



# DISPATCH

Quarterly Newsletter  
SPRING 2021

## EMS Awards Program

**Brave. Dedicated. Willing. Reliable.**

These words describe the 86,000 licensed or certified EMS providers in California. They demonstrate these qualities every day by coming to the aid of others when they are most in need and working to ensure that the EMS system operates well. However, each year, due to circumstance or extraordinary effort, certain individuals among us shine the brightest.

Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the deadline for 2020 Award Nominations had been extended to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. The purpose of the extension was to allow more opportunities for EMS providers, supervisors, managers, and the public to nominate deserving individuals for recognition in the 2020 California EMS Awards. This year EMSA is planning on holding a virtual Award Ceremony for the EMS Award Program. EMSA will announce the Award Recipients during EMS Week on May 16-22, 2021.

To find out more information on how to join the virtual Award Ceremony and to review the final list of nomination recipients, please visit our website at [emsa.ca.gov/awards](https://emsa.ca.gov/awards).

# NATIONAL EMS WEEK

## MAY 16-22, 2021

President Ford declared the first EMS Week in 1974 to celebrate EMS practitioners and the important work they do in our nation's communities. This year marks the 46th annual National EMS Week. As part of this, EMSA is requesting pictures of EMS personnel or pictures of their employer's patches for a special presentation to be revealed during EMS Week.

"This is EMS: Caring for Our Communities" will be the theme of this year's EMS Week. It also marks an opportunity for EMS to raise public awareness about the essential role of EMS. NAEMT partners with the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) to lead annual EMS Week activities. Together, they work to ensure that the vital contributions of EMS practitioners are celebrated and recognized.

EMS Week will focus on a specific theme each day. First responders are encouraged to plan activities and events based on the themes in their communities:

- Monday-EMS Education Day
- Tuesday-Safety Tuesday
- Wednesday-EMS for Children Day
- Thursday-Save-A-Life Day  
(CPR & Stop the Bleed)
- Friday-EMS Recognition Day



# Interview with Asha Devereaux, MD, MPH

Dr. Asha Devereaux was identified by California Medical Assistance Teams (CAL-MAT) as a noteworthy contributor in EMSA's COVID-19 pandemic response. To highlight her remarkable contributions The Dispatch recently interviewed Dr. Devereaux about her CAL-MAT journey.

*Q: What is your regular profession?*

A: I am a physician in private practice, board-certified in Pulmonary, Critical Care, and Internal Medicine. I additionally am certified in Holistic Medicine.

*Q: How did you hear about CAL-MAT?*

A: I heard about CAL-MAT from Disaster Medical Assistance Team meetings (DMAT).

*Q: Why did you sign up?*

A: I have served 11 years in the US Navy and trained teams for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and high yield Explosives Intensive care unit disaster (CBRNE ICU) response on the United States Naval Ship (USNS) Mercy. Following my transition to private practice, I had volunteered for our local Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and signed up for DMAT. Following my response to Hurricane Katrina and the San Diego fires, I realized how susceptible our state is to disasters (earthquake, drought, heat illness, and fires) and feel that I can contribute in a meaningful way. The lungs are impacted by many of these situations and complex patients usually find themselves evacuating to shelters on oxygen. Now with COVID19, I felt I could be of service to patients in need at the Alternate Care Site (ACS), help train our unit, address clinical questions and support colleagues deployed.

*Q: Where were you deployed?*

A: With CAL-MAT, I have provided training at Los Alamitos, deployed to Camp and Marin for the fires (shelter response), and during COVID19, deployed to the ACS in Imperial County in June and November 2020.



*Q: Are you currently deployed? If yes, please describe your role and duties.*

A: I am not currently deployed; however, I have regular responsibilities supporting the San Diego unit as the Sr. Medical Officer in developing clinical training (such as vaccinations, COVID management, respiratory issues w/fires, oxygen management). I helped bring the Fundamentals of Critical Care Medicine Course to our team, which over 75 people attended. I am currently working on clinical manuals for ACS and Fire Camp with my team-mates and look forward to advancing the work of CAL-MAT.

