



EMERGENCY MEDICAL  
SERVICES PROGRAM

# County of Santa Cruz

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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## MINUTES EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMISSION

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>February 16, 2022</b>	<b>TIME:</b>	<b>8:30 AM</b>
<b>PLACE:</b>	Virtual Meeting Used for Social Distancing		

### ITEM:

1. Call to Order/Establish Quorum, Review/Correct Agenda, Minutes– [8:30 am] –Approved August and December minutes.
2. Written Correspondence Report – None
3. Oral Communications – None
4. COVID-19 Update – Ghilarducci – the Omicron surge appears to be on downturn. More surges should be expected in the future with variants and immunity waning. There is still a significant number of people in Santa Cruz County who are unvaccinated. Most of the current cases are concentrated in school age children but this population is more surveilled. Home testing makes case numbers less accurate. Wastewater data shows that case numbers are dropping. The mask mandate for some settings has expired. Therapeutics for COVID are more available.
  - a. Hospital Update – Hospitals have been running full census, COVID positive patients starting to decline, they received many crisis nursed from the state which helped with their staffing shortages. Diversion report draft pending review, will bring next meeting.
  - b. <https://www.santacruzhealth.org/HSAHome/HSADivisions/PublicHealth/CommunityDiseaseControl/CoronavirusHome.aspx>
5. Watsonville Community Hospital – Brenda and Dave– funding continues to be the biggest need for the purchase of the hospital. The deadline for a sale decision has been extended to the end of March, and the court decision selecting who will purchase the hospital will be made on Feb. 22. The “district hospital” status may increase the possibility of better reimbursement for Medi-Cal patients. Funding for the hospital purchase may ultimately need to come from the entire county – perhaps a property tax as the stability of the healthcare system in the county depends on two hospitals. Individuals wishing to donate to the funding effort can contact the Pajaro Valley Community Health Trust. Monterey County is considering helping the funding effort. The Board of Supervisors will be appointing a board for the new healthcare district. Interested individuals should contact the Board of Supervisors. A board member with EMS experience would be valuable for the healthcare district.
6. EMS Administrator Report – Compliance is good. AMR is requesting its first rate increase since the 2019 contract began. AMR’s request for a 5.2% increase was approved. It should be noted that a 5% rate increase does not result in a 5% increase in revenue to

AMR due to set rates for a number of payors. AMR also replaced the fleet's LP15 monitors. Fire is working towards this as well. Brad Cramer is looking at increasing system efficiencies.

7. EMCC Commissioner Openings – Brenda will be meeting with the Law Chiefs to discuss the opening for a representative to the EMCC. The AMR appointment is in process.
8. Prehospital Advisory Committee – The Red Lights and Siren (RLS) committee is looking at trying to reduce code 3 calls to patients that do not need an emergency response. The committee is looking at trauma calls and noted that the trauma system continues to work well. Brad is reviewing cardiac data generated by the “Code Stat” feature of the LP15 monitors. Chief Bingham asked for feedback on his agency’s use of the Lucas device for cardiac care. Boulder Creek Fire has been using it for a year or two. Chief Bingham noted that fire must wait for the device to be relinquished before going back in service.
9. Behavioral Health Update and Impact on EDs –Marc Yellin - Continuing challenges due to staffing at the CSP, requirement for law to stay at the ED with a patient on a 5150.
10. ET3 – Alex Aste – Alternate destination project - now developing protocols for medics to use. AMR will be meeting with Doctors on Duty to work out details.
11. Innovator – Alex Aste – Regarding overdoses - the project is developing a system to alert people when there are drugs circulating in the community with a high potential for overdose.
12. Radio System Infrastructure – Chief Gray is the lead for Fire on this project. EMS and Fire should be ready to address the Board of Supervisors when the radio infrastructure consultant’s report is released.
13. Items for March Agenda – Next meeting March 16, 2022, Annual Diversion Report, Air Ambulance Status at Watsonville Base, EMCC meeting days/time, Lucas device.
14. Adjournment –

Commissioners in attendance:

Kent Benedict, MD	Celia Barry
Eric Conrad, RN	Jason Nee
Arnold Leff, MD	Michael McGannon, MD
Marc Yellin, MD	

Commissioners excused:

Rich Rubin

Amy Grooters, RN  
Marcus Kwan, MD  
Dan Quinto

County Staff:

Brenda Brenner  
Shelley Huxtable  
David Ghilarducci  
Claudia Garza

Guests:

Brad Cramer  
Michael Baulch  
Jeff Horner  
Paul Angelo  
Alex Aste – AMR Quality Care Coordinator

Kent Cramer – LifeFlight  
Michael Baulch  
Mark Bingham  
Michael Beaton