



Staying Current:

AHSEMS:

The following modules have just been released or updated, please visit AHSEMS.com to review at your earliest convenience.

New Video for review:

Dr Demchuck;s stroke information video.

Protocol Updates:

Pain management in obstetrical patients.

SIRS Criteria:

Adult Sepsis

Adult Shock

Adult Anti Pyretic

Alberta College of

Paramedics:

The Alberta College of Paramedics has launched their new redesigned navigation portal, please visit their website to have a look!

collegeofparamedics.org



this issue

- Back to School Safety **P.1**
- A Tribute **P.2**
- Employee Survey Results **P.3**
- Influenza Campaign **P.4**
- Case Study **P.5**
- Recruitment **P.6**

Classes are in.... BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY!!



September is a great time to get involved in the community, feel free to visit your local schools and familiarize yourselves with local Emergency Response Plans and Back to School Safety.

Here are just a few Pictures of the crews in Hinton hosting kindergarten tours, teddy bear clinics, visiting daycares, and women's shelters to show their support.

Great Job Hinton!!





"We're here for Life"

- L**ead by Example
- I**nnovative Thinking
- F**amily Principles
- E**xcellence in Care



A Tribute to all Emergency Responders...

In August Canadians were reminded of the ultimate sacrifice not once but twice. Volunteer firefighter Donald Bamber of Lac Ste Anne County, Ab. suffered a medical emergency while in the line of duty, resulting in Cardiac Arrest. Only 10 days later New Brunswick Ambulance reported that a medevac plane had crashed killing one Flight medic and one Pilot, while injuring the second Pilot and Nurse on board. Flags all across the nation were lowered to half mass and first responders flocked to show their support for their fallen comrades.

It is important to remember that anytime we have a loss of life in the line of duty, left behind are the first responders who were called upon to respond to their colleagues in their time of need. If you or someone you know is having a hard time coping with the stressors of the job please don't hesitate to reach out .

Associated Ambulance Support systems can be accessed by contacting the Operations Manager on call at 780-429-9943 who will assist you in making contact with one of our CISM support members, or if you wish to access your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) directly you are welcome to call the LifeWorks help line at 1-877-207-8833.

Remember....all inquiries remain confidential

Stryker Power Pro XT Stretcher Trial

This past August Associated Ambulance placed 3 Hydraulic stretchers into service on a trial basis to allow our frontline staff the ability to assess the effectiveness of these new devices and to provide feedback on their effect at reducing the risks related to everyday patient lifting.

Rene Iwaszkiewicz from Stryker was on site at each of the stations involved in the trial to orientate, train and assist the staff with any initial questions or concerns that they may have before putting the stretchers into service. Since their implementation, the overall feedback that we have received has been positive.

Moving forward we will continue to assess these devices with the plan to make a final decision on purchase in time for delivery of the three new frontline units currently on order.

A big thank you goes out to the staff in Westlock, Rocky Mountain House and Drayton Valley for their assistance in this process. We will keep everyone posted on the results!!

Fleet Services announces new Online Vehicle Maintenance Form

As part of our ongoing Quality Assurance process enhancements, we have established a new online version of the Vehicle Maintenance Request Form for use when there is an issue with an Associated Ambulance vehicle.

This new form is now available through the EMS Manager system and replaces the previous paper version of the vehicle request form and the weekly vehicle maintenance forms.

The online Vehicle Maintenance Request Form has been put in place as a means of streamlining access to our fleet maintenance processes as well as to assist both the Fleet Services department and the Operations group in making more effective and efficient decisions as they pertain to the safe operations of our entire fleet.

When to use the Online Maintenance Request form:

- Whenever there is any non-urgent concern regarding the continued/safe operation of the vehicle
- When a deficiency is noted during a daily readiness check
- When regularly scheduled maintenance is required
- Any time a maintenance issue is discussed with a Supervisor, Manager or Mechanic and it is deemed to require further action.