*Q: What was most memorable about your experience?*

A: Helping people who are scared and feeling ill is my greatest purpose. In austere settings, this is magnified since patients, as well as responders, are in unfamiliar settings. Making order out of chaos during disasters is a challenge which I enjoy facing. The most memorable aspect of any deployment is the camaraderie that develops when we deploy as a team and support each other with a unified purpose in helping others.

*Q: What would you say to others who are interested in signing up?*

A: SIGN UP! Be ready to work hard, keep an open mind, share your expertise, be kind, and know that you will come home feeling rejuvenated by your deployment.





## California State Stroke and STEMI Summits

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This year, EMSA will be conducting the first annual STEMI and Stroke Summits. The Summits will provide an education forum on current trends for optimal care, newest technology, and best practice on both aspects of clinical and system management of care for both ST-Elevated Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) and Stroke patients.

The events will occur across two half-day sessions on June 8-9, 2021. Registration will be free and continuing education credits will be available at no charge.

For [online registration](#) and more information about the event please follow the links:

**Stroke Summit:** [ca-stroke-summit-2021.eventbrite.com](https://ca-stroke-summit-2021.eventbrite.com)

**STEMI Summit:** [ca-stemi-summit-2021.eventbrite.com](https://ca-stemi-summit-2021.eventbrite.com)

If you have any questions about the events, please contact EMSA Specialty Care Systems Specialist, Dr. Farid Nasr at [farid.nasr@emsa.ca.gov](mailto:farid.nasr@emsa.ca.gov).

# Interview with Kate Christensen, MD

Dr. Kate Christensen was identified by California Medical Assistance Teams (CAL-MAT) as a noteworthy contributor in EMSA's COVID-19 pandemic response. To highlight her remarkable contributions The Dispatch recently interviewed Dr. Christensen about her CAL-MAT journey.



*Q: What is your regular profession?*

A: I am a retired internist and hospice physician. I am a volunteer provider at two free clinics run by Rotacare in the Bay Area.

*Q: How did you hear about CAL-MAT?*

A: Like most people, I was isolating at home in the spring of 2020, wishing there was something I could do to help. I signed up on the DHV web site. One afternoon in May I received an email from CAL-MAT asking if I wanted to join and was interested in deploying to a COVID surge site. I answered yes, not sure what either of those were, and received a phone call soon after asking for more information and explaining the mission. A few days later I was at my first Alternate Care Site (ACS) in San Mateo, for a two-week deployment.

*Q: Why did you sign up?*

A: I had seen the television footage of nurses and doctors exhausting themselves caring for COVID patients, and as a primary care physician I felt a great obligation to help. I also liked the idea of intermittent deployments, as opposed to a full-time work commitment. CAL-MAT was the perfect fit for me.

*Q: Where were you deployed?*

A: My first deployment was at the San Mateo ACS, and I returned there later to help close the site. Over the next 8 months I served at ACSs in Portersville (twice), Imperial, and Fairview. I was also sent to fire camps in Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa. At most of these missions I served as the Chief Medical Officer (CMO).

*Q: Are you currently deployed? If yes, please describe your role and duties.*

*A: No, I am not currently deployed. I am currently being a grandma.*

*Q: What was most memorable about your*

*A: My association with CAL-MAT has given me the opportunity to meet a wide range of very interesting and talented people, some of whom have become good friends. I also felt very grateful to have this opportunity to help a very vulnerable population.*

*Q: What would you say to others who are interested in signing up?*

*A: CAL-MAT is a great way to stretch yourself. The work situation is often very fluid with lots of complex problem-solving, and it is exciting to find you can rise to a variety of challenges outside of your normal comfort zone. It is also a wonderful way to have a direct beneficial impact on people affected by disasters. No matter where you are deployed or what the nature of the mission is, you will be making a big difference in some people's lives.*





## Rent Past Due?

Renters and landlords have enough things to worry about. Past due rent shouldn't be one of them.

If you're an income eligible renter who has experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19 and have past due rent, or you're a landlord who has experienced a loss in income because of unpaid rent, you may be eligible to get financial assistance now through the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program.



