

# EMSA Dispatch

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## Connecting Communities, Strengthening Partnerships

BY ASHLEY WILLIAMS

In our ever-evolving quest to enhance emergency medical services, EMSA is proud to unveil the EMSA Dispatch, your quarterly insight into our dynamic world. This edition is packed with updates and initiatives showcasing the power of collaboration in advancing our mission to serve our communities.

Stay up-to-date with the latest news, events, and resources from EMSA and our external partners by following us on social media, subscribing to our newsletter, and visiting our website regularly. Together, we're shaping the future of emergency medical services and creating lasting impact in the communities we serve.

## Spotlight on Preparedness: California's Mass Casualty Full Functional Exercise

BY TIM REED

In an unprecedented move to elevate our state's emergency preparedness, EMSA, in collaboration with the California Air National Guard, is proud to announce the Mass Casualty Full Functional Exercise that took place on April 6, 2024. This initiative stands as an immense step in our ongoing commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of all Californians, bringing together an

extensive network of agencies and organizations in a united effort to save lives and enhance public safety.

### *A Unifying Mission for Enhanced Readiness*

Amidst the increase in global and domestic challenges, the imperativeness of preparedness cannot be overstated. The exercise transcends a conventional drill; it symbolizes California's proactive approach towards emergency preparedness and its dedication to protecting its communities from the uncertainties in mass casualty incidents.

The exercise is designed with multifaceted objectives, all aimed at examining and enhancing our joint response to mass casualty situations. The focal points of this exercise include:

- *Strengthening Military Interoperability:* This goal aims to improve the seamless integration of military resources into civilian emergency response operations, ensuring that when the time comes, our combined efforts are both effective and efficient.
- *Boosting Interagency Coordination:* By fostering a spirit of unity and cooperation among various agencies and organizations, we can guarantee a cohesive and unified response to emergencies, thereby maximizing our impact and minimizing response times.
- *Refining Mitigation Strategies:* Through this exercise, we aim to revisit and refine our strategies for mitigating the effects of mass casualty incidents, ensuring that we are always prepared to respond with the most effective measures to protect our communities.

This exercise is a reminder of the importance of readiness, collaboration, and the ongoing enhancement of our response capabilities. It highlights the necessity for preparation not only internally but across the communities we serve.

### **Welcome Aboard: Meet the Members of the EMS Systems Division**

The EMS Systems Division has onboarded new staff throughout the division. With these new staff joining the EMS Systems Division, we found it pertinent to provide details of each staff & their contact information. If there are any questions pertaining to the EMS Systems Division, programs the Systems division oversees or any of its staff members, please feel free to reach out and we would be glad to assist.

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## **What is a POLST Form and the California POLST eRegistry Act?**

The Physician Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) is a medical order signed by both a patient and physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant that specifies the types of medical treatment a patient wishes to receive toward the end of life. POLST is a tool that encourages conversation between providers and patients about their end-of-life treatment options and helps patients make more informed decisions and communicate their wishes. As a result, POLST can prevent unwanted or medically ineffective treatment, reduce patient and family suffering, and help ensure that patient wishes are followed. The POLST form is designed for people who have chronic health conditions or those who are seriously ill. If you feel you need a POLST Form, please reach out to your medical provider who can walk you through the POLST Form and the medical options it provides you. Currently, the California POLST Form is only a paper-based form. This will change with the development of the ePOLST Registry.

The Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) is honored to provide oversight for the California POLST eRegistry Act established on July 27, 2021. The act requires EMSA to establish a statewide electronic POLST registry system that collects patient Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment

(POLST) information and provides electronic access to patients and medical providers.

The ePOLST Registry is a State Information technology (IT) project and requires EMSA to use The California Department of Project Approval Lifecycle (PAL) which is a three-year process used to improve the quality, value, and likelihood of success for information technology (IT) projects undertaken by the State of California.

To assist EMSA with the Project Approval Lifecycle (PAL), which is divided into four stages EMSA has entered into an Interagency Agreement with the CalHHS Office of Technology & Solutions Integration (OTSI) to oversee and manage the project planning, development, and implementation efforts.

OTSI's mission is to procure, manage, and deliver technology systems that support the delivery of health and human services to Californians. The project remains in its procurement phase and the State is currently working on the Request for Proposal. We anticipate the system's availability in 2026. Once the procurement phase ends, the project plans to send regular project status updates to stakeholders.

An ePOLST Registry email box has been set up for stakeholders who may have a question on the ePolst Registry and to request to be a part of stakeholder engagement please send your request to ePOLST Registry Project, CalHHS Office of Technology & Solutions Integration at [POLSTRegistryProject@osi.ca.gov](mailto:POLSTRegistryProject@osi.ca.gov).

## **Connect with EMSA on Social Media: Expand Your Network Today!**

BY ASHLEY WILLIAMS

In our continuous effort to foster a collaborative and engaging community, the EMSA is thrilled to announce our active presence across various social media platforms. This initiative aims to bridge the gap between EMSA, our partners, and the communities we serve, promoting a seamless flow of information, insights, and innovations in emergency medical services.

### *Why Follow Us?*

Our social media channels are more than just outlets for sharing news; they are vibrant communities where ideas flourish, support is readily available, and the pulse of emergency medical services can be felt in real-time. Following EMSA on social media enables you to:

- **Stay Updated:** Get the latest news, updates, and announcements from EMSA, including advancements in emergency medical practices, regulatory changes, and educational resources.
- **Engage with Content:** Participate in discussions, share your insights, and connect with like-minded professionals within the emergency services community.
- **Expand Your Network:** Discover and connect with other emergency medical professionals, fostering collaborations and partnerships that can enhance your operations and outreach.
- **Learn from the Best:** Access a wealth of knowledge through shared experiences, case studies, and best practices from across the globe.

