



**BUCKS COUNTY
EMERGENCY
HEALTH
SERVICES**

**BUCKS COUNTY
EMERGENCY HEALTH
SERVICES
ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR (2022/2023)**

Authority

In accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Health Rules and Regulations 28 Pa. Code § 1021.103, The regional council governing body shall submit an annual report to the Department.

Reporting requirements of Appendix A – Work Statement. Comprehensive Annual Report as related to, Coordinate and Improve the delivery of EMS in the Council’s region.

Report are due within 30 calendar days of the end of each state fiscal year (June 30th)

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REGIONAL SUMMARY:

(Provide a summary of the council including regional background / demographic and other information unique to individual region / county)

Bucks County is in southeastern Pennsylvania, a contiguous county to the City of Philadelphia, Montgomery County, Lehigh County, and Northampton County. The Delaware River runs the entire length of Bucks County border to New Jersey.

Bucks County land area: 622 square miles with a population of 646,538 (2020 Census) Approximately 1069 residents per square mile. There are eight rural municipalities with a total land mass of 150 square miles (24% of county land mass) and a Total Population:24,559 (4% of County population) *Source: Center for Rural Pennsylvania*

The Bucks County Commissioners are the Pennsylvania Department of Health grantees that serve as the regional Emergency Medical Services (EMS) council for Bucks County. The Commissioners delegate that responsibility to Bucks County Emergency Health Services which is part of the Emergency Services Division. The Bucks County Emergency Services Division also includes Emergency Management, Fire Marshal's Office, Department of Communication (PSAP), Law Enforcement Training, Haz Mat, and Special Operations.

Bucks County Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) is a single-county regional council that is a local government unit. We are required to have an advisory body that provides BCEHS with advice and recommendation on matters related to EMS. Bucks County Emergency Health Services Advisory Council fills this responsibility. The members are EMS stakeholders appointed by the county commissioners for a three-year term.

BCEHS is responsible for 52 licensed EMS agencies. Sixteen agencies provide 9-1-1 service, and Twenty-six agencies support our ambulance with quick response service. There are ten private ambulance transport services. There are 1,882 EMS providers who live in or are associated with BCEHS. Bucks County has six hospitals within its border, all are credentialed Medical Command Facility. All of our hospitals are Primary Stroke Centers and one Thrombectomy Capable center. There are two Level II Trauma Centers within our borders and four other Trauma centers just outside our borders.

We are also one of three credentialed BLS Training Institutes in Bucks County. Our relationship with Bucks County Community College allows us to offer EMS training at a reduced cost to the students. We also provide CPR and First Aid training to all county employees who are required to have it for their position.

The Bucks County's regional EMS Council manages the county's First Responder CISM Team. A BCEHS staff member is the CISM Team Coordinator. When we receive the CISM Team requests, the coordinator will organize the deployment.

1. Board of Directors \ Health Council Officers

President: Richard Goldsmith

Vice President: Robert Race

Treasurer: N/A

Secretary: Kim Dicken

(Please list all other members below)

NAME

1	Rich Goldsmith, Pres. – Ambulance Transport Agency
2	Scott Molle/Bob Walters – Emergency 911 Communications
3	Bob Race – Public at Large
4	Chief Ken Coluzzi – Fraternal Order of Police
5	Kathleen Fox – Nursing Home Association
6	Vacant – ER Nurses
7	Vacant Paramedic/Nurse
8	Mark Scholl – Squad Chief’s Assoc.
9	Raymond George, Public at Large
10	Tom Topley Public at Large
11	Earl Bruck- Public at Large

Due to being a government based regional council our County Commissioners are the responsible party of the grant contract with BEMS, we then have our required Health Advisory Council.

The Bucks County Commissioners for the 2022 county fiscal year:

Robert Harvie Jr., Chair
Diane M. Ellis-Marseglia, LCSW, Vice-Chair
Gene DiGirolamo

Our Health Council membership is comprised of 11 members who serve three-year terms. All members are appointed by the County Commissioners who shall consider the following areas for membership:

Bucks County EMS Chief's Association
Emergency Department Staff (Physician/Nurses)
Hospital Administrators
Non-Municipal EMS Agencies
EMS Practitioners- Emergency Medical Responder, Emergency Medical Technician, Paramedics/Health Professional
Chiefs and Firefighters Association
Law Enforcement Association/FOP Lodge 53
American Heart Association
American Red Cross
Bucks County and Municipal Emergency Management Officials
Bucks County Emergency 911 Communications
Nursing Home Association/Long Term Care
Chambers of Commerce
Public-at-Large

All members are volunteers and receive no compensation or reimbursement. We are scheduled to meet 4 times per year.

