



DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Numbered Memo Series 07-01
January 2007

To: First Responder and Ambulance Service Providers
EMS Training Centers
Service Medical Directors

From: Larry Gilbertson, Director
Bureau of Local Health Support and EMS
Wisconsin Division of Public Health

Re: EMS Section Updates

I want to take this opportunity to share updates regarding current progress in the EMS Section.

Regrettably, Dan Williams tendered his resignation in December and will be gone in early February. His leadership and program management will be sorely missed. The recruitment paperwork was submitted in December. Hopefully, the position announcement will be distributed in January and we will have a new chief by March 1, 2007.

Paul Wittkamp, EMS Communication Coordinator, has agreed to serve as acting EMS Section Chief in the interim. Paul will be coordinating the efforts of the office in order to maintain business activities and ongoing projects. Although we strongly suggest that you contact the appropriate program coordinator with your questions and concerns, Paul will also be available to assist you as needed.

The First Responder position funding was lost due to a 30% decrease in CDC Public Health Preparedness funds. There were other positions not funded as well in the Division of Public Health.

The Data Coordinator position funding was lost in the CDC Prevention Block Grant funding deficit. The President's Fiscal staff provided no dollars to the Prevention Grant which has been the case for the last several years. Similar to the last several years, we expect Congress to vote to restore funding at last year's level. At this point in time, we are assured of Prevention Grant funding for the first two quarters of 2007, until a decision is made in Congress. There are over thirty positions in the Division of Public Health that are funded in full or partially. There are 3.75 positions in the EMS Section.

The funding for the EMS Medical Director half-time position which was funded fully by the Prevention Block Grant was reduced by 50% due to the Prevention Grant deficit as well as a statute that limits the use of Prevention funds at \$25,000. Although we would like to make the EMS Director funding whole, there are no available funds at this time.

In January the EMS Section will participate in a strategic planning session lead by Joe Covelli from Lifelink III. This session will be an opportunity to discuss workflow, cross training, customer expectations and team building.

These are definitely stressing times for all public and private sectors, especially in a time of diminishing resources. The EMS Section staff are a group of very competent, seasoned professionals who have rose to the challenges that have been presented. The Section continues to function and will continue to do so in the future. It is true that the EMS Section exists on Federal Grants and State GPR funding. This may become problematic in the future especially with the future decision regarding the Prevention Block Grant. Having said that, I don't want to speculate about what might happen, but to assure the EMS community that we are managing our existing resources as best we can.