National EMS Culture of Safety
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Project Background

• Funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Office of EMS and EMS for Children

• Stimulate the growth of a “Culture of Safety” within the EMS community through development of a Strategy document
  – Where are we?
  – Where do we want to be?
National Stakeholder Meeting

- EMS identified as high-risk industry
- Affects patients, responders and the public
  - Violence
  - Vehicle Operations
  - Medication errors
  - Infectious diseases
  - Lifting and moving patients
- Lack of EMS injury data system
- Limited sources of data
Considerations

- Balance between patient – responder – community safety
- Capitalize on concern for the patient
- Recognition that this is a long process but has intermediate “wins”
- Disparate nature of EMS
- Respect for unique circumstances and environments of EMS
Considerations

• Limited resources
• Incorporate lessons from other fields
• Evidence-based within reason
• Balance between cultural and practical
• Build on existing foundations
• Seek to be emulated
Right balance – EMS Personnel, Patient and Safety of the public?

**Purpose:** One of the challenges Culture of Safety is creating a pervasive culture – one that touches the personnel, the patient and the public.
The HSSE Culture Ladder

- **Generative (High Reliability Orgs)**
  - HSE is how we do business round here

- **Proactive**
  - Safety leadership and values drive continuous improvement

- **Calculative**
  - We have systems in place to manage all hazards

- ** Reactive**
  - Safety is important, we do a lot every time we have an accident

- **Pathological**
  - Who cares as long as we’re not caught
Suggested elements:

• Just Culture
• Coordinated Support & Resources
• National responder and patient safety data systems
• Education initiatives
• Reporting and investigation tools
Just Culture

- **Human error:**
  - individual should have done something other than what he or she did, and
  - the action(s) inadvertently caused (or could have caused) an undesirable outcome

- **Negligent conduct:**
  - falls below the standard reasonable level of skill expected

- **Reckless conduct:**
  - greater culpability than negligence because it is conscious, unjustified, and done in spite of understanding of the likelihood of harm

- **Intentional/willful violations:**
  - know the negative result of the action but do it anyway.
Just Culture

- Separate behaviors from outcomes
  - Base the response to unsafe acts on the behavior itself and the risk it presents,
  - Not on the outcome

- **Console** human error.
- **Coach** at-risk behavior.
- **Punish** reckless behavior.
- ...independent of outcome.
For more information on the project please contact:

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