



# Buxton Fire-Rescue



EMS Quality Improvement Program

**Implementation Date: August 2013**

**Update: July 2018**

**Update: October 14, 2020**

## BUXTON FIRE-RESCUE EMS Quality Improvement Program

Buxton Fire-Rescue is a combination paid/on-call department delivering fire, emergency medical services (EMS), and specialized rescue services to the Town of Buxton and its mutual and automatic aid partners. The department operates from three stations. Each of the two ambulances are Licensed to provide basic emergency medical care and are permitted and equipped to provide Paramedic medical care.

The department is staffed 24hrs a day with a minimum of two employees. Ideally one of these emergency responders is trained at least at the entry level firefighter and paramedic license level and the other is trained at least at the entry level firefighter and basic EMT license level or above, most are certified and/or qualified with more specialized training (e.g. PHTLS).

Buxton Fire-Rescue has developed this plan to articulate the process that will be used to monitor and improve upon the quality of pre-hospital patient care, of all patients utilizing Buxton Fire-Rescue's EMS service.

### **Mission Statement**

Buxton Fire-Rescue is dedicated to providing quality pre-hospital emergency medical care to the residents and visitors of Buxton. Our highly trained providers of advanced and basic life support strive to provide the most effective and compassionate care to every person they encounter by working collaboratively with our local hospitals and regional and state regulators to maintain the highest level of training, evaluation and operational readiness.

### **Authority**

Buxton Fire-Rescue (BFR) is the primary licensed provider of Emergency Medical Services within the Town of Buxton and provides emergency medical response to its mutual and automatic aid partners within the southern Maine Region.

The following program has been created to satisfy requirements of the licensing authority Maine Emergency Medical Services (Maine EMS) to create and formally maintain a written quality assurance/quality improvement (QA/QI) program. This program must evaluate pre-hospital care rendered to users of Buxton Fire-Rescue's EMS system.

The information reviewed during QA/QI is often protected health information (PHI). Members of Buxton Fire-Rescue's QA/QI Committee and members of the Regional QA/QI Program are allowed by Section 164.512(d) of Maine EMS Law to review

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information mission critical to completing local or regional QA/QI requirements. The law “permits covered entities to disclose PHI to a health oversight agency for certain functions including quality assurance/improvement – and the Maine EMS Protocols require all EMS providers to participate in the Regional and State QA/QI programs”.

### **QA/QI Committee**

The Buxton Fire-Rescue EMS Division has identified the need for a complete and thorough quality assurance and quality improvement system. The system is built understanding that not one person can complete QA/QI of all emergency reports completed by a service over any course of time. Buxton Fire-Rescue has identified a need for the use of a local QA/QI Committee made up of the following members:

- Chief of Department – responsibility may be delegated
- Deputy Chief; EMS Division – (Chairperson)
- EMS Division Captain – Paramedic
- Private – Advanced EMT,
- Private – Basic, Advanced EMT, Paramedic,
- Service Medical Director

The name of the committee will be the *QA/QI Committee*; and will be further referred to as the committee. The committee will have responsibility at the local level to review patient care reports (PCR) completed during or after treatment within Buxton Fire-Rescue’s EMS system.

### **Confidentiality of Proceedings**

All proceedings, documents, and discussions of the committee are confidential pursuant to Maine EMS law and rules/laws regulating PHI including but not limited to HIPPA rules of patient confidentiality.

Data collected specific to personnel within the Buxton Fire-Rescue Department, shall only be exchanged between the provider and the committee. PHI or PCR’s may be accessed by the provider, or the committee; as well as the regional or state QA/QI committee or representative(s) as outlined in EMS law and/or local rules/policies.

All committee members or personnel reviewing/receiving PHI or PCR information must sign a confidentiality statement prior to viewing the information. State/Regional QA/QI representatives need not complete local confidentiality sign off’s as they have already been completed at the State/Regional level within the EMS System.

### **Why QA/QI**

The Buxton Fire-Rescue QA/QI program will monitor, review, evaluate, and subsequently improve the delivery of pre-hospital care within Buxton Fire-Rescue The

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plan is designed to create a consistent approach to facilitate attainment of the key EMS quality objectives based on input from providers and customers. These objectives include:

- Assuring the level of patient care is consistent with policies, protocols and accepted standards of care
- Evaluation and improvement of system-wide performance
- Assignment of responsibility for monitoring and evaluating activities
- Identification of important aspects of out-of-hospital care
- Collection, analysis and dissemination of data from dispatch to discharge
- Communication of relevant quality improvement information system-wide
- Promotion of appropriate utilization of EMS resources and services
- Cultivate standardization of the quality improvement processes

### **Identified QA/QI review**

This document defines areas of focus for the committee to review as it relates to the entirety of the Buxton Fire-Rescue EMS system. The areas are the following:

- Personnel
- Equipment and Supplies
- Documentation
- Clinical Care and Patient Outcome
- Skills Maintenance, Competency and provider education
- Transportation to the medical facility
- Local receiving healthcare facilities
- State/Regional QA/QI indicators

The committee may utilize feedback from tools such as customer satisfaction surveys. This feedback may help identify strengths and weaknesses of the Buxton Fire-Rescue EMS system, resulting in changes based on evidence rather than hunches or “gut feelings.”