## Who Can Apply?

**Landlords** who have income-eligible renters experiencing a financial hardship due to COVID-19 with past due rent.

**Renters** who have experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19, have past due rent or utilities, and have a household income that is not more than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

## How Much Rent Relief Will I Get?

**Landlords** can get reimbursed for 80% of past due rent accrued between **April 1, 2020**, and **March 31, 2021**, if they agree to waive the remaining 20% of unpaid rent.

**Eligible renters** whose landlords choose not to participate may still apply on their own and receive 25% of unpaid rent accrued between **April 1, 2020**, and **March 31, 2021** through a direct payment to their landlord. If a landlord refuses direct payment, the 25% can be paid to the renter to pay missed rent to their landlord by June 30, 2021. Paying 25% of past due rent by June 30, 2021 can help keep renters in their homes under the extended eviction protections provided in SB91.

*Eligible renters can also receive help paying future rent, equal to 25% of their monthly amount to help them stay in their homes, and 100% of up to 12 months of unpaid or future utility bills.*

## How do I Apply?

To check eligibility requirements, apply or find a Local Partner Network organization who can assist you further, visit [HousingIsKey.com](https://HousingIsKey.com) or call 833-430-2122, toll free.

[HousingIsKey.com](https://HousingIsKey.com)



## **CA COVID-19 Rent Relief Now Available to Income Eligible Households**

Rent relief is now available to income eligible households who need financial assistance for unpaid rent and utilities through the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program. If you have experienced a financial hardship due to COVID-19, have past due rent or utilities, and have a household income that is not more than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI), you may be eligible to receive help to pay past due or future rent and utilities from the state of California. Landlords and renters can verify eligibility immediately by visiting [HousingIsKey.com](https://HousingIsKey.com), or by calling 833-430-2122, and if eligible, apply now.

### **Program Details**

If you are a landlord and participate in the COVID-19 Rent Relief program, you can get reimbursed for 80% of your eligible renters' unpaid rent accrued between April 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021, if you agree to waive the remaining 20% of their unpaid rent from that same time.

If you are an eligible renter, you can apply on your own and receive 25% of your unpaid rent that was accrued between April 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021, even if your landlord doesn't participate. You can also receive financial assistance to pay future rent, equal to 25% of your monthly amount. This combined assistance can help you stay housed once California's eviction protections expire on June 30, 2021. Additional financial assistance available through the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program includes help paying past due utility payments accrued from April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021, as well as help paying future utility bills, both of which may be paid at 100% of cost but are limited to a total of 12 months.

To check eligibility, review the required application items and apply, visit [HousingIsKey.com](https://HousingIsKey.com). Required information, along with necessary verification items, will be required for applications to be processed. Once an application has been processed, both the landlord and renter will be notified about the application status and next steps.

### **Eligibility and Application Assistance**

Registered Local Partner Network (LPN) organizations are currently available by appointment to answer questions and help determine eligibility. A list of partners and locations is available at [HousingIsKey.com](https://HousingIsKey.com), under community partners/resources, or by calling 833-430-2122.

Visit [HousingIsKey.com](https://HousingIsKey.com) today for more information, to check eligibility or to apply.



CALIFORNIA  
**PARAMEDIC FOUNDATION**

## OpioidLAN and Opioid CE Distribution

The California Paramedic Foundation (CAPF) is kicking-off its California Opioid Prevention by EMS (COPE) Project! This project has two valuable components: the OpioidLAN and the COPE Course.

The COPE Course is a free, online course available on CAPF's open-access learning platform and covers topics such as an update on new synthetic opioids, a discussion on cultural competence and self care, and pragmatic strategies for EMS-driven prevention programs addressing the opioid crisis [caparamedic.org/courses](https://caparamedic.org/courses).

The Opioid Learning and Action Network (OpioidLAN) is a free, monthly, lunch-hour session for EMS leadership from around California to collaborate on EMS-integrated injury and illness prevention programs in the opioid epidemic space. Each OpioidLAN session will kick-off with one or more guest speakers from around California or across the country.

### UPCOMING SESSIONS

May 19, 2021

June 11, 2021

# NATIONAL EMS MEMORIAL BIKE RIDE COMING TO EMSA!



The National EMS Memorial Bike Ride, Inc. honors EMS personnel by organizing and implementing long distance cycling events that memorialize and celebrate the lives of those who serve every day, those who have become sick or injured while performing their duties, and those who have died in the line of duty.