When a Maintenance Form is submitted online, an email notification is automatically sent to the Fleet Services Technicians notifying them of a newly submitted issue. A Fleet Services Technician will make contact with the Station Supervisor on the next business day following submission of the request.



It's your Move

safe client handling



"It's your Move" ...coming to a station near you

September 24, 25, 26 we will be hosting our first training session with our orientation class!! Keep an eye out for training opportunities in your area over the next few months.

Employee Engagement Survey Results

The first of what is anticipated to be annual Employee Engagement Surveys has concluded and the results are now in.

Before expanding on the details of what the survey revealed and recommended, I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the entire Leadership Team, to thank each and every employee who took the time and made the effort to provide us with the incredible amount of heartfelt suggestions, recommendations and feedback.

A total of 139 responses were received which represents just shy of 41% of all employees. This is statistically significant because most online surveys of this type measure success at the 30 – 33% response level. Your responses indicate a level of engagement that many other organizations would wish to have and we are very enthused with the results.

The responses we received are not a surprise. Clearly, there are things we are doing very well and there are things we are not. As an organization we have grown quickly and, as with all quick growth, mistakes have been made along the way. But.....we have also had some incredible successes!!!

With any organization this size, not everyone will be completely satisfied with their current situation and, as a Leadership Team, we should not and cannot become complacent in the thought that there are no improvements that can be made. Mistakes will happen, change will not always be popular but, in order to improve where we are and where we are going, we must be willing to accept that change, even unpopular change, is a healthy necessity. Our commitment, over the next few weeks and months, is to give serious consideration to the feedback that has been provided, improve quickly on the things we can control and make changes where necessary. As Barak Obama said recently, **“we are the change we have been waiting for.”**

Now for the results:

The Distribution of respondents in Question #1:

Respondent Type	Responses	% of Total
EMR/EMT	87	63.97%
Paramedic	41	30.15%
Administration	7	5.15%
Other	1	0.74%

The Scoring for Question #2 was as follows:

“Given the opportunity, how likely are you to recommend Associated Ambulance as a great place to work?”

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	# of Responses
Responses	4	5	5	5	11	14	7	33	28	14	13	139
												68.35% Scored 6 or higher
												63.31% Scored 7 or higher
												39.57% Scored 8 or higher
												19.42% Scored 9 or higher

Responses to Questions 3 and 4 are summarized below:

Q3 - What is your primary reason for the score you just gave?

Q4 - What is the most important improvement you would like Associated Ambulance to implement?

Aside from the two hot button issues of wages and hours of work, there were six clearly indefinable themes in Questions 3 and 4. Responses identified concerns and made recommendations on the following:

- The need for improved communication between frontline staff and the management teams
- Improved consistency in the application of company policies, rules and expectations
- Increased engagement at the station level by the Operations Manager group
- More flexibility in scheduling, particularly for full time staff
- Improvements in the new employee orientation and training process
- Increased recognition and acknowledgement for the work that is being done by frontline staff – specifically, more focused efforts to deal with fatigue management issues

Clearly, we have some work to do. The Leadership Team will be taking the next few weeks to further analyze these results and responses. The information gathered through this survey, in addition to the work currently underway through our Strategic Planning initiative will chart the path forward for the entire organization. In the interim, Senior Leadership members have begun to identify a number of changes that could be considered “quick wins”, some of which you may have already seen and we will continue to reach out to the frontlines for feedback as we move forward.

Thank you again to everyone who participated in this survey. Your commitment and passion for EMS and Associated Ambulance is exceptional. I would like to leave everyone with a final thought. In the words of Albert Einstein, **“the world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.”**

Its Influenza Season Again



This year's campaign is called "GET IT BEFORE YOU NEED IT"

Influenza viruses come to Alberta every year. The good news is that the influenza vaccine usually arrives first.

