



# EMERGENCY MEDICAL TIMES

June 2009

**EMS**  
CREIGHTON EMS EDUCATION

*From the desk of*

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Is it a myth? No, it's real, very real. A Critical Care Paramedic student asked this question in class:

*I have heard grumblings about this, mostly whispered in dark alleys and behind closed doors. Is the Paramedic Practitioner actually out there or is it some sort of mythical thing that shares a house with Bigfoot?*

### Background

In 1990, Mike Rothenberger, MD (*deceased*), was keynote speaker at an EMS Today (JEMS) Conference on the topic of *Expanded EMS*. Dr. Rothenberger's vision was that within 10 years, paramedics would show up at a residence and assess the patient with portable radiographs and lab studies. They would treat patients with antibiotics, Lasix® drips, suturing, orthopedic casts, and other expanded practice treatments. That vision prompted widespread experimental pilot projects and studies throughout the U.S. Today, nearly 20 years later, we are nowhere near arriving at an expansion of practice on that scale. However, several pilot programs all over the world come very close to Dr. Rothenberger's vision. The concept is very much alive.

### Development of the Rural Paramedic

About four years ago a small group of visionary leaders began a new look at the possibility of meeting the needs of underserved rural areas with expanded practice paramedics. Previous projects and research studies did little to encourage the growth of an EMS scope of practice. Nearly every published study came out with similar results--far too many problems in the outcomes to move forward with a new acceptable expanded scope of practice for paramedics. Worse yet, the EMS community nationwide shot down all references to *Advance Practice Paramedics* that would have opened the door for the expansion of the paramedic scope of practice.

The current movement to develop a Rural Paramedic is strong, however, and has a vibrant worldwide network actively studying best practices and piloting model programs and curricula. The collaboration of stakeholders includes representatives from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Mexico, Sudan, and many others including the United States. Nebraska is well-represented with Dennis Berens, NE HHS Rural Health, Garry Steele, NE HHS EMS Training Coordinator, Debbie VonSeggern, UNMC Continuing Education, Rick Walker, M.D., Creighton University, and Bill Raynovich, actively participating.

In October 2008, Creighton University EMS Education hosted a national conference on Expanded EMS, with presentations by Gary Wingrove of the Mayo Clinic, David Page of FISDAP, and John Becknell, publisher of Best Practices in EMS.

### Current Status

An expanded practice *Rural Paramedic* project is currently being piloted by the Mayo Clinic on an Indian Reservation in Minnesota and other pilot projects are underway in Canada, Australia, and England.

The Nebraska DHHS EMS and Rural Health divisions are currently seeking funding through the U.S. Federal Agency Healthcare Research and Quality to develop a pilot project.

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## THE CRITICAL CARE PARAMEDIC

When the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration of the Federal Department of Transportation set out to write new EMS Standards and Practices and new Scopes of Practice for all levels of EMS, an Advance Practice Paramedic was anticipated, either with an eager welcome and the sentiment that "it's about time," or the dread of increased educational requirements and consequential increases in operating costs. The APP would likely have been required to minimally possess a clinical Associate's degree, and very possibly, a clinical Bachelor's degree. The expanded scope of practice would have opened the door to several career expanding possibilities for EMS providers, including a Critical Care Paramedic (CCP) and a Community Paramedic.

The CCP already exists in practice and in Medicare regulation and reimbursements. In practice across the U.S. each day, thousands of patients are transported from one facility to another by paramedics that are providing patient care that exceeds their training and specified scopes of practice. Sometimes the patient is on an automated ventilator, sometimes a drug is running in an IV line that was never formally taught in paramedic class, sometimes the patient has central monitor lines placed. In each of these cases the "letter of the law" is satisfied with a nurse pointing to the device and saying, "There's the On-Off switch. There's where you change the rate. There's the tidal volume setting." When the CCP becomes a nationally recognized practice level and the training is standardized, every paramedic providing patient care between facilities will be competently trained to manage the patients,

procedures, medications, and documentation that are required. We are getting closer to that day.

On the national scene, a National Critical Care Transportation Board has written a certifying examination. The first run of the exam is scheduled for October of this year and several states are already promulgating critical care transportation regulations that include specific training and certification requirements for paramedics that provide care that exceeds the standard paramedic scope of practice.

Nebraska EMS has been moving toward formal recognition and regulation of CCP training and clinical practice. On February 20<sup>th</sup>, Bill Raynovich, EMS Education Director, and Mike Miller, Paramedic Program Director, were invited by Dean Cole to participate in an EMS Advisory Board meeting to discuss the development of Critical Care Paramedic standards and training. Nebraska HHS EMS has received a \$20,000 grant for CCP training this year and Creighton University EMS has opened the training program to both rural Nebraska and metropolitan Omaha in an online-enhanced format. The pilot CCP training program recently began with 8 students enrolled from Beatrice and Richardson County, and 17 enrolled from the Omaha area. An additional 7 AMR CCP students are enrolled in a current online CCP.

Creighton University EMS Education began offering a Critical Care course two years ago. Seventeen students have completed the program and 6 are currently enrolled in Critical Care courses. In response to feedback received from students who have completed the course, and in consideration of advice from the EMS Advisory Board, an online Critical Care Preparatory Course has been added to help bridge the challenging gap between what the standard paramedic course teaches and the level of clinical expertise required of the Critical Care Paramedic.

### WHERE ARE THEY NOW? *Rory Hand (2008 BS-EMS Graduate)*



Rory Hand is Life Support Simulation and Course Specialist for the American Academy of Pediatrics.

*"I took a rotation off from my graduate program when I started this job because I wanted to make sure I got off on the right foot, but I'll be starting it again this summer. It's very difficult to get motivated to do grad school work when I've been lucky enough to get a salaried position that is paying as much as I would expect to make with the masters degree! The Academy has very flexible work hours, and this enables me to be a volunteer coach at my old high school for cross country and track, so it's been a great fit. When I was interviewing I was up against some people who already had advanced degrees in education, and even an MD who was out of practice, but I guess I interviewed well! My experience as an EMS instructor definitely set me apart because a large part of my job is staying current on the latest in simulation technology as it pertains to medicine."*

*"Funny but true story: I was auditing an NRP course last month and the neo-natologist in charge asked me to demonstrate a full megacode for a limp, cyanotic neonate, including intubation and intraosseous access, for the class. After I finished he said 'Thank you for that excellent demonstration of technique, doctor. Are you a resident here, or at another hospital?' After I got done laughing I explained that I picked up my ability to recite algorithms verbatim as a paramedic. Earlier in the day I was paired with one of the L&D nurses at a station, and after we finished our scenario she asked, 'So you must've worked in a nursery for a few years, huh?'. I got a good laugh out of that one too."*

## SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS PRESENTED

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Each year, Creighton University EMS Education has a ceremony to celebrate the paramedic students who have successfully completed training. On July 26, 2008, 15 students were awarded certificates of completion. In 2009, eighteen students are expected to receive certificates of completion. Awards will again be presented to outstanding preceptors, hospital clinical training units, and field internship services based on nominations from students.

### Preceptor Award



Congratulations to Jason Schweitzer, a paramedic and firefighter with the Lincoln Fire Department, who was chosen by nominations received from students for the Preceptor Recognition Award! The students wrote *“He welcomed us to the station each shift and following every call, we debriefed what was done, why it was done, and how it might be approached differently in retrospect – truly an educational experience.”* Another student states *“when not responding on calls, he still made me feel like a member of the team and was genuinely interested in me as an individual, not just another student. His knowledge and expertise as a paramedic are phenomenal.”*

### Academic Excellence Award

Nine unit exams combine with a comprehensive written examination to total over 2,000 questions each student must answer in the pursuit of academic success. The Academic Excellence Award is based upon the student's performance on these quizzes and exams and is awarded to the student with the highest composite grade point average at the end of the program. While all students have much to be proud of, only one has done so with a final composite average of 94.5%. Congratulations to Jon Kilstrom (BSEMS, May 2009) for outstanding academic achievement!



### Clinical Excellence Award

Classroom testing is just one method of grading performance, application of the skill and knowledge to real patients is just as important and deserving of recognition. Each year, a student is identified who has excelled in delivering a high level of professional, skillful, and compassionate care during their field internship and clinical practicum. James Casey came from Alaska to Creighton University to study Emergency Medical Services. He has also received a \$5,000 scholarship to pursue paramedic studies from the National Association of EMTs. Congratulations to James for outstanding clinical performance!

## A SPECIAL THANKS

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An outstanding group of paramedics, nurses, managers, technicians, firefighters, and physicians contribute to the success of Creighton University's EMS Education program, not only in the Omaha metro area, but throughout the country. Nearly all students gained invaluable field internship experience with EMSA in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Each person assisting with the paramedic education program has gone above and beyond by reaching out to students with guidance and sharing of valuable personal medical experiences.

Many people make our program possible and all are deserving of our thanks. We would like to extend a sincere thank you to Rev. John Schlegel, President of Creighton University, Dr. Barbara Braden, Dean of University College, Mary Beth Bestenlehner, Assistant Dean of University College, and all of the senior administrative staff of Creighton University. Without their support and commitment to our mission in EMS Education, we would not be able to provide the outstanding program that many have worked so hard to develop.

Special thanks to members of all hospital organizations and EMS agencies precepting our students in clinical units and rescue squads. The program would not be possible without this guidance, leadership, and mentoring during the student clinical and field internship experiences. The time, talent, commitment, knowledge, and sharing volunteered by these exceptional individuals is evident and greatly appreciated.

## EXTREME MAKEOVER – EMS EDITION

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Over the past year, EMS Education has added 1,365 square feet of classroom space to its facility at 2514 Cuming Street. Every inch of the facility has been reconfigured and improved with new paint, carpeting, and furniture. The results are colorful and impressive. Included in the remodel are two new simulation labs with one-way mirrors to allow the instructor-controller to operate simulation manikins from the next room.

We were excited to show off the new facility at the Creighton University EMS Education Open House on April 17<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 50 visitors stopped by to look around and enjoy refreshments.

## CONGRATULATIONS EMS GRADUATES!

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### December 2008

Kelly Vogel, ASEMS  
Riyadh Al-Hazmi, BSEMS  
Moses Stephen Loli, BSEMS

### May 2009

Shari Lentsch, ASEMS  
Cindy Ortiz, ASEMS  
Oliver Berglund, BSEMS  
Gregory Graham, BSEMS  
Jonathan Kilstrom, BSEMS



If you have good news to share, email us at [cuemse@creighton.edu](mailto:cuemse@creighton.edu).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Paramedic Graduation Ceremony

Saturday, July 25, 10:00 AM  
Harper Center Auditorium

### EMT-Paramedic Course

August 26, 2009 – July 24, 2010

### EMT – Basic Course

August 27 – December 17, 2009  
January 14 – May 6, 2010

### Nurse to EMT-Basic

September 14-19, 2009  
March 8-13, 2010  
April 19-24, 2010  
September 13-18, 2010

### Paramedic Certification Course for Healthcare Professionals

July 6-17, 2009  
October 5-16, 2009  
May 10-21, 2010  
July 12-23, 2010  
October 11-22, 2010

### EMS Instructor

August 25-December 16, 2009

### EMS Management

January 13-May 5, 2010

### Critical Care Paramedic

January 19-April 13, 2010

### 2009 EMS Renewal (48 Hours–Includes B, I & P)

Jan. 24-25, Feb. 13-14, Mar. 6-7, 2010

### 3rd Annual EMS Competition

Saturday, November 21, 2009  
Creighton University's Kiewit Fitness Center

Applications are now being accepted.

Register on <http://ems.creighton.edu>

or call 402-280-1280 for more information