Meet the  
*Muddy Angels* riders  
at the CA Emergency  
Medical Services  
Authority September  
23, 2021, at the  
midpoint of their 400-  
mile ride.



Join the  
riders for a  
brief ceremony,  
Thursday at 8:00 am.  
Show your support and  
greet the riders, as they  
prepare for their ride  
to Vacaville.

## 2019 Route Schedule Information

- Day 1 (Sep 20) - Reno, NV to South Lake Tahoe, CA
- Day 2 (Sep 21) - Circumnavigate Lake Tahoe (S. Lake Tahoe start/end)
- Day 3 (Sep 22) - South Lake Tahoe, CA to Rancho Cordova, CA
- Day 4 (Sep 23) - Rancho Cordova, CA to Vacaville, CA
- Day 5 (Sep 24) - Vacaville, CA to Petaluma, CA
- Day 6 (Sep 25) - Petaluma, CA to San Francisco, CA

For more information, or to register as a rider, please visit  
[www.muddyangels.com](http://www.muddyangels.com)

Emergency Medical Services Authority (event held outside)

10901 Gold Center Drive, #400 Rancho Cordova, CA 95670 (916) 431-3700 - [externalaffairs@emsa.ca.gov](mailto:externalaffairs@emsa.ca.gov)





## April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

The Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) is asking the state's citizens to join them in bringing awareness to the issue of child abuse prevention through many monthlong activities and projects. EMSA has been highlighting the child abuse prevention message on its social media platforms throughout this month. But EMSA has long been a partner in child abuse prevention by overseeing the Childcare Provider Preventive Health Training Program for almost thirty years. The training program requires providers in licensed childcare facilities to take health and safety practices training which includes child abuse prevention training.

According to data gathered by KidsData, an estimated one in four children experience abuse or neglect in the U.S. Child maltreatment can cause serious physical injuries and even death. It also can cause lifelong physical, emotional, and behavioral problems, which can lead to intergenerational impacts. Children who are abused or neglected are more likely to have problems such as anxiety, depression, delinquency, difficulty in school, and early sexual activity. Child maltreatment (along with other adverse childhood experiences) can disrupt brain and physical development, particularly when experienced in early childhood, increasing the risk for numerous health problems in adulthood, including heart disease, cancer, substance abuse, mental illness, and suicidal behavior, among others. While most victims do not repeat the cycle of abuse later in life, they are more likely to enter into unhealthy relationships as teens and adults and to mistreat their own children. Beyond the impact on individuals and families, child abuse has a significant impact on society. The economic cost of nonfatal child maltreatment is estimated at \$428 billion annually in the U.S., based on 2015 data.

# Schedule your COVID-19 vaccine today.

More appointment times are making it easier to get your COVID-19 vaccination.

## Before your vaccination

- Schedule your appointment at [VaccinateALL58.com](https://www.vaccinateall58.com) or by calling (833) 422-4255.
- Find a vaccination site for you and your loved ones.



## Day of vaccination

- Bring a form of documentation with your name that matches the name on your appointment. Acceptable forms include: a driver's license, pay stub or utility bill.
- If your vaccine requires a second dose, ask when it will be scheduled.
- Prepare to wait 15-30 minutes after your shot to make sure you don't have a reaction to the vaccine.
- After your shot make sure to get your vaccination card.



## After getting vaccinated

- If you experience mild side effects, it's a normal reaction to the vaccine. Doctors recommend taking over-the-counter pain relievers like acetaminophen or ibuprofen if you have any discomfort.
- Typically it takes two weeks for your body to build immunity against COVID-19 after your last dose.
- Take a photo of your vaccination card and keep in a safe place.
- **Continue to wear a mask,** wash your hands and practice physical distancing.



Let's get you there.  
Let's get to immunity.

#GetToImmunity #VaccinateALL58 #CaliforniaForAll



Still have questions? Visit [VaccinateALL58.com](https://www.vaccinateall58.com) or call (833) 422-4255.