2. Regional EMS Council Staff:

Director

Larry Loose

<u>STAFF POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>
<u>EMS Quality Assurance Coordinator</u>	<u>Jason Diefenderfer</u>
<u>EHS Field Representative</u>	<u>Gentilina Miller</u>
<u>Emergency Health Training Coordinator</u>	<u>Michele Rymdeika</u>
<u>Administrative Assistant/5</u>	<u>Kimberly Dicken</u>
<u>Recruitment and Retention Specialist</u>	<u>Ian Liberatore</u>

3. Regional Medical Director(s)

	<u>NAME</u>
1	<u>Jefferson Health, Dr. Gerald Wydro, MD</u>

4. **Financial Statement of income and expenses:**

Categories	Budget Totals:	Expended
I. Personnel Services	\$173,734.29	\$173,701.32
II. Consultant Services/Subcontract Services	\$59,812.28	\$59,294.24
III. Patient Services	\$0.00	\$0.00
IV. Supplies/Equipment	\$4,500.00	\$4,395.58
V. Travel	\$8,050.00	\$7,340.66
VI. Other Costs	\$40,416.05	\$33,815.44
TOTALS	\$286,512.62	\$272,132.85

NOTE: THE AMOUNTS SHOWN ABOVE ARE PRELIMINARY END OF YEAR TOTALS AND NOT FINAL AUDIT AMOUNT
 Also, the above amounts do not show budget adjustments, as the budget adjustments are not reflected in our workbooks. This is the reason for under/overs in above line items for expenses.

5. **Special Project Funding:**

Projects as determined by the Department to be appropriate and necessary for the implementation of a comprehensive statewide EMS system. The amounts listed below are included in the categorical totals shown above.

Regional Bariatric Regional Project (Provider Equipment Funds)	Amount: \$27,427.82
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We continue to support our regional bariatric supports with our provider equipment funds within the grant. There are two supported bariatric support units within the region. The program aims to provide safe and dignified transport for bariatric patients who need acute medical care. It also improves provider safety by giving them the necessary tools and resources to move this population safely.

Provided bariatric transfer device and a backup device.

Regional Medication Vending Machine Maintenance (sustainment)	Amount: \$ 5,551.00
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Project Narrative:

This is our latest evolution of prehospital medication exchange. Several years ago, we used “Provider Equipment” funds to purchase medication vending machines for each of our county receiving facilities. The hospitals provide the medications and maintain the par of the product in the machines. The regional EMS office staff administers the program i.e., liaison between hospitals and agencies, adding credentialed practitioners, providing reports, etc. The project allows the hospitals to account for medications dispensed to EMS agencies. We estimate the program saves the EMS system over \$35,000/year based on machine transactions. The funds cover the cost of the machine software.

Regional Data Collection System – Data preservation	Amount: \$850.00
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Project Narrative:

In previous years the grant covers the expenses of our regional data collection system. After the 2020/2021 FRCO the grant could not support the full expense of the system. Bucks County has absorbed this expense for our EMS agencies. In 2017 our data collection vendor advised us they were changing their data (PCRs) storage process including a fee for data storage. We advised our agencies to archive their data on a regular basis. We are funding the data storage until 2024

6. Regional Activities/ Organizational Management

	Date
Date of the current Comprehensive Regional EMS System Plan	12-16 Last review 05- 19
Number of Board of Director Meetings \ Health Council meetings	3
Public Education Stop-the- Bleed Events	0
Public Education CPR Events/County CPR Training	40
Number of Legislative Inquiries or Contacts	Over 10
Technical Assistance Request (local entities and elected officials)	Over 50

Regional Activities/ Organizational Management Project Narrative:

We routinely work with our municipalities and EMS agencies. We provide our municipalities with an annual EMS report that includes the Number of EMS requests, EMS response times (90th Percentile), and the Top ten EMS dispatch types. We also provide more granular data when requested. Continue to advocate for local EMS funding support from our municipal government.

