North Dakota EMS Association

COVID-19 Update

CDC.gov/COVID19
North Dakota EMS Convention Postponed

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the national and state emergency declarations issued today, the North Dakota EMS Association annual convention and tradeshow that was originally scheduled in Bismarck for early April has been postponed.

The conference committee has been closely monitoring all of the latest developments regarding COVID-19 and over the past 24 hours have worked diligently to secure an alternate date. **We have confirmed the dates of October 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of 2020 at the Bismarck Event Center.** A block of rooms are being secured at the Ramkota Hotel, and neighboring hotels. Additional details for participants and exhibitors will be announced over the coming weeks.

As we all face this public health crisis we ask for the continued support and prayers of all EMS providers across this country, and to each and every person affected by this pandemic. **Information Released:** March 13, 2020 at 5:03 PM

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**Upcoming NDEMSA Events**

- April 21, 2020 Mental Health Awareness Training, Jamestown
- April 28, 2020 Management Essentials, Jamestown
- April 29, 2020 Mental Health Awareness Training, Medora
- May 5, 2020 EMR Course Begins
- May 7, 2020 EMR Course Registration Opens
- May 16, 2020 Mental Health Awareness Training, Wyndmere
- May 22, 2020 EMS Safety Course, Bismarck ND

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**Conference Postponement FAQ**

- COVID-19 Resources
- Online EMR Course
- EMS Safety Course
North Dakota EMS Response to COVID-19

Department of Health Guidance

Updated EMS Management and Transport Considerations (3/19/2020)

Transport PUI/COVID-19 Patient (3/19/2020)

Best Practices (3/19/2020)


EMS Management and Transport Considerations (2/27/2020)

Online Resources

www.health.nd.gov/

CDC: Interim Guidance for EMS

CDC: Travel Restrictions

CDC: FAQ about PPE

CDC: FAQ from Healthcare Providers


www.eso.com/covid-19/
Partnerships -

• **Communicate Early and Often!**
  • Medical Director
    • Reach out for assistance and recommendations
    • Keep MD informed of potential exposures, equipment/medication inventory, etc.
  • Local PSAP
    • Discuss 911 screening criteria being utilized
  • Hospital within your transportation plans
    • How would they like you to enter their facility with the suspected COVID patient?
    • Capacity of care and available treatment offered
  • Local city/county public health
    • Possible resources available to EMS (N95s, PAPRs, etc)
    • State of health within city/county
  • Vulnerable population facilities (nursing homes, assisted living centers, etc)
    • Procedures for entering/exiting facility
    • Number of vulnerable persons at facility
Pre-screening patients

If the patient exhibits symptoms of an acute febrile* and/or lower respiratory infection (fever, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, cough):
  a. Place a surgical mask on the patient AND
  b. Obtain a detailed travel history to China or other areas with confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the past 14 days of symptom onset or close contact** with a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient or someone under investigation for COVID-19.
Personal Protective Equipment

If there is a history consistent with concern for potential COVID-19, initiate standard contact and airborne precautions and eye protection for EMS personnel.

a. **Standard Precautions:** perform hand hygiene, then put on clean, non-sterile gloves. Change gloves if they become torn or heavily soiled. Put on a clean disposable gown. Change the gown if it become soiled.

b. **Airborne Precautions:** use respiratory protection (i.e., a respirator) that is at least as protective as a fit-tested NIOSH-certified disposable N95 filtering facepiece respirator.

c. **Eye protection:** put on eye protection (i.e., goggles, a disposable face shield that covers the front and side of the face)
If there is a history consistent with concern for potential COVID-19, initiate standard contact and airborne precautions and eye protection for EMS personnel.

a. **Standard Precautions:** perform hand hygiene, then put on clean, non-sterile gloves. Change gloves if they become torn or heavily soiled. Put on a clean disposable gown. Change the gown if it become soiled. If there are shortages of gowns, they should be prioritized for aerosol generating procedures, care activities where splashes and sprays are anticipated, and high-contact patient care activities that provide opportunities for transfer of pathogens to the hands and clothing of HCP.

b. **Eye protection:** put on eye protection (i.e., goggles, a disposable face shield that covers the front and side of the face)

c. **Airborne Precautions:** use respiratory protection (i.e., a respirator) that is at least as protective as a fit-tested NIOSH-certified disposable N95 filtering facepiece-respirator.
   i. Facemasks are an acceptable alternative if N95 respirator is not available. Respirators should be prioritized for procedures that are likely to generate respiratory aerosols, which would pose the highest exposure risk to HCP. **When the N95 supply is restored, fit-tested EMS clinicians should return to use of respirators for patients with known or suspected COVID-19.**
PPE Reuse

- [https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html)
  - Discard N95 respirators following use during aerosol generating procedures.
  - Discard N95 respirators contaminated with blood, respiratory or nasal secretions, or other bodily fluids from patients.
  - Discard N95 respirators following close contact with any patient co-infected with an infectious disease requiring contact precautions.
  - Use a cleanable face shield (preferred) or a surgical mask over an N95 respirator and/or other steps (e.g., masking patients, use of engineering controls), when feasible to reduce surface contamination of the respirator.
  - Hang used respirators in a designated storage area or keep them in a clean, breathable container such as a paper bag between uses. To minimize potential cross-contamination, store respirators so that they do not touch each other and the person using the respirator is clearly identified. Storage containers should be disposed of or cleaned regularly.
  - Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching or adjusting the respirator (if necessary for comfort or to maintain fit).
  - Avoid touching the inside of the respirator. If inadvertent contact is made with the inside of the respirator, perform hand hygiene as described above.
  - Use a pair of clean (non-sterile) gloves when donning a used N95 respirator and performing a user seal check. Discard gloves after the N95 respirator is donned and any adjustments are made to ensure the respirator is sitting comfortably on your face with a good seal.
Treatment