Alberta's influenza immunization program will begin mid October and we are beginning our strategy now to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to become immunized. According to the latest information from Alberta health services, the Influenza vaccine will be offered to all Albertans (six months of age and older), free of charge.

Our goal this year will be to see every employee take advantage of the opportunity to protect themselves and their families against the Influenza virus.

Get immunized before influenza arrives and gets you!!!!

Additional information on the dates and times of immunization clinics will be made available as they become available. Watch for news of our Influenza Immunization Contest. You could have a chance to win one of two iPad Mini tablets!!!

The six (6) most important precautions everyone can take to reduce or prevent the spread of influenza are:

- Get immunized against Influenza
- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough. The flu virus can travel through the air when a person coughs or sneezes.
- Wash your hands frequently. This includes ensuring that you wash your hands when you arrive at work and just before you leave for home.
- Don't share personal items with others (dishes, eating utensils, toothbrushes, etc.)
- Clean and disinfect work surfaces frequently, especially if space is shared with others.
- Avoid close contact with others who are experiencing Influenza like symptoms and ensure that YOU wear your PPE when indicated.

Medics corner... Case study #1

by: John Ross, EMT-P

It is the last shift of a very busy tour and we have spent the evening bouncing around the City providing coverage but doing no calls. There are two and a half hours left in the shift when Dispatch calls and asks for a favour.

We have a choice: we can flex to the City center or to the far south end. If we go south, we may get off a little later but we won't have to deal with the bar crowd. And the south is really depleted. We decide to go south.

We get to the outlying station and settle in to wait out the shift. Thirty minutes later, we get a call. I say to my partner; "This won't be so bad, adult patient, known diabetic, at home with his wife. All we have to do is work a little magic with the D50, make sure the patient is stable and we can leave him at home. Won't even require a trip to the Hospital."

When we arrive on scene, a Fire Crew is waiting for us. The patient is on the second floor of a walk up apartment building. Just to be on the safe side, we keep the Fire Crew with us. Probably the best decision we made all night because nothing went right after that.

The patient's wife greets us at the door. Our patient is a very fit, 120 kg rugby player. His wife says that they went out for dinner earlier in the evening then came home to watch a movie and relax. During the movie, he said he was tired and was going to bed. When he got up from the couch, he took two steps and collapsed.

The patient is supine on the floor, unresponsive, mildly diaphoretic with snoring respirations. He is IDDM, does not drink and does not take any recreational drugs. His only medication is insulin and he manages his diabetes very well. The only thing different tonight, according to the patient's wife, was that while they were watching the movie, he seemed to be staring off into space and not saying much.

We apply oxygen, start a line with an 18 gauge and get a BGL. He is at 2.2 mmol/l. We break out the D50 and start to administer it. In pretty much every hypoglycemic episode, D50 will bring the patient back to consciousness. I have never experienced what happened next.

Suddenly, the patient's eyes snap open, he has a glassy eyed stare, he starts screaming at the top of his lungs and becomes violently combative. It takes four Firefighters to hold him down. So glad we kept them on scene.

During the struggle, the IV gets pulled out. My partner starts another one while I check his BGL. Still at 2.2 and we give another 25 grams of D50. No change, the patient is still screaming and fighting. Now we have to sedate this guy. We administer 5 mg of versed, get no effect and after a few more minutes we administer another 5 mg. Still no change. We are on the phone with OLMC to get permission to give another 10 mg. The Doctor says; "I can hardly hear you. What is all that screaming in the background?" "That's our patient." Doc says; "Okay, yeah, give him the 10 mg, all at once."

After the versed is administered, the patient calms down and stops screaming but he is still not responding to us. With the help of the Fire Crew, we get him to the truck and start transporting. Good thing the Hospital is only five minutes away. As we roll into the Ambulance bay, the patient wakes up and starts screaming and fighting again. The Doctor meets us at the door and we take the patient into a trauma bay. He is still combative and now he is trying to make an escape, screaming all the while. Security restrains him and the Doctor has to administer 40 mg of propofol to calm the patient enough to do an emergency CT.