*Where to find us:*

To ensure you don't miss out on any valuable information, here's where you can connect with us:

- *Facebook:* Follow EMSA on Facebook for community stories, event highlights, and experts from the emergency medical field. [Facebook/EMSA](#)
- *X:* Join our Twitter feed for real-time updates, industry news, and engaging discussions. It's a great place to stay informed and interact directly with EMSA. [Twitter.com/CA\\_EMSA](#)
- *LinkedIn:* Our LinkedIn page is the go-to resource for professional connections, detailed articles, and EMSA career opportunities. It's an excellent platform for expanding your professional network within the emergency services community. [LinkedIn/EMSA](#)
- *Instagram:* Experience the visual side of EMSA on Instagram, where we share behind-the-scenes looks at EMS operations, training exercises, and the people who make it all happen. [Instagram/EMSA](#)
- *YouTube:* Subscribe to EMSA's YouTube channel for educational videos, training tutorials, and comprehensive insights into the world of emergency medical services. [YouTube/EMSA](#)

**National EMS Memorial Bike Ride**

Embark on an adventure out west! The registration for the Colorado and West Coast routes are officially wide open. Register at [nemsmb.org](https://nemsmb.org).

## **California Health News Update: EMSA Joins Statewide Data Sharing Initiative**

BY ASHLEY WILLIAMS

EMSA is excited to announce a significant development in California's healthcare landscape: EMSA has officially become part of the California Health and Human Services Agency's Data Exchange Framework (DxF) by signing the inaugural statewide Data Sharing Agreement.

This momentous agreement marks a collaborative effort among more than 1,400 partner organizations statewide, all dedicated to securely sharing information. The DxF is poised to establish a robust and dependable infrastructure for safe data exchange among healthcare providers and supporting entities. By leveraging this framework, our state's leaders can make informed, data-driven decisions in policy-making and management, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness and equity of California's EMS system.

EMSA encourages all our partners to join us in embracing the DxF by signing the Data Sharing Agreement. Data exchange lies at the core of California's mission to empower health and human service providers with the necessary tools to enhance patient outcomes and tackle health disparities. Through the DxF, we aim to prioritize patient care and advocate for historically marginalized communities.

We eagerly anticipate collaborating with our partners to enhance healthcare information exchange, fostering a more interconnected and efficient healthcare system throughout California. EMSA is proud to play a pivotal role in this groundbreaking initiative, marking a significant milestone for healthcare and EMS providers across the state.

Together, let's continue working towards a healthier future for all Californians.

## **Equity and Diversity in EMS**

BY DIRECTOR LIZ BASNETT

As the Director of EMSA, I want to emphasize the importance of equity and diversity within the EMS system, comparing the journey to a precise flight

path. Minor deviations could significantly alter the trajectory, just as small misalignments can impact EMS effectiveness over time. To maintain course, open and honest dialogue among California's EMS partners is crucial.

Central to this vision is the commitment to equity, starting with defining what equity means within EMS and striving for equitable patient outcomes, system accessibility, and workforce diversity. A methodology anchored in data-driven analysis will facilitate statewide progress monitoring.

Data standardization is key, enhancing decision-making, transparency, and community engagement. By expanding data sources to include hospitals and trauma centers, and adopting proactive approaches, EMSA aims to better allocate resources, ensure compliance, and improve care quality. Predictive analytics will further help in foreseeing and addressing potential risks.

Workforce diversity is also paramount. By collecting and analyzing demographic data, EMSA plans to build a workforce that mirrors the communities it serves, amplifying diverse voices and fostering an inclusive environment.

As EMSA's director I invite continuous partner engagement and innovative ideas to bolster these initiatives. Acknowledging the EMS community's readiness for transformative conversations, I reiterate the commitment to moving from reactive to proactive strategies, focusing on patient-centered policies.

I'd like to express my sincere gratitude is expressed to all partners for their dedication to this transformative journey, laying the foundation for a resilient and equitable EMS system that prioritizes excellent patient outcomes.

## **Ensuring Excellence in Childcare: How EMSA Sets the Standards for Pediatric First Aid and Health Training**

BY KIM LEW

EMSA, in consultation with pediatric first aid and preventative health experts, is tasked with establishing minimum standards for training childcare providers in pediatric first aid, CPR, and preventative health practices. EMSA reviews and approves training programs to ensure childcare providers receive current, evidence-based pediatric first aid, injury prevention, and preventative health training. EMSA's preventative health training program coordinator, Aley Gucake, regularly receives and reviews pediatric



healthcare advisements and recommendations from health experts and organizations to assist in overseeing and assessing the required training and instructor qualifications to make sure California childcare providers receive the most effective training. Gucake, for example, recently received United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services Office, information on pediatric meal planning (a required preventative health training topic) regarding meats and meat alternatives for children. The information was posted to the EMSA childcare nutrition information webpage.

### **EMSA Welcomes New CIO Joe Sullivan**

Joe joins EMSA as the new Chief Information Officer (CIO). Joe is bringing nearly 30-years of private sector experience, supporting and managing IT operations and logistics for enterprises of more than 120,000 employees and 40 million customers worldwide. He has 10-years of experience in firefighting, search & rescue, and EMS provider operations - invaluable working knowledge of EMSA's primary mission. Joe has a BA in leadership and organization and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from UC Davis, he also has several advanced certifications in network security, systems engineering, as well as an active Firefighter I and CA EMT Certification.

Joe's experience in IT project management and supervision of IT personnel, coupled with his unique background as an EMS first responder, gives him a unique opportunity to make an immediate impact - not only on our day-to-day operations, but also on the achievement of long-term goals articulated in our 10-year strategic plan.

***Thank you for reading Volume 1, Issue 1 of EMSA Dispatch!***

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