



**BUCKS COUNTY
EMERGENCY
HEALTH
SERVICES**

**BUCKS COUNTY
EMERGENCY HEALTH
SERVICES
ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR (2021/2022)**

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 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 EMS Advisory Council fills this responsibility. The members are EMS stakeholders appointed by the county commissioners for a three-year term.

BCEHS is responsible for 49 licensed EMS agencies. Seventeen agencies provide 9-1-1 service, and Twenty-four agencies support our ambulance with quick response service. There are eight private ambulance transport services. There are 1,882 EMS providers who live in or are associated with BCEHS. Bucks County has five hospitals within its border and all five are credentialed as a 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 center just outside our borders.

We are also one of two 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 student. 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 they receive the CISM Team requests they are responsible for organizing the deployment.

1. Board of Directors \ Health Council Officers

President: Richard Goldsmith

Vice President: Robert Race

Treasurer: None

Secretary: Deb Myatt/Kim Dicken

(Please list all other members below)

NAME

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Rich Goldsmith, Pres. – Ambulance Transport Agency |
| 2 | Scott Molle – 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 | Edward Crohe, III – Paramedic/Nurse |
| 8 | Mark Scholl – Squad Chief’s Assoc. |
| 9 | Deb Myatt – Emergency Medical Technician |
| 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 appointees are recommended 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>CPR Education Coordinator</u>	<u>Deb Myatt (Retired 11/2021)</u>

3. Regional Medical Director(s)

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

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

	Budget Totals:	Expended
Personnel Services	\$138,820.79	\$138,820.79
Consultant Services	\$20,075.00	\$11,408.26
Subcontracted Services	\$38,279.30	\$38,253.30
Patient Services	\$0.00	\$0.00
Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00
Supplies	\$6,772.73	\$3,246.73
Travel	\$11,550.00	\$3,833.64
Other Costs	\$43,939.01	\$33,815.44
TOTALS	\$259,436.83	\$229,378.16

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: \$33,000.00
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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.

Regional Medication Vending Machine Maintenance (sustainment)	Amount: \$ 6,000.00
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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-COVID
Public Education CPR Events	0-COVID
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 by recruitment and retention initiatives.

7. Continuous Quality Improvement

	Quantity
Number of Clinical Cases Reviewed by Regional QI Committee	14
Accidents Involving Ambulances / EMS Personnel Reported in the Region	13
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 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 entry of their data into the registry.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, our Regional QI committee and Regional MAC have met jointly.

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 (includes one in NJ), Two Level I Trauma centers, Two Comprehensive Stroke Centers (includes one in NJ) Three Burns Centers. Regional MAC has reviewed our communication center's "Emergency Medical Dispatch" cards and provided input.

During a spike of COVID-19 cases in December 2021, the Regional Medical Director in collaboration with Regional MAC and Bucks County Emergency Management issued a moratorium on EMS diversion. The impact was reviewed at 14 days, 30 days, and 60 days and compared to pre-moratorium data. No impact was identified. Receiving facilities received the same EMS volume regardless of whether they were requesting "divert".

9. Systems Operations

	Quantity
Spot inspections conducted – EMS Agencies-	0
Spot inspections conducted – EMS Vehicles	0
Spot inspections conducted – Continuing Education Sponsors	0
Spot inspections conducted – Education Institutes	1
Spot inspections conducted – Medical Command Facilities	3

Number of Safety Inspections Conducted	0
Number of Vehicles Inspected During Safety Inspection	0
Photo & Signatures Added to Certification Cards	0
BLS Psychomotor Examinations Conducted	8
Number of BLS Psychomotor Exam Candidates Tested.	152
ALS Psychomotor Examinations Conducted	1
Number of ALS Psychomotor Exam Candidates Tested	6
Certification Class Visits Conducted	15
Number of EMS Agency Re-Inspections Conducted	
Number of Authorized Inquiry Reports Filed with the Bureau	3

Systems Operations Narrative:

Every effort has been made to fulfill these obligations to the best of our abilities and do it safely. COVID-19 has derailed many of our normal routines during the first two quarters of the contract. As moved into the mid-3rd quarter things began to improve and transition back to pre-pandemic activities. Creating updated processes as we moved forward and training new staff.

10. Emergency Preparedness Activities

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

Emergency Preparedness Narrative:

COVID-19 continued to complicate these planning activities. Throughout the pandemic, we have had the opportunity to exercise some of our plans. We identified some strengths and weaknesses in our plans and made appropriate corrections. Transitioning from the old coalition to the new one continues to be challenging. COVID 19 exacerbated the challenges.

