

THE ALABAMA OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



EMS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

From Mobile to Huntsville and Everywhere In-Between

Volume 17, Issue 2 – July - September 2024

EMS EDUCATION, RESPONSIBILITY & STANDARDS.

William Elwin Crawford, MD, NRP, FACEP
EMS Medical Director, State of Alabama

As I sit here and contemplate the ever-changing education environment in EMS and medicine in general, I am reminded of days gone by when I was a young EMS educator at the University of Alabama. A lot has changed over the last thirty-five years. The technology has changed, the educational delivery methods have changed, the attitudes of both the students and educators have changed. The list of changes is too exhaustive to list in the entirety here.



One thing that has not changed though is the responsibility of both the student and the educator to make sure the end-student is well educated, competent and as much as possible comfortable to enter the arena of EMS. It should be every educator's desire to see a student succeed despite their level of expertise entering a class. A failed student is a direct reflection of the educator or instructor. Did the educator practice a skill with a student until the student could not get it wrong? It shouldn't be practice until the student gets it right. ***It is practice until they can't get it wrong.***

In times of reflection on EMS education, I can't help but think about David Garmon. David was the consummate EMS educator who made it his life's work to educate thousands of EMS professionals. His demeanor made it easy to learn from him, and his dedication to seeing students succeed was unmatched. David was well-aware that the failed student was a direct reflection of himself. He would always go the extra mile to give a student the tools to succeed. David had a great understanding of EMS education but an even greater understanding that an educator or instructor did not go home at quitting time and forget about his or her students. David understood that students needed a *"let's see what we can do to help you"* rather than a *"let's move on, you may not belong here"* attitude. He was one of the best at getting students to the next level. He also was a strong advocate of standards and he understood that standards must always be present in EMS education.

In closing, we should never lower our standards of education BUT we should strive to have the passion that David Garmon had to help students meet those standards.

Elwin Crawford, MD, FACEP

FIVE POINTS MASS SHOOTING

BIRMINGHAM, JEFFERSON COUNTY

September 21, 2024; Incident Call Out APPRX 11:00 PM

The Alabama Office of EMS would like to take this opportunity to commend the efforts of Birmingham Fire & Rescue Service as well as other EMS members for their response to and management of the Five Points Mass Shooting on Saturday evening, September 21, 2024.

The shooting reportedly killed at least 4 people and injured 17 others. The victims were injured outside and in the vicinity of the Hush Hookah and Cigar Bar at 2012 Magnolia Avenue in the city's Five Points South, a long-time entertainment area. News sources cite the incident as the result of a murder for hire where the perpetrators did not discriminate targets and used a semi-automatic pistol that had been altered to fire in fully automatic mode. It is estimated from collected shell casings that greater than 100 shots were fired in the incident. It is thought that the firearm was altered by use of a "Glock switch" which can render a previously standard weapon into a fully automatic capable weapon like the Glock Model 18. A Facebook post by Birmingham's WBRC 6 News on May 17, 2022, reported that semi-automatic pistols such as the Glock Model 17 equipped with a "Glock switch" can sustain a rate of fire of up to 1,200 rounds per minute. If this was used, the approximately 100 rounds fired on scene could have occurred in as little as a few seconds. Fully automatic handguns are also notorious for being extremely inaccurate, which may be the reason for the wide field of fire and large numbers of casualties.



A Facebook post by Birmingham Fire & Rescue Service reported that the response to the incident involved 15 ALS Rescue Units, 2 BLS Units, 8 Engine Companies, 1 Squad Company, 3 Battalion Chiefs, 1 EMS Supervisor, 1 Assistant Chief, 1 Fire Chief, 1 Fire Investigator and 1 Safety Officer. In total 63 fire personnel were involved in the incident. This large number does not consider the number of law enforcement personnel, emergency dispatch personnel, TCC dispatch personnel and the physicians, nurses, technicians, and other hospital personnel involved. The Facebook post reminded the reader that even with this huge, sudden burden on the EMS System, that equipment had to be cleaned and restocked and the System had to be readied for subsequent emergencies.

