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State Traffic Safety Grant Funds EMS Data System

SACRAMENTO – A new grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety will usher in a new era of data collection and reporting for California's emergency medical services. The $245,000 award to the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) is titled "California EMS Data System Transformation to National EMS Data System" and took effect October 1, 2013. This funding will be used for California to adopt new national EMS data standards for reporting of EMS response information.

The new standards, known collectively as NEMSIS Version 3, are similar to blueprints for ambulance and patient data systems. The NEMSIS Version 3 data standards provide for new, unprecedented levels of health data integration which were nearly impossible with previous data standards. Several key agencies have been involved in the development of this new data standard including the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and National Association of State EMS Officials.

The new data standards make it easier for health care providers to transmit pre-determined portions of patient records to local and state health officials, who are responsible for reviewing the data, researching the best treatments for patients during emergencies and improving California's emergency medical service system for everyone. When it comes to treating injuries caused by traffic collisions, prompt delivery of specialty medical care gives patients the best chances for optimal recovery.

EMSA will begin deploying NEMSIS Version 3 as part of its California Emergency Medical Services Information System in 2014. End-users will be able to identify high frequency traffic collision patterns, use of personnel protective devices such as child passenger seats, destination decision patterns showing access to trauma centers, use of air transport and ultimately patient outcomes.

This data will be incorporated into local, regional and state quality improvement programs to improve post-crash survivability. The continuous analysis of statewide data will guide the development and implementation of the State Trauma Plan and State EMS Quality Improvement Program and continuously evaluate the delivery of EMS and trauma care in California. Funding for this program is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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