



EMS NEEDS TO BE AT THE SAME EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AS EVERY OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDER IN THE COUNTRY

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The citizens of the United States expect and deserve quality healthcare. From the onset of an acute medical event or a traumatic crisis throughout every phase of medical intervention as well as rehabilitation, each and every patient seeks to have the highest possible standards of care provided by every medical professional interacting with them during their most desperate time of need. Without question, every aspect of healthcare strives to provide the highest quality medical care for each patient encounter.

There is not a patient willing to say they are delighted to have the second best individual or healthcare system offer care to them; and I don't know of any medical practitioner willing to become only the second best.

EMS has failed to achieve the same level of quality assurance when it comes to the educational accreditation requirements afforded to them by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) through the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions (CoAEMSP). By not requiring educational facilities to obtain and maintain national accreditation the profession has failed to accomplish what was clearly articulated in the various nationally recognized agendas (EMS Agenda for the Future and the EMS Education Agenda to name but a few). Our collective failure to strive to establish and enforce a final date to assure that every EMS educational offering is from a national accredited program has resulted in the EMS profession taking significant steps backward. It is of utmost importance that EMS education accreditation of every paramedic institution keeps pace with the other health related professions that have long recognized the benefits of requiring national accreditation being in place for their profession. As you are undoubtedly aware, beginning in 2013, the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) will require that individuals taking the Paramedic exam must have graduated from an educational program accredited by CAAHEP through the CoAEMSP. By 2013 we must be willing and able to achieve the following goal: every paramedic student in the nation MUST have graduated from an institution that is nationally accredited. The CoAEMSP has demonstrated it is positioned to enable the EMS educational system to obtain this vitally important credentialing over the next three years. It is unconscionable to believe we have waited this long to address this vitally important aspect of the education needs of our EMS providers. What's more, we cannot use cost as an excuse for not supporting accreditation when the average cost is just 8.4 cents per contact hour. It is now time for us to make the needed changes and allow EMS to be at the same level educationally as every other health care provider in the country. I am seeking your support on moving the matter to the forefront of tasks we must attend to. I have a very simple request for you at this point – visit the “Becoming Accredited” section of the CoAEMSP website. Then pick up the telephone and contact Dr. George Hatch, Executive Director of CoAEMSP at 817-330-0080 Ext 112 or Bill Goding at Ext 113. I am certain they both will be enthusiastic in sharing our vision for a greater educational tomorrow in the EMS profession.

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