The committee will utilize data gathered by PCR review to formulate local training schedules and/or programs. A successful training program will utilize and benefit from an effective QA/QI program in many ways. Procedure performance indicators can be designed and measured at regular intervals (ie: intubation).

The QA/QI program may measure frequency of procedures and then base EMS training needs on the skills performed infrequently.

### **Process**

The QA/QI process will provide critical feedback and performance data based on standards within the Buxton Fire-Rescue EMS system. Components of identified QA/QI

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process will include the following parts:

- Identify issue(s)
- Measure data to validate and quantify the issue(s)
- Analyze the data and symptoms of the issue(s) to determine the root cause
- Develop and implement a plan of action through education or policy/process revision
- Measure and monitor the results providing feedback
- Continuous monitoring of the implemented education program ensuring positive service outcome

### **EMS Provider Feedback**

The committee is responsible for receiving and giving feedback to the department's EMS providers. Feedback should be both positive and "needs improvement" feedback to the provider. If after reviewing a PCR, the committee feels further review of the PCR is needed, the Regional QA/QI program will be requested to complete the further review.

The committee will utilize the mail system within the State of Maine MEFIRS program to deliver messages regarding PCR review. This system will be utilized to keep all run information confidential and under the security of an EMS providers license number and password to the online reporting system. The MEFIRS is the system in which hospitals, Regional QA/QI program and the department's billing service access online run reports, for certain PHI and billing information utilization.

The MEFIRS system automatically notifies the providers through electronic mail and system notification of a reviewed PCR, for their immediate review. The provider shall review comments from the committee within 14 days of receipt.

PCR review will be completed at least once every month starting in August 2013. The meeting of the committee will be scheduled as needed and may not be required to complete the QA/QI process. Members of the committee may use online methods to view PCR's for subsequent review.

### **QI Activities**

QI activities are comprehensive in their scope and encompass many strategies. They utilize a number of approaches and models of problem solving and analysis. These activities, while distinct, are inter-related and address clinical and system issues from three perspectives:

- **Prospective:** Working proactively to mitigate issues before they occur.
- **Concurrent:** Assessing issues and addressing them as they happen.
- **Retrospective:** Examining the data we have collected to provide additional insight into the efficacy, effectiveness and efficiency of the Buxton Fire-Rescue

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EMS system.

QI activities may include but are not limited to the following:

- **Provider Recognition** – the QI program will regularly recognize the efforts made by providers, to promote high quality patient care.
- **Data Collection and Analysis** - The collection of data allows the committee to identify frequency, trends, improvements, declines and other areas that are actionable.
- **Customer Satisfaction** - Surveying customers is similar to being graded on performance.
- **Patient Care Report (PCR) Reviews** - PCRs are a valuable source of information of the quality of patient care delivery and data trends.
- **Skill Maintenance** - QI analysis can identify skills or procedures are deficient or not performed on a frequent basis. These skills should receive performance review and testing.
- **Continuing Education (CE)** – covers regulatory and mandated training as well as educational needs as a result of QA/QI findings
- **Protocol and Procedure Review** - Regular timely review of treatment protocols is imperative. Review is important to update medical procedures and apply new rules and regulations that may affect patient care.
- **Generating Activity Reports** - Activity reports are summaries of various measurable events that can be based on the Buxton Fire-Rescue EMS system. These reports can be used to establish trends, consistencies and rates of proficiency. These reports can help to establish training needs or identify the need for system changes.
- **Benchmarking** - comparison of a system's performance statistics against the national, state, regional or locally established performance levels.
- **EMS Event Review Process** - Issues or concerns can come from a variety of sources and may be clinical, operational or both. Buxton Fire-Rescue events are to be reviewed and the characteristics of the events measured and analyzed for improvement of the Buxton Fire-Rescue EMS system. If a provider or department member(s) observes what appears to be inadequate/poor patient care practices, or an area that can be improved upon they should first address the provider. If further intervention is needed they should contact an officer of the Buxton Fire-Rescue EMS Division for further follow up.

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- **Equipment/Technology Evaluation** -The committee plays an important role in creating processes to objectively evaluate and analyze new gear, equipment and technology.

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE/IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE  
CONFIDENTIALITY**

As a member of the Buxton Fire-Rescue Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Committee involved in the evaluation and improvement of the quality of care rendered to patients within the emergency medical services system, I recognize that confidentiality is vital to the free and candid discussion necessary to effectively conduct quality improvement activities and is required by Maine State EMS Law.

Therefore, I shall respect and maintain the confidentiality of all discussions, deliberations, records and other information generated in connection with these activities and make no disclosures of such information except to persons authorized to receive it.

It is expected that the confidentiality of all the Buxton Fire-Rescue Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement information will be maintained by all committee members.

I understand that all affected persons and agencies are entitled to undertake such action as is deemed appropriate to ensure that this confidentiality is maintained, including action necessitated by any breach or threatened breach thereof.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title/Agency

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date