So what happened? It should have been a simple hypoglycemic call.

After conferring with the Doctor, he was sure it was a case of neuroglycopenia brought about by an adaptive syndrome known as hypoglycemia unawareness.

Patients who have lived with diabetes for most of their lives have an awareness of when their blood sugar is low. Over time, this awareness becomes less sensitive and many patients will believe they feel fine when, in fact, their BGL is quite low. Adrenaline and glucagon, normally triggered by the falling glucose, fail to be as effective as counter regulatory mechanisms as they once were. This can occur anytime from late childhood to late adult ages. With the loss of the counter regulatory effect, symptoms of hypoglycemia, such as sweating, tremors and rapid heart rate are absent.

Now we are looking at a patient who has adapted to low glucose levels. The problem is that the brain has not adapted and still requires a specific amount of glucose to function properly.

Neuroglycopenia can produce a variety of symptoms including rage, personality change, delirium, "glassy look" and seizures. In our patient, when we administered the D50, we woke up a delirious, hallucinating person, all due to the lack of adequate glucose to the brain.

Take good note of the information from family or bystanders. The description of the patient's behavior prior to becoming unresponsive may give a clue to some other underlying issues.

Never treat a hypoglycemic episode as routine. New evidence is emerging about diabetic patients now that their longevity is increasing. The reaction you expect from your treatment may not be the one that you get.

And, naturally, we did not get off on time. Like I said, no good deed goes unpunished.



In the next issue:

Modified work program

Are you injured? We are working on some innovative ways to keep you active while you recover.

Car Seat Safety.

What is the best (and safest) way to transport the little ones?

Do you have a suggestion for upcoming issues of the Gazette? We want to hear from you.

Please email your suggestions to nfisher@associatedambulance.com

Recruitment:

This month Associated Ambulance is hosting our largest New Employee Orientation class ever!! We will be adding **24 new members** to our team in various positions throughout the company. Keep an eye out for new faces everywhere!

If you know of someone who is interested in a career with Associated Ambulance, resumes can be sent to:

Recruitment@associatedambulance.com



The kids were thrilled to see who showed up at the matinee of the *Planes: Fire and Rescue* movie!!

For a chance to win 4 movie Passes email the name of the rusty old fire truck in the Movie *Planes: Fire and Rescue* to: nfisher@associatedambulance.com

Deadline for entries is **October 31, 2014.**

All submissions will be entered in a draw for the movie passes.

Associated Ambulance Gazette Issue 02 Sept 2014

Associated Ambulance proudly supports the

[Paramedic Pay It Forward Award](#)

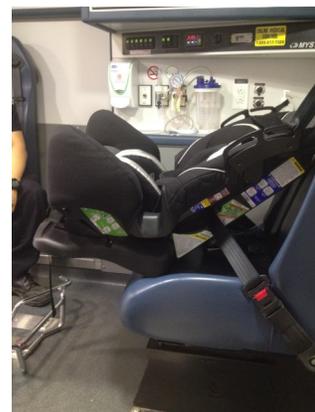


Do you have a question for us??

Maybe there is other staff members wondering the same thing....

Please feel free to email the group and we just might post your question in our next edition.

Or simply send us a pic and we may post that as well!!



Associated Ambulance

Head Office:

4814 42 Ave

Mayerthorpe, AB.

Toll Free: 1(888) 877-3577

Edmonton Office:

16110 112 Ave

Edmonton, AB.

(780) 429-6771

Congratulations to **Jewel Reiersen** (Drayton Valley Station) for coming up with the winning entry in the "name that newsletter" contest.

We will be visiting the Drayton Valley station very soon to present Jewel with her \$100.00 gift certificate to the Keg Steakhouse.

Way to go Jewel!!!!