

Health Systems Partner to Promote EMS Innovations



Best practices in emergency medical care will be identified and implemented across the US as part of a new project supported by a \$225,000 grant. "Promoting Innovations in Emergency Medical Services" is a collaboration between Mount Sinai Health System in New York and the University of California (UC) San Diego Health System.

Goals of the project include the creation of a National Framework Document which can be used as a pathway toward the optimal use of emergency medical services (EMS) services for population health management. Stakeholder input will be collected around the country, through solicitation of feedback via telephone, online and face-to-face encounters.

"Community Paramedicine"

The role of EMS in population health management is evolving along with the healthcare landscape in the US. The mobility of emergency medical services allows them to serve people in hard-to-reach or neglected rural and urban neighbourhoods, delivering so-called "community paramedicine" to these populations. The increased access to care made possible by EMS, for patients with chronic conditions as well as acute issues, makes it a valuable area for innovation and investment.

"Our hope is to engage with a diverse group of stakeholders to create a pathway for the widespread implementation of best practices and delivery system reforms in emergency medical services across the U.S.," said one of the two project co-directors, Kevin Munjal, MD. He is an Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at Mt. Sinai's Icahn School of Medicine.

Dr. Munjal directs the project with James Dunford, MD, the City of San Diego's EMS Medical Director and Professor Emeritus of the UC San Diego Health System. Dr. Dunford said, "Tomorrow's innovations will likely improve domestic preparedness, increase patient access to care, decrease healthcare costs and improve community resilience."

Integrating Innovation and Infrastructure

Of course, innovation is always tempered by existing infrastructure, regulations and attitudes. Regulatory oversight and the maintenance of a statewide systems approach will ensure that public safety is not compromised. The testing of new EMS delivery models with both local and state health systems necessitates state office involvement in the development of financial, legal and regulatory frameworks.

The project's funding comes in the form of a grant from the United States National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the US Department of Homeland Security's Office of Health Affairs, and the US Department of Health and Human Services. Regional stakeholders will meet in New York and San Diego in May 2015, and a steering committee will convene in Washington, DC in September 2015.

Source: www.mountsinai.org

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