



## LEADERSHIP GUIDE OFFERS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT TOOLS FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEMS

Since the enactment of the National Highway Safety Act of 1966, and the formal beginning of emergency medical services (EMS), the common goal of EMS providers has been to reduce unnecessary death and disability from sudden illness or serious injury. While this goal remains constant, present-day health care needs require that EMS systems provide the highest quality service with limited resources. To help with these efforts, *A Leadership Guide to Quality Improvement for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Systems* is available now.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Maternal & Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration worked with researchers at the University of Maryland to develop a model guide for EMS quality improvement. An expert writing panel comprised of national experts in the fields of EMS quality improvement, system management, evaluation, data collection, and manual writing wrote the new guide. *A Leadership Guide for Quality Improvement to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Systems* was reviewed by a review team representing national EMS and related organizations.

The *Leadership Guide* is a template for EMS managers who want to establish and maintain a program for continuously monitoring and improving the quality of patient care and support services in all parts of the EMS system. It encourages EMS leaders to integrate continuous quality improvement (QI) practices as essential parts of normal EMS routines.

Local, regional, and statewide EMS organizations will find suggestions for specific activities regardless of where they might be in the QI process.

Those who are just beginning the process will want to build the potential for success by developing an awareness and appreciation that QI is a worthwhile endeavor. The next stage is to expand workforce capabilities in QI practices and techniques until finally, an organization can fully integrate the strategic quality planning process and quality improvement actions into the daily EMS operation.

The *Leadership Guide* uses the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Program as a model to guide EMS QI efforts and to evaluate progress. The Baldrige program identifies seven key action categories.

- ◆ **Leadership ...** Senior leaders and managers lead by example. They integrate quality improvement throughout the entire organization, in the strategic planning process, and promote quality values in work practices.
- ◆ **Information and Analysis ...** quality improvement is based on management by fact. Information (data) and analysis are critical to measure success.
- ◆ **Strategic Quality Planning ...** involves three activities: 1) developing long and short term objectives for performance and outcome standards; 2) identifying ways to achieve those objectives; and 3) measuring the effectiveness in achieving quality standards.
- ◆ **Human Resource Development and Management ...** involves developing the full potential of the EMS workforce to work together to achieve new levels of service and value.



- ◆ **EMS Process Management ...** means improving work activities and work flow across functional or departmental boundaries.
- ◆ **EMS System Results ...** assessing the organization's success at achieving quality improvement.
- ◆ **Satisfaction of Patients and Other Stakeholders ...** involves ensuring ongoing satisfaction with EMS services by both internal and external customers.

The *Leadership Guide* includes a glossary of *QI* terms, a review of relevant *QI* literature, a set of basic *QI* tools, and a series of evaluative questions and examples for EMS systems.

#### HOW TO ORDER

For a copy of the *Leadership Guide to Quality Improvement for EMS Systems*, write to Emergency Medical Services Division, NHTSA, NTS-14, 400 Seventh Street S.W., Washington, D.C, 20590, or send a fax to (202) 366-7721.

The *Leadership Guide* can be downloaded from NHTSA's Homepage at:  
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/ems>

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