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Utah – Measure Professional Resuscitation Using Defibrillator Voice Recording

Working with Government Officials to Actively Promote Use of Audio Recording Devices within Utah EMS Agencies

BRIEF BACKGROUND

Legislation was passed by the Utah Legislature (HB0056, 2018) allowing EMS recordings to be protected and non-discoverable to any Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA) requests. This statute allows recordings to be used for training and performance improvement in EMS care for critically ill or injured patients across the state. Audio recording devices include any device or piece of equipment designed or intended for resuscitating an individual or for treating an individual with a life-threatening condition.

Prior to the passing of the legislation, EMS recordings on a medical scene were not an option for review of patient care and training. The primary source for performance improvement data was based on the narrative found in the PCR, which at times lacked objective views and additional information to help improve future medical care of patients.

STEPS TAKEN

For a successful program to function at the highest level, quality performance data is critical. The program's goal was to provide the state's EMS agencies with audio of actual medical emergency scenes to offer non-punitive feedback to the crew involved. The recordings were designed to be utilized with all other feedback devices and data collected from the scene. This allowed the Medical Training Division of the agency, along with the Medical Director, to recreate the scene and identify instances of superior patient care, as well as areas that need improvement.

CHALLENGES

The initial challenge was getting buy-in from the Utah Legislature by demonstrating how the lack of audio data was hindering improvement efforts. Another obstacle was obtaining video recording. Since police body camera footage is currently not protected as non-discoverable, this data source could not be pursued. The third challenge was funding; agencies with old equipment need funds to make necessary upgrades for greater recording capabilities.

RESULTS

Assessing the full results of the quality improvement effort will take years, as the program is still in its early stages. Many departments are just beginning to take advantage of the new legislation.

OUTLOOK

Utah Resuscitation Academies continue to teach the principles of HP-CPR to key members of agencies throughout the state. The program is focused on giving each agency techniques and tools that can help improve cardiac arrest survival. A new component of this training explains the recent legislation and the training opportunities it affords. For medical professionals across Utah borders, project stakeholders also help assist interested states to develop similar legislation.

CONTACT

Brandon Howard: Brandon.howard@wvct.gov

Chris Stratford: Chris.Stratford@health.utah.edu



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