Facilitating EMS workforce improvement through recruitment and retention initiatives.

7. Continuous Quality Improvement

	Quantity
Number of Clinical Cases Reviewed by Regional QI Committee	8
Number of mandatory regional reviews	2086
Accidents Involving Ambulances / EMS Personnel Reported in the Region	9
Number of Times the Regional QI Committee Met	5

Continuous Quality Improvement Narrative:

Longitudinal reviews on cases of the value selected by the QA coordinator. The cases are then presented to the QI committee and regional MAC. The regional quality assurance coordinator performs the chart review as a third party and identifies the region's strengths and opportunities to improve. The coordinator presents data to the committee and collectively they try to identify a root cause analysis and create a process improvement plan.

The Regional Quality Assurance Coordinator reviews all the following incidents:

Cardiac Arrests, Advance Airway, Sedation Assisted Intubations, Ketamine Admin (Agitated Behavior) Antibiotic Pilot Administrations.

We are also monitoring the integration of IALS into our system.

Stats from the regional review are reported to the regional MAC, regional QI committee, and EMS agency leadership. We also are strong supporters of the CARES registry and encourage our EMS agencies and hospitals to enter their data into the registry.

Our Regional QI committee and Regional MAC meet jointly. Routinely are the same participants for both committees.

8. Medical Direction

	Quantity
Regional Medical Advisory Committee meetings	5
Accredited Level I Trauma Centers	0
Accredited Level II Trauma Centers	2
Accredited Level III Trauma Centers	0
Accredited Level IV Trauma Centers	1
Accredited primary Stroke Centers	5
Comprehensive Stroke Centers	0
Thrombectomy Capable Stroke Centers	1
Acute Stroke-Ready Hospitals	0

Medical Direction Narrative:

Due to our geographic location, we have access to specialty centers just outside our regional borders. This includes Three level II trauma centers (including one in NJ), Two Level I Trauma centers, Two Comprehensive Stroke Centers (including one in NJ) Three Burns Centers. Regional MAC has reviewed our communication center's "Emergency Medical Dispatch" cards and provided input.

Integration Intermediate Advance Life Support (IALS)- Regional Medical Director working with our communications center developing IALS call types. We have identified challenges integrating this level of service into areas with heavy ALS penetration.

9. Systems Operations

	Quantity
Spot inspections conducted – Continuing Education Sponsors	0
Spot inspections conducted – Education Institutes	2
Spot inspections conducted – Medical Command Facilities	10
Number of Safety Inspections Conducted	4
Number of Vehicles Inspected During Safety Inspection	31
Photo & Signatures Added to Certification Cards	0
BLS Psychomotor Examinations Conducted	11
Number of BLS Psychomotor Exam Candidates Tested.	248
ALS Psychomotor Examinations Conducted	0
Number of ALS Psychomotor Exam Candidates Tested	0
Certification Class Visits Conducted	16
Number of EMS Agency Re-Inspections Conducted	30
Number of Authorized Inquiry Reports Filed with the Bureau	5

Systems Operations Narrative:

Transitioning back to pre-pandemic operations and orienting new staff was more challenging than expected. Inter-operating learning to interoperation with partners who were working hybrid work schedules.

We have added a recruitment and retention specialist to our staff to assist with promoting EMS as a career option. Facilitate introductions between individuals interested in EMS and our EMS agencies. We have also increased the EMS presence at career fairs.

10. Emergency Preparedness Activities

	Quantity
Coalition / Task Force Meetings Attended <small>(only EMSOF funded staff attendance)</small>	5/7
Tabletop Exercises Attended / Conducted	0
Full Scale / Functional Exercises Attended / Conducted	1/1/0
Special Event Plans Submitted	0
Responses / Deployments	1
Strike Team Agencies	5

Emergency Preparedness Narrative:

Continue to maintain regional assets for readiness. Routinely interoperating with county emergency management. We received a temporary vehicle for our regional physician response team to carry specialized physician equipment and special medical operations equipment.

When it comes to STRIKE Teams in Bucks County, we do it differently. We have designated agencies that will provide the drivers and trucks, then other agencies will send providers to staff them. We probably could say we have 10 teams; however, we like to be conservative.

