A National Strategy for EMS Specialty Certification

National Association of State EMS Officials

February 1, 2015
State director reps, EPSC leadership, Medical Direction

Multiple writing sessions

Consideration of practices other allied health professions

While models of specialty certification related to state licensure/recognition vary widely, some commonalities do exist
NASEMSO is a Governing Member of the Federation of Associations of State Regulatory Boards (FARB)

Mission

* Promote excellence in regulation for public protection by providing expertise and innovation from a multi-professional perspective.

Benefits from participation

* Exchange information and engage in joint activities relating to the licensing of professionals.
* Engagement in activities to improve the standards of the professions, the delivery of services and the services of regulatory licensing agencies for the welfare and protection of the public.
Clarification of Terms
(These are NOT interchangeable!)

**Certification**
- Voluntary process
- Private organization
- Used to demonstrate a level of knowledge and skill
- Used to *enhance* the licensure process
- NOT a license to practice

**Licensure**
- State legislative action establishes legal authority
- Only those who are licensed and recognized (authorized) by the state may legally practice
EMS Specialty Certification

- National Scope of Practice Model deferred on the topic (2007)
- Several potential EMS specialties have emerged
- Lack of consistency in body of knowledge and skills needed to provide effective health care
- States have previously identified need for consensus and multidisciplinary input
Closer Look at
EMS Specialty Certification

What SC is not...

- Not entry-level practice
- Does not replace a license
- Does not authorize an expanded scope of practice

It IS a process...

- Requires experienced practitioner
- Requires additional body of knowledge and verification of skills
- Requires medical oversight
Examples

* Critical Care
* Community Paramedicine
* Pediatrics
* Tactical EMS
* Wilderness
* Wildland Fire
* Others
Why standardize definitions?

* To help explain to the EMS profession, other related professions, and the public the **purpose and scope** of a proposed EMS specialty.

* To demonstrate how the proposed EMS specialty will **integrate** within the health care system.

* To provide assurance that the **safety** of patients will not be compromised.
For example…

- A **basic description or definition** of the proposed specialty.
- An explanation of the expected approach to specialty care including the **types and range of services** that would be provided and the anticipated **clinical environment/location of service**.
- A description of the **population to be served**.
- A description of how **medical oversight** will be accomplished.
- The **level of practitioners** (Basic Life Support and/or Advanced Life Support) that will be utilized to provide the service.
For example...

* A description of the **value added** (i.e. how the proposed specialty fulfills an unmet need and/or complements the health and well-being of the population it will serve.)
* A description of any **potential risks** of harm to patients and personnel.
* A description of how the specialty will be **integrated** within EMS and the healthcare system.
* Copies of **protocols** that are SPECIFIC to the proposed specialty.
* Anticipated size of workforce needed to maintain the **viability** of the specialty based on population density.
* Copies of any **research/evidence** that supports the need for the specialty.
For example...

* A description of the **body of knowledge** (such as model course curricula), **faculty and facility requirements**, **supervised practicum/preceptorship/ experience**, and/or **testing requirements** that will support specialty practice.
* Identification of **knowledge evaluation** process.
* Policy recommendations for **periodic review/renewal**.
Getting from here to there…
PROPOSED:
American Board of EMS Specialties

* Consensus-based process under the NASEMSO umbrella
* Comprised of state EMS officials, subject matter experts, EMS medical directors, EMS educators, EMS managers/administrators, peer reviewers, and others (to be determined.)
American Board of EMS Specialties

Functions

Executive Council
(Governance Body)

Coordinating Committees
(Logistics)
Coordinating Committees

Roles

* Primary: discuss and identify practitioner requirements and make recommendations to the Executive Council for endorsement
* Could be used to develop national templates (i.e. preliminary descriptions and definitions since none are currently recognized by the majority of states)

Composition

* State EMS officials
* National organizations
* Subject matter experts
* EMS medical directors
* EMS managers/administrators
* EMS educators
* EMS practitioners
* Peer reviewers
* Others??
Role of Coordinating Committees

- EXAMPLES of practitioner requirements to be identified by consensus:
  - Experience – (such as) Supervised practicum or number of patient contacts
  - Education – (such as) Approved and/or accredited course of study
  - Training – (such as) Number of contact hours in the EMS specialty
  - Leadership Contributions – (such as) Contributions in areas such as professional membership, speaking, publishing articles, serving on volunteer boards or committees and other areas beyond the scope of individual job requirements.
  - Comprehensive Essay - (such as) Real-life scenarios are provided, and response must demonstrate knowledge, skills and abilities as listed in the essay instructions.
  - Examination Requirements – (such as) Accredited certification board or other process
  - References needed- (such as) current supervisor, EMS medical director, others
Executive Council

Roles

* Process oversight
* Ensure neutrality
* Collect and analyze input
* Review and approve specialty-oriented proposals and documents
* Assist states

Composition

* Led by NASEMSO
* Stakeholders – ex officio
The Board will be tasked to consider all input but as the national association of state agencies that regulate the EMS profession, NASEMSO must serve as the founding and single voting member of its Executive Council.

One caveat...

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American Board of EMS Specialties

Board Verification of National EMS Specialty

Executive Council comprised of:
NAEMSSC (founding member), National EMS Organizations, Others

Author/sponsor/other submits application to Board for endorsement of national EMS specialty

Executive Council assesses body of knowledge and psychometric skills that are in REMS.
These are verified and/or edited and a "Proposed EMS Specialty" package is disseminated for public review and comment.

Comments collected by Board's Executive Council convenes to consider a formal endorsement of the proposal.

National EMS Specialty and Portfolio Packages Formally Endorsed by Board for Statewide Adoption

Composition and Roles for Coordinating Committees

Four Committees formed (initially) to review practitioner applications: Critical/Specialty Care, Wildland Fire, Tactical EMS, Community Paramedicine/Mobile Integrated Health Technician

Committee membership comprised of state EMS officials, subject matter experts, EMS medical directors, educators, EMS managers/administrators, peer reviewers, and others

(EMS Specialty) Committee identifies portfolio of requirements for individual recognition (such as): Experience, Education, Training, Leadership Contributions, Core Competencies, Examination Requirements, and References

.G (EMS Specialty) Committee develops format/tools for individual credentialing and makes recommendation to Executive Council

Portfolio Package Submitted by [EMS Specialty] Committee to Board's Executive Council

For illustrative purposes and discussion - February 2015
Feasibility

- Unknown at present
- Would require considerable resources
- In-kind donations
- Grants
- Donations from industry partners
- Potential for fees
Survey of states, stakeholders, EMS agencies, and practitioners:

1. Is there a need for standardizing definitions on a national basis?
2. Do states want a mechanism they could use to assist with practitioner credentialing?
3. At what level would states/EMS agencies and others use a formalized process?
Website:
http://www.nasemso.org/Projects/EMSEducation/EMS-Specialty-Certification.asp

* The survey for **STATE EMS OFFICIALS** is available at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WTQFYC2

* The survey for **EMS STAKEHOLDERS** is available at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SPSWFF3