The Alabama Office of EMS cannot begin to express the accolades deserved by the personnel involved in the treatment, transport, care, investigation and management of the mortality and morbidity caused by this senseless crime against the innocent citizens of Birmingham. While once considered one of the nation's most dangerous cities, recent studies show that Birmingham's violent crime rate has fallen behind other large cities like Memphis, Tennessee; Detroit, Michigan; and Little Rock, Arkansas. EMS and law enforcement personnel in Alabama's "Magic City" have worked diligently over the years and decades to improve health and safety within a rapidly growing urban sprawl. Birmingham has similar issues to any area of large population. We salute those professionals who strive every day in that chaotic environment to make a difference for Alabama's citizens and visitors.

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR:
EMS Conference Orange Beach
Jamie Gray, BS, AAS, NRP, TP-C
State EMS Director

The yearly Alabama EMS Conference has long been a tradition among our state's EMS providers. It has existed in some form since the mid-1980's. The two primary conferences in the area over the years were in Mobile, with Southwest Alabama EMS and in Orange Beach/Gulf Shores with Southeast Alabama EMS. Other conferences that have importance was the leadership conferences held in more recent years by John Blue in Oxford, Alabama. A conference that is ongoing is the Trauma Symposium held by the Gulf EMS Region and the University of South Alabama Trauma and Burn Services. That conference is scheduled to be held in March 2025 at the Golden Nugget Hotel and Casino in Biloxi, Mississippi.



The Alabama EMS Regions had held continuing education programs since their inception. A need for EMS Regions and personnel from around the state to network was recognized and the first EMS "beach conference" was held in 1985 and primarily organized and sponsored by Southeast Alabama EMS Region. The conference was primarily held in late May or early June so that room rates were lower, and weather afforded a good beach experience. Most EMS Regions participated and had a presence at the conference, and it quickly became a tradition among EMS providers throughout the state of Alabama to attend every year. The activities were centered at the Quality Inn in Gulf Shores, which continued until the facility was destroyed by Hurricane Ivan in 2004. Southeast Alabama continued to sponsor their conference for more than twenty-five years, finally ceasing due to budget concerns around 2010.

Southwest Alabama EMS Region (SWAEMS) also held a yearly conference throughout the same time period in Mobile. SWAEMS' conference typically was held in early-to-mid December and was the "last chance to get CEU's" for many throughout the state when licensure periods ended on December 31st every year. The conference began in the early 1980's and was typically held in the riverfront area and in the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center once it was ready in 1993. After moving to the Convention Center, it soon became a tradition to have nightly activities at Fort Conde nearby where music was available with a DJ and a huge buffet was included which was served to the participants by the lecturers themselves. The buffet was known to include homemade jambalaya made by Mobile Fire Rescue Department's Assistant Chief Billy Pappas, who was known as one of the best cooks in the area for decades as well as one of the original fire department paramedics. One of the other cherished traditions, usually involving Chief Pappas, was firing the cannon at Fort Conde. The firing of the cannon was often random and unexpected but very revered by conference goers.

Both conferences typically included renown speakers. A favorite of both conferences was Steve Murphy and his wife Judy who retired from fire and EMS services in the northwest US, and who now lives in Orange Beach, Alabama (due to his many visits to speak there) and who still speaks at EMS conferences throughout the nation. Many people who have heard Murphy speak will quote things that he said in his presentations, sometimes decades later. Dr. John Campbell, the founder of Basic Trauma Life Support (now International Trauma Life Support) was also a frequent speaker and went on to serve as Alabama's State EMS Medical

Director for many years. Baxter Larmon, Ph.D., MICP, then a professor of emergency medicine and Director of UCLA's Center for Prehospital Care often frequented both conferences discussing the innovative and progressive developments in EMS being driven by EMS research. Dr. Larmon is now a professor emeritus from UCLA. Nobody who ever heard Ken Bouvier, former EMS Chief of Monsanto Fire Department in New Orleans, Louisiana, ever left one of his presentations without experiencing cramps from laughing at his comedic but effective addresses regarding the judicious practice and application of EMS techniques and the strange and humorous occurrences surrounding our jobs.

Although both conferences fell by the wayside over the years due to budget constraints and other factors, recently a resurgence of the concept has been occurring with the Alabama EMS Conference, Inc. The Alabama EMS Conference, Inc was established with the Alabama Ambulance Association and Alabama EMS Association to create one conference and is an 501(3)-organization established in 2017. With the involvement of the Alabama Office of EMS the organization provides the highest quality instruction, skills practice, social events, and vendor exposure and offers Continuing Education Unit credit for both EMS and nursing participants.

Every year the Orange Beach EMS Conference continues to grow, including attendance, vendors, classes, and activities. The 2024 Conference is projected to be the biggest and best occurring to date and includes over sixty different activities and classes to choose from. The activities include a 5K Walk/Run, On-Site IBSC (International Board of Specialty Certification) Testing and a Casino Night!

The current Conference is designed to promote the best in education, camaraderie, influence, product innovation, exposure to new ideas, and health and wellness that we have to offer. As I have often said, the role of professional (or volunteer) EMS provider, emergency nursing personnel, emergency physician and ancillary providers is much more than a job. It is a calling. A calling to serve our fellow human beings. We all share the stresses of care provision, and no matter our role we have that in common. By learning and playing together we can form the network of communication and support we need to best serve ourselves as we prepare ourselves to serve others.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Conference, this year and in the future.

2024 Alabama EMS Conference
November 11, 2024 7:00 AM – November 15, 2024 5:00 PM
The Orange Beach Event Center Orange Beach, AL

PROVIDER SERVICES UPDATE

Christopher Hutto, MBA, NRP
Provider Services Coordinator
Acting EMS Education Coordinator

Provider services:

The annual service license renewal period is April 1 through June 30. The vast majority of you were timely in renewing your licenses this year. We are grateful to you for your efforts to make it as seamless a process as possible. As a gesture of mutual effort, we are working with our developers to make the applications pre-filled. It is our hope that by next April all you will need to do is log onto the online application and merely make corrections. Web management will be removed from this renewal application. If you need to update who in your service has web management access, please fill out the web management form on our website and send it to us. This may be done via email or snail mail. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact me or Ms. Kem Thomas at emsproviderservices@adph.state.al.us if you have any questions or concerns about service licensure. We will be more than happy to assist however we can.

Education:

Over the summer, Kimberly Coley, former Education Coordinator for the OEMS, accepted a job offer she couldn't refuse. We wish her well and hope for a smooth transition into her new position. National Registry recertification and license renewals will be here before you know it. Don't wait until the last minute to get your con-ed! To ensure the con-ed you're getting is approved look for an approval number from one of our regional EMS offices or the Alabama OEMS. CAPCE (Commission on Accreditation for Prehospital Continuing Education) approved courses are also acceptable. More information about CAPCE can be found on their website: <https://www.capce.org/> Make sure any con-ed course is legitimate before you spend your time or money on it. If you are unsure, check approval numbers with the region office or OEMS and look for the CAPCE logo on any website. Please don't hesitate to contact me at emseducation@adph.state.al.us if you have any education related questions or concerns.



The Alabama Office of EMS regrets to announce the passing of an EMS icon in our state. Patti Brown, Paramedic and Educator at Haynes Ambulance of Alabama for over forty years passed away in Huntsville, Alabama on July 31, 2024. Patti began her EMS journey in Tallassee, Alabama in the mid-1970's and migrated to Montgomery in 1980 where she worked for City Ambulance and then Haynes Ambulance. She was employed by Montgomery Fire Department as a dispatcher during the mid-to-late 1980's but found her home with Haynes Ambulance full time until shortly before her passing. In recent years she resided in Hamilton, Alabama with her late husband Jim Brown, also a Paramedic and retired fire chief. Jim passed from cancer within the last two years and shortly thereafter Patti herself was diagnosed. After a year of treatment, she was called home after metastasis occurred. We are blessed to have known her and worked with her, as well as loved her as a family member and friend.

STROKE EDUCATION AND SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Tabatha Ross, BSN, RN

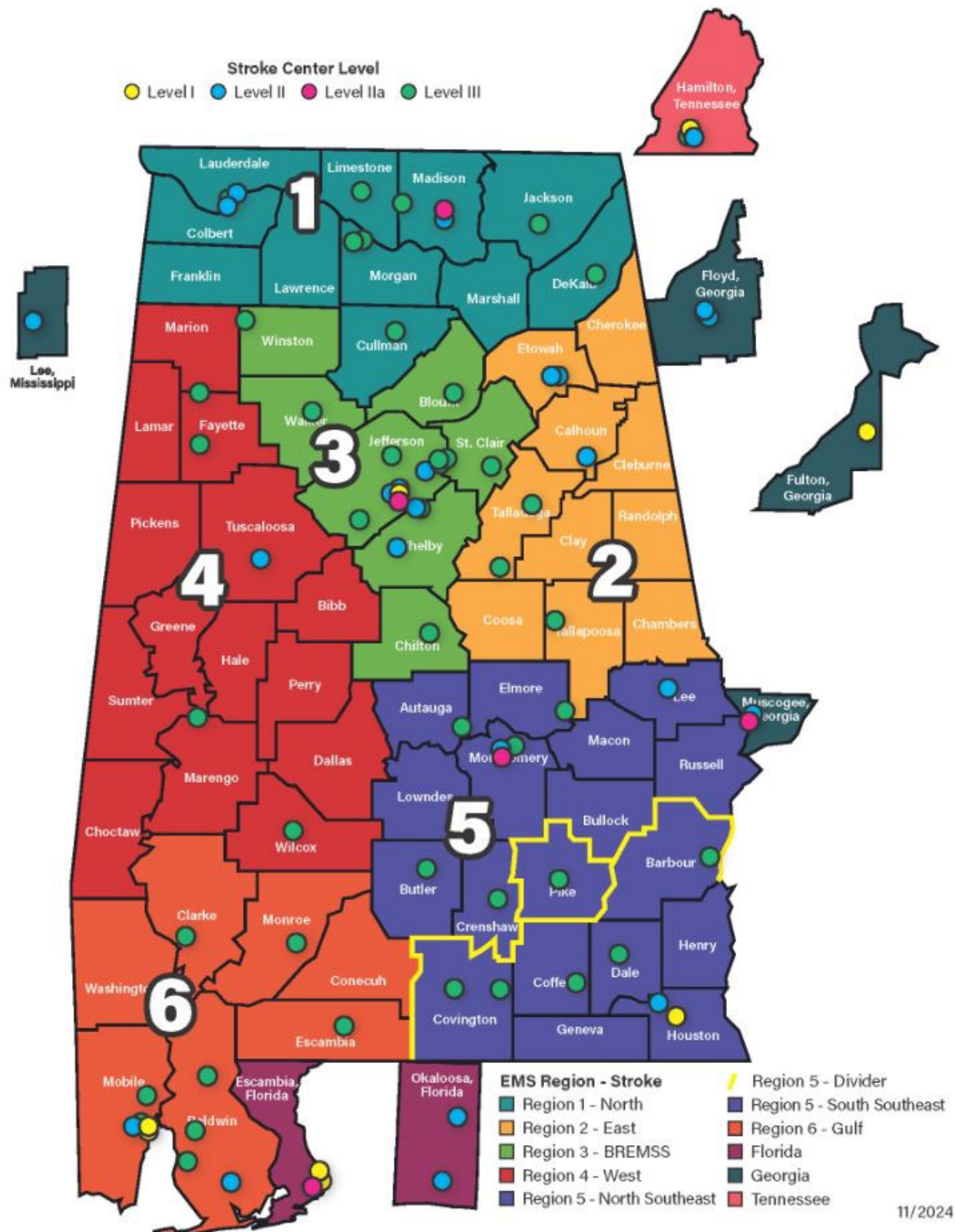
Acute Health Systems – Stroke System Coordinator

On Oct 22, 2024, Severity-Based Stroke Triage (SBST) routing based on the Emergency Medical Stroke Assessment (EMSA) score will be statewide. