



State of Maryland

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**House Appropriations Committee
Health & Social Services Subcommittee**

**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Health & Human Services Subcommittee**

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The Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) is an independent state agency that coordinates all components of the statewide EMS system in accordance with policies set by the State EMS Board and Maryland statute and regulation. MIEMSS' areas of responsibility include medical oversight, coordinating and supporting EMS educational programs, operating and maintaining a statewide communications system, designating trauma and specialty centers, licensing and certifying EMS providers, licensing and regulating commercial ambulance services, and participating in EMS-related public education and prevention programs.

We appreciate the opportunity to present MIEMSS' FY 2022 budget request and to brief the committees on several programmatic areas of interest. MIEMSS and the Emergency Medical Services Board are very appreciative of the General Assembly's support of MIEMSS and our Statewide EMS system. The analysis by Andrew Garrison is comprehensive and focuses on several important issues. We thank him for his hard work, as well as that of the Department of Budget and Management and Breanna Browne, MIEMSS' DBM budget analyst.

I would like to provide a few brief comments highlighting several of our efforts over the past year.

COVID-Related Initiatives. The response of the EMS system to COVID-19 has been a major focus. To augment the EMS workforce, Maryland added 1,440 Provisional EMS Clinicians to work throughout Maryland. Provisional EMS Clinicians include those whose Maryland license / certification previously expired; clinicians who are licensed / certified in other states; and Maryland EMT and Paramedic students. These clinicians are able to transition to fully licensed / certified EMS Clinicians.

In consultation with Nursing Schools and Respiratory Therapy Schools, MIEMSS implemented a Clinical Extern credentialing program so Nursing and Respiratory Therapy students could augment the hospital / health system workforce to meet the increasing demands presented by COVID. To date, we have credentialed over 1,300 students as Clinical Externs and another 600 students are in process.

MIEMSS developed a Critical Care Coordination Center (C4) to identify available critical care resources when hospitals need to transfer critical patients. C4 is staffed 24/7 with a Critical Care Coordinator who has a near real-time view of critical care bed capability statewide and a virtual Central Intensivist Physician who works with referring physicians to identify patients' anticipated critical care needs, match patients with available resources, and assist in arranging patient transfer, if necessary.

Non-COVID Initiatives. Working with the EMS Board, MIEMSS issued an updated EMS Plan – *Vision 2030 – Plan for the EMS System.* *Vision 2030* will be implemented over the next decade

and sets the way forward for the continuing growth and evolution of our statewide EMS system. *Vision 2030* was developed in collaboration with EMS professionals – both career and volunteer – and system stakeholders; and was approved by the EMS Board in August 2020.

MIEMSS is working with the Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP) to develop a new method to monitor Emergency Department overcrowding data that would replace the outmoded monitoring system currently in use. MIEMSS has also developed a web-based application to provide EMS clinicians with real-time ambulance activity at hospitals to help them make informed decisions regarding patient destination.

Called “@HA” (short for At-Hospital Ambulances), information on the dashboard includes hospital, number of ambulances at the hospital, the ambulances’ jurisdictions and the minimum and maximum times the ambulances have been at the hospital. We are currently developing a mobile version of the @HA dashboard.

One of MIEMSS’ most critical functions is the operation of our Statewide EMS Communications System. MIEMSS’ emergency medical communications system is a complex network that provides communications among ambulances, medevac helicopters, dispatch centers, hospital emergency departments, specialty referral centers and trauma centers. Because much of the equipment of our system is outdated, we are in the midst of a multi-year project to upgrade the statewide system. The Board of Public Works approved a contract in May 2018, and we are fully immersed in project work despite COVID-19. While the work is underway, the current EMS Communications System remains fully operational. The project is in the Implementation Stage in six counties (Frederick, Montgomery, Prince George’s, Charles, Calvert and St. Mary’s). The Equipment Delivery Stage has begun in Baltimore City and eight (8) other counties (Harford, Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Howard, Carroll, Washington, Allegany and Garrett). Statewide project completion is expected by the end of FY23.

These are but a few of MIEMSS’ initiatives over the past year. We are grateful for your support and look forward to continuing to work with you. Thank you.

We would be happy to answer any questions.