



November 27, 2007

## *NREMT EdNet Communique - November 2007*

### **NREMT Board Votes to Require Paramedic Accreditation**

On November 13-14, 2007, the National Registry of EMTs Board of Directors voted to require that applicants for national Paramedic certification graduate from a nationally accredited educational program after December 31, 2012.

The motion was introduced in June 2007 and tabled to enable consultation with other members of the EMS community. Following discussions with other national EMS organizations, the board passed the motion unanimously on November 14, 2007. The rationale for the change is based on the recommendations in the EMS Education Agenda for the Future: A Systems Approach as well as the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report titled Emergency Medical Services at the Crossroads. These two publications call for a linkage of paramedic educational program accreditation with eligibility for certification.

Currently, fourteen states require national accreditation of paramedic education programs and, there are over 240 nationally accredited programs. Most experts believe that this represents about one-half to one-third of the active paramedic education programs in the country. "The CoAEMSP is committed to helping programs understand and meet the standards and guidelines for accreditation," stated Randy Kuykendall, the current Chairman of the Committee on Accreditation for EMS Educational Programs (CoAEMSP).

William E. Brown, Jr., NREMT Executive Director said "We believe that the major barrier to achieving accreditation will be institutional support. We hope that this policy provides paramedic program directors with the leverage to get the same resources as other allied health education programs. There is simply no reason why any quality program cannot achieve accreditation in the next five years."

Another concern is the number of paramedic programs that are in "non-traditional" educational settings. Dr. George Hatch, CoAEMSP Executive Director, stated "We currently have accredited programs in all types of locations and institutions. The CoAEMSP has a variety of mechanisms to meet the sponsorship requirements. Virtually any type program, including proprietary and agency based, can meet the sponsorship standard through seeking independent institutional accreditation or collaborating with other organizations to form a consortium."

While the EMS Education Agenda for the Future calls for educational accreditation for all levels of EMS personnel, the IOM report recommends requiring accreditation only at the paramedic level. The NREMT motion affects only paramedic eligibility. Jimm Murray, NREMT Vice-Chairman (of the Board of Directors) concludes that "the current evidence supports requiring accreditation at the paramedic level. We may revisit the issue of accreditation at other levels at a later date."

"This is an important step forward for the discipline of paramedicine," concluded Sandy Bogucki, MD, PhD and Chairman of the NREMT Board of Directors. "Every occupational group that has evolved and gained credibility as a profession has done so through strengthening their educational and credentialing systems. We know that this change will be a challenge, but the Board feels confident that accreditation will improve paramedic education and ultimately the quality of care that patients receive in the out of hospital setting."

### **Other Board Meeting Highlights**

The NREMT Board conducted a full day strategic planning meeting to begin the process of determining the NREMT goals and objectives for 2009-15. The process was led by a professional facilitator with expertise in the strategic planning process. A strategic planning committee will be appointed and report their recommendations to the full Board for review in June 2008.

- The following individuals were elected to 2007-09 NREMT Board of Directors officer positions:
  - Chairman: Jimm Murray
  - Vice Chair: Peter Glaeser, MD
  - Treasurer: Tommy Loyacano

- The following individuals were elected to terms on the NREMT Board of Directors:
  - EMTs at Large: John Clark, Kurt Krumperman
  - Physician at Large: Joseph Ornato, MD
- The NREMT Board of Directors recognized the following individuals:
  - **Sandy Bogucki, MD, PhD** –for her outstanding contributions, service and guidance during her tenure as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Registry. January 1, 2006 – December 31, 2007.
  - **Howard A. Werman, MD** – for his outstanding contributions, service and guidance during his tenure as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Registry. January 1, 1990 – December 31, 2007.
  - **Roger D. White, MD** – for his outstanding contributions, service and guidance as a two-time Chairman of the NREMT Board of Directors and for 35 years of service to the NREMT Board - a contribution that will never be matched by any member of the Board of Directors. January 1, 1973 – December 31, 2007.

The Conference Room at the NREMT building will be named the Roger D. White, MD Conference Room in honor of his extraordinary contribution to the NREMT and the EMS community. Dr. White was also elected a Board Member Emeritis.

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