



Elevating EMS agencies
since 2011

2020 Quarter 4 Newsletter

- Big Sky Care Connect – BSCC Montana is getting a Health Information Exchange! Thank you to all of you who joined the webinar by BSCC tailored to our clients. EMS liaison Stephanie Sullivan summarized the history and roll-out of the HIE in Montana. This bi-directional network of patient information will help improve patient care and outcomes, boost crew morale, and ease the burden of sharing documentation with the hospital. At an affordable subscription rate of \$532/year, with the first year free, this network is a great value to Montana providers. If you haven't already, we hope you'll decide to participate in this network. Please let us know if you have any questions or need to obtain the enrollment application.
- End of year check-up: Do we have your current protocols for dispatch and how you deploy your crew based on the call? This information can influence billing, especially level of service decisions when creating claims. Is your Medicare enrollment data current? Any changes to the Board of Directors, new ambulance vehicles, etc., need to be reported within 60 days. Have you looked at your compliance plan recently? Let us know if you would like assistance with any of these items.



*"Save one life, you're a hero.
Save multiple lives, you're an EMT."*



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EMT SPOTLIGHT: RACHEL DURAM



BRIEF BACKGROUND Born in Longmont, Co. Moved to MT at age 12, where we built a log house in the woods. I went to Fortine school and to High School through Christian Liberty Academy. I graduated with all A's and one B (in Physical education hahah) and was able to take part in college courses, such as Economics and Bible theology. I had a full-time job in my parents Casket building business making \$3.50 per hour. I then went to Youth With A Mission school called DTS (YWAM) in Lakeside, MT and then the Dominican Republic on the Good Samaritan Ship. I then went to SOE with YWAM, where I lived in Hawaii and India. Upon returning to Montana I was a nanny for a family in Wyoming for a summer, and came back to Montana to marry my husband who I had known since we were 15, Neil Duram. We lived in Eureka and Neil worked for my dad in drywall but wanted to further his career in law enforcement so we moved to Missoula, Montana where I worked full time at Hardees Restaurant as the shift manager until we moved back to Eureka for Neil to be a City Cop there as a stepping stone. He then got on to the Highway Patrol and I became pregnant and we moved back to Missoula where we had both our kids in 3 years. We then moved back to Eureka to raise our family and be close to both parents who were next door neighbors. I started cleaning homes as a teen and found that that was a good way to contribute to the lifestyle we wanted. I had met a dear friend at an early age named Annie Dueker who was an EMT for our local ambulance service. I knew that they had local classes and thought I might do that since I live so close to the barn, and someday could give back. I had always had a desire to become a nurse, though it just wasn't in the cards. So, when my kids were both in high school and did not need their stay at home mom as much anymore, I took the class. I became an EMT and then had the opportunity to move to AEMT. An opening for the Director of Operations became available and I was able to fulfill it. I have a heart to help those in Eureka because it is my home that I love. The Duram House is 911, hahah. We will continue to be there for the Town of Eureka as long as physically possible.

HIGHLIGHT OR FAVORITE ASPECT OF WORKING IN EMS: I enjoy being there for people in their time of need. This is my hometown and I like having knowledge in helping people. They are skills that are usable for my own family as well and have been used frequently.

Compliance Corner: Documentation in the time of COVID

With all the challenges added to your work with consideration of COVID, several questions have come up repeatedly that are worth addressing here. Medicare has approved alternative destinations as payable during the time frame of the declared Public Health Emergency. You can find more information regarding this at <https://www.phe.gov/emergency/news/healthactions/phe/Pages/covid19-2Oct2020.aspx>. As long as the patient is transported to a destination that is equipped to treat the condition of the patient consistent with state and local EMS protocols, and all of the other Medicare requirements are met (medical necessity, reasonableness, etc.), Medicare will pay for a widened range of destinations.

As you are probably aware, there are also accommodations made for the patient signature requirement in cases where you are dealing with a known or suspected COVID patient. In these situations an EMS crew member can ask the patient for their consent and agreement to the signature document verbiage, and then sign on their behalf in the COVID signature area. In the narrative please be sure to describe the circumstances that are enabling you to use these exceptions.

The Medicare Ground Ambulance Data Collection project was also delayed due to the pandemic. Any provider chosen to participate during 2020 is now responsible for submitting data for 2021 instead. More detail can be found at <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/AmbulanceFeeSchedule/Ground-Ambulance-Services-Data-Collection-System>.