11. Board of Director \ Health Council Meetings

DATE:	TIME	LOCATION
9-28-22	1000	Bucks County EHS office
11-30-21	1000	Bucks County EHS office
2-22-23	1000	Bucks County EHS office
5-24-23	1000	Bucks County EHS office

12. Medical Advisory Committee Meeting

DATE:	TIME	LOCATION
08-10-2022	1000	State MAC Webinar
9-14-22	1000	Bucks County Public Safety Training Center
11-09-22	1000	State MAC Webinar
11-16-22	1000	Bucks County Public Safety Training Center / Zoom
01-11-23	1000	State MAC Webinar
01-18-23	1000	Bucks County Public Safety Training Center / Zoom
03-23-23	1000	Bucks County Public Safety Training Center / Zoom
04-12-23	1000	State MAC Webinar
05-18-2023	1000	Bucks County Public Safety Training Center / Zoom

13. Quality Improvement Committee Meeting

DATE:	TIME	LOCATION
9-14-22	0930	Bucks County Public Safety Training Center / Zoom
11-16-22	0930	Bucks County Public Safety Training Center / Zoom
01-18-23	0930	Bucks County Public Safety Training Center / Zoom
06-22-23	0930	Bucks County Public Safety Training Center / Zoom

14. Regional Accomplishments:

Narrative:

Regional Data Collection System

- The regional council continues to host and manage the regional data collection system at no cost to the EMS agencies or the state grant. The system is fully funded by Bucks County.

EMS Naloxone Leave Behind

- Our EMS Naloxone Leave Behind project is continuing. Our ongoing collaboration with Bucks County Drug and Alcohol Commission makes this program a success. We have nine EMS agencies and sixteen fire companies participating in the program. Our agencies have left behind Naloxone 72 times at EMS encounters during this grant period.

We are the liaison between the commission and EMS and fire agencies. The regional EMS office staff distributes naloxone from the commission to fire and EMS responders. We provide scrubbed opioid-related EMS data to the commission and community leaders.

EMS Recruitment and Retention Efforts

- Regional staff sits on the Occupational Advisory Committee for one of the technical high school's Emergency Services program. The students in this program take the EMT certification class. Successful certification makes these students ready for employment upon graduation. Creates an opportunity for recruiting new EMS practitioners into traditional EMS work. Recently engaged with a second technical high school interested in an EMT program.
- Recognizing our current EMS practitioners during EMS week distributed water bottles to all of the EMS agencies for their providers
- Participated in ten career fairs promoting EMS.

EMS System

- Our quality assurance coordinator and regional medical director are working on specific call types for Intermediate Advance Life Units without impacting the delivery of care.
- Our regional bariatric support units continue to be a successful project that started over a decade ago. The goal of the project was to prevent injury to EMS practitioners and their patients. Also, to transport this patient population in a safe and dignified manner. During this contract period, the Regional Bariatric Units had 299 requests and 173 transports.
- We continue to support the prehospital Mobile Stroke Unit project. The unit is a partnership between Bensalem EMS and Jefferson Health Northeast. These types of units have been appearing in EMS systems throughout the country. Every system is trying to see how these specialized vehicles can enhance prehospital stroke care. During this contract period, the Mobile Stroke Unit had 486 dispatches and 169 transports.
- We continue to lead and administer the “First Responder CISM Team”. Our office coordinates CISM Team training and activations. The following is our CISM activities for this contract year:
 - Training -1
 - CISM Inquires – 5
 - Deployments -8
- Rural EMS Education- Provided the following EMS training in our rural community:
 - 2 EMT Classes
 - 1 EMSVO Continuing Education Class

Administration

- Continue to advocate for better-sustaining funding for EMS at the local municipal level. This has encouraged some municipalities to evaluate their funding to their local EMS agency.
- Liaison between Bucks County Communication Center, EMS Agencies, and municipalities. EMS response order change requests start in the regional office. A response model is created to assure the closest EMS resource is recommended. The affected municipality is advised of the change request and our recommendations. We note any discrepancies between the change request and our recommendations. The municipality approves or disapproves the change order.
- American Rescue Plan Funds have started to our EMS agencies for salary support, Tuition reimbursement for EMS certification, recruitment, and retention of current practitioners. To date, almost \$1.5 million has been paid to our EMS agencies.