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
9-22-21	1000	Bucks County EHS office
11-24-21	1000	Bucks County EHS office
2-23-22	1000	Bucks County EHS office
5-25-22	1000	Bucks County EHS office-Canceled

12. Medical Advisory Committee Meeting

DATE:	TIME	LOCATION
8-11-21	1000	State MAC Webinar
9-8-21	1000	Bucks County Public Safety Training Center
11-10-21	1000	State MAC Webinar
11-17-21	1000	Bucks County EHS office / Zoom
01-19-22	1000	State MAC Webinar
01-26-22	1000	Bucks County EHS office / Zoom
03-9-22	1000	Bucks County EHS office / Zoom
04-20-22	1000	State MAC Webinar
06-22-22	1000	Bucks County EHS office / Zoom

13. Quality Improvement Committee Meeting

DATE:	TIME	LOCATION
9-8-21	0900	Bucks County Public Safety Training Center
11-17-21	0900	Bucks County EHS office / Zoom
01-26-22	1000	Bucks County EHS office / Zoom with Medical Advisory Committee
06-22-22	1000	Bucks County EHS office / Zoom with Medical Advisory Committee

14. Regional Accomplishments:

Narrative:

COVID-19 Response

- Assisted Bucks County EMA in the planning and distribution of home COVID Test kits

EMS Naloxone Leave Behind

- Our EMS Naloxone Leave Behind project is continuing. We have had more agencies join our mission because they saw the success the other agencies were having utilizing this free service. We can continue this project because of our partnership with Bucks County Drug and Alcohol Commission. We have ten EMS agencies participating in the program. Our agencies have left behind Naloxone seventy times at EMS encounters during this grant period.

Our office continues to work with Bucks County Drug and Alcohol Commission to fight the opioid crisis. 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 schools Emergency Services class. 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.
- Develop a relationship with Bucks County Workforce and Economic Development to assist with EMS recruiting efforts. They have introduced EMS to Careers Ready Bucks and Pa Career links.

Bucks County Workforce and Economic Development provided over \$32,000 in grant funds to assist with EMS training. The funds covered some of the following expenses instructor fees, medical equipment for class (stethoscope, BP cuff), books, and cognitive test prep apps. Some of the funds covered tuition for qualifying students.

- Recognizing our current EMS practitioners not just as practitioners, but as individuals. We started sending birthday cards to our providers who not only live in our region but the ones who live outside our region and practice at an agency in Bucks County. We also gave our providers who are affiliated with an EMS agency challenge coins during EMS week.
- In the last quarter of this contract the county approved changing the part-time CPR coordinator position to a full-time EMS Training and Recruitment Specialist.

EMS System

- Our Quality Improvement Coordinator and Regional Medical director embarked on a new case review process. Longitudinal Review- EMS cases are selected by QI Coordinator the cases are then reviewed in four segments: Dispatch, Response, EMS care, Hospital care, and disposition. The longitudinal quality assurance template allows for enhanced engagement of the EMS system from the 911 Dispatch center to final patient disposition at the hospital providing a rare window into the EMS care paradigm for all EMS stakeholders.
- Our bariatric support units continue to be a successful project 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 277 requests and 164 transports.
 - Physician Response Team Activation- Requested to assist an EMS agency and bariatric support unit with a severely acute bariatric patient who needed extrication from his apartment. Amazing to see regional supported assets come together to help this patient and enhance the prehospital care on scene.
- We continue to support the prehospital Mobile Stroke Unit pilot 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 362 dispatches and 119 transports.
- We continue to lead and administer the “First Responder CISM Team”. Our office coordinates CISM Team training and activations. We have had 8 deployments during this contract year. There is a concern about the increase in need, but the silver lining is providers are asking for help.
- Rural EMS Education- Provided the following EMS training in our rural community:
 - 1 EMR Class
 - 2 EMT Classes
 - 1 Prehospital Trauma Life Support Class
 - 1 EMS Instructor Class

Administration

- Develop a relationship with the leadership of Bucks County Association of Township Officials. Promoting increased funding for EMS at the local municipal level. This has encouraged some municipalities to evaluate their funding to their local EMS agency.
- Bucks County committed almost \$6 million of the American Rescue Plan Act funds to EMS. \$5.5 million is going directly to EMS agencies for salary support, Tuition reimbursement for EMS certification, recruitment, and retention of current practitioners. The balance is to support EMS training and regional EMS support units.