CRC\) Program](#) helps educate, equip, and empower local community members to be better prepared and more confident in helping someone experiencing a cardiac event before the ambulance arrives. Communities are prepared to provide tools and resources to improve cardiac emergency response, AED access, and heart health education.

### WHY GET INVOLVED

Cardiac Ready Communities have increased survival rates through widespread CPR & AED training. There is enhanced AED availability in key locations, and this improves response times and strengthens EMS partnerships. The CRC Team works together to create a system of care where all community members come together to increase access and save lives.

### HOW TO JOIN

Communities and campuses can start by building a local team, identifying AED and CPR training needs, and working toward recognition as a Cardiac Ready Community or Campus. **Get Started Today!** Reach out to Stephanie Hanson, SD Department of Health Cardiac Ready Community Lead or submit your [Letter of Intent](#) and we will reach out to you.

As of March 2025, 6 communities have been designated, 4 colleges campuses are becoming Cardiac Ready Campuses, and 9 communities have signed their letter of intent of becoming a CRC. **Your community is a heartbeat away from saving lives – assemble your CRC Team today.**

*"South Dakota town of 700 banded together for the betterment of their community and will save lives because of it! There is no community too large or too small for the Cardiac Ready Community Program."*

– Kimball Community

CLICK or  
SCAN to learn  
more about the  
CRC Program



## 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

### By 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Anyone in the United States can call or text 988 or use an online chat tool to access the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

988 will accept calls, texts, and online chats from anyone who needs support for a suicidal, mental health, and/or substance use crisis.

People can also contact 988 if they are concerned about a loved one in crisis.

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline will be accessible through 800-273-8255 and 988.

<https://988lifeline.org/>



## South Dakota Ambulance Association



**To register for classes or for zoom  
link visit:**

[www.sdambulance.org](http://www.sdambulance.org)

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605-661-2246



July 18th Vermillion & Hot Springs  
July 19th Sioux Falls & Sturgis  
July 20th Plankinton & Faith  
July 25th Winner & Mobridge  
July 26th Madison & Aberdeen  
July 27th Miller & Watertown



The Certified Ambulance Privacy Officer (CAPO) certification is the nation's first and only HIPAA compliance accreditation for the ambulance-industry!  
How to write effective HIPAA Privacy, Security and Breach policies  
How to best safeguard your paper and electronic information  
The most common HIPAA issues for ambulance services  
You will learn dynamic practices, and how to effectively deal with everyday ambulance HIPAA matters.  
The CAPO Course is recommended for any current or prospective HIPAA Compliance Officer/Official, Privacy Officer/Official, Security Officer/Official, managers, supervisors, and others involved in HIPAA training or compliance.

**July 21st & July 22nd**  
**AmericInn - Pierre, SD**  
**80 Participants**



600 East Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(605) 773-4031

## South Dakota Office of EMS & Trauma

IMPROVE  
SUPPORT  
STRENGTHEN



## OFFICE OF EMS & TRAUMA CONTACTS

[EMS.sd.gov](http://EMS.sd.gov)



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