• Treatment Tips for suspected COVID patients
  • Use the smallest crew required for proper patient care.
  • Use disposable linens when possible
  • Conduct scene size up and initial interview at a distance of greater than 6 feet from the patient. If this is not possible, Airborne Precautions must be initiated prior to entry of scene and patient interview. Do not enter the home without wearing recommended personal protective equipment.
Treatment

• Equipment
  • Ventilators – contact vendor to obtain parameters of machine and training/additional accessories needed (filters, tubing, etc)
  • Nebulizer Medication and delivery devices – inventory current and monitor use – order early (check with local pharmacy for their inventory)
  • Exposure to “in ambulance” equipment and supplies – limit exposure/use within cabinets, bags (being brought into a 10-120 home), etc.

• Aerosol-Generating Procedures
  • Suction
  • Intubation/Bi-pap
  • Nebulizers
Decontamination

• Follow CDC guidelines for approved “hospital grade” disinfectant usage

• Tips –
  • Limit the number of people exposed to potentially contaminated materials, the vehicle operator and patient care provider are the only crew members responsible for decontamination and disinfection of the transport unit
  • All waste, including PPE, drapes, and wipes, should be considered infectious substance, and should be packaged appropriately for disposal
  • Two people in PPE should decontaminate and disinfect. A third person should be available to document the decontamination and be available for other assistance as needed
  • PPE should be donned and doffed according to CDC guidelines
Transportation

- **Air Transport**
  - **Ground Transport** – Limit or eliminate friends/family in passenger compartment.
  - Keep driver from entering patient compartment unless an emergency exists. Driver must remove all PPE except mask prior to re-entering driver compartment.
  - Utilize exhaust fan in patient compartment during transport.
  - Notify hospital early of suspected COVID patient.

- **EMTALA**
  - Same rules apply; COVID patients are NOT an exception.

- Closest facility still applies – follow local transport plans.
Supply Acquisition

• Inventory current supplies now and often (daily, weekly, etc)
  • Do not wait until the need arises….get ahead of the curve
    • Be frugal, Be smart ($$$$
    • Theft of supplies

• Many distributors are inundated with orders which have caused delays in shipment and shortages in supplies
Supply Acquisition

• Access to State Cache
  • Email sent on 3/6/2020 with instructions for ordering

• Contact for questions: Angie Strand – amstrand@nd.gov

HAN ASSET ORDERING

To place a request order, log on:
http://hansets.nd.gov/

If you have an established account, log in. If you don’t please register (upper right).

Sign in  Register

0 items

In the search bar type item(s) needed (example, N95 Respirator Masks)

Mask Respirator N95 3M
(Regular)  $0.00

Mask Respirator N95 3M
(Small)  $0.00

Choose what you are requesting and submit order.

Please assist us by returning what was issued to you for any fulfilled requests by donating the
same quantity and brand back to the ND DoH State Medical Cache when items come available to
your facility at a later date. This will help ensure we have enough supplies available to the
medical and first responder communities in the state.

Be advised we cannot take payment for medical cache items, strictly donations and attached is
a donation form that is to accompany all returned items.

Thank you.
National Registry (NREMT) Certification

- Extended certification period to June 30, 2020
- Removed the Distributive Education limits for this certification period
- Provisional NREMT certification at all levels approved
  - Successful completion of a program
  - Successfully passed the cognitive exam
- Very few Pearson-VUE testing centers in operation
- Working on a remote cognitive testing option (weeks away)

www.nremt.org
Certifications that expire June 30, 2020 will be extended and new date determined after the emergency

- EMR to Paramedic, Instructor/Coordinator to EVOC, etc.

Instructor/Coordinator refresher class scheduled for June 5th in Jamestown remains as scheduled

45th Annual EMS Conference was postponed to October 2-4, 2020

Accepting provisional NREMT certifications as well as out-of-state certifications (updating registration forms)

www.ndhealth.gov/ems
Executive Order

• Suspends Chapter 23-27 of N.D.C.C
  • As well as all related provisions under N.D.A.C

• Subject to emergency requirements established by State Health Officer
Cost Capture

• Track and document **ALL** equipment and supplies ordered to meet the demands/requirements for treating potential COVID 19 patients
  • N95 masks, PAPRs, proper disinfectant, gowns, etc
    • Maintain receipts
  • Track **ALL** dispatch (10-120) calls, as well as those calls your providers deem a potential COVID case
Taking care of yourself is not an extracurricular activity, it’s a necessity.

• The best way to care for yourself is to be as educated as possible.
• Answering your own questions will prepare you to answer others.
• Do what you can to get good sleep.
• Focus on healthy eating and hydration.
• Do things to calm yourself like prayer, meditation, yoga.
• Don’t obsess watching the news and reading articles.
• Watch for signs of increased agitation, anger, short temper.
• Talk to peer support, call a counselor.