

## Prevention and disease management: Future EMS role?

The Center for Emergency Medicine of Western Pennsylvania has launched a program to study and develop methods for EMS agencies to deliver preventive health and disease-management services. Emed Health investigates methods for EMS providers to offer community interventions such as vaccinations, health screenings, and management for chronic diseases such as asthma, congestive heart failure, and diabetes.

While the preponderance of health services remain a function for physicians, EMS personnel are ideally suited to provide some preventive and ongoing care. EMS practitioners are already in every community and can often identify at-risk and under-served patients who can most benefit — at a cost to patients, insurers, and the community that is far below that of physicians. An increasingly competitive environment in the urban setting and low call volumes in the rural setting create pressure for additional sources of income to keep EMS agencies' vital emergency functions available.

Emed Health's goal is to develop a cost-effective system of community-based chronic-disease management and prevention services for delivery by "health advocates" drawn from the ranks of EMS agencies. With adequate training, oversight, and quality control, EMS providers help contain health costs, assist patients in adhering to disease management and prevention targets, generate new revenue for EMS agencies, and combat loss of EMS personnel to "burn-out" or injury. The system includes mechanisms to alert the

Calendar of Events	
<b>Advanced Trauma Life Support</b>	
<b>2006</b>	
Nov. 30 - Dec. 1 .....	Provider
Dec. 1 .....	Reverification
<b>For more information about ATLS courses, call Debbie Stroop 412-647-8115 or Anne Marie Hinich 412-647-4715.</b>	
<b>For a list of nationally available ATLS courses, see <a href="http://web2.facs.org/atls/ATLSsearch.cfm?Search=USA">http://web2.facs.org/atls/ATLSsearch.cfm?Search=USA</a>.</b>	

patient's primary care physician (PCP) of changes in health status, and to take direction from the PCP for any on-site treatment required.

Emed Health serves as a model system for replication throughout the region and the nation, delivering programs in asthma management, diabetes prevention, community health fair screenings, and vaccination by EMS personnel in the Pittsburgh area. Future projects may include programs in integrating such programs into disaster responses. For more information, contact Kelly B. Close, MD, MPH, executive director, at [closekb@upmc.edu](mailto:closekb@upmc.edu); 412-812-0133; or, toll free, at 1-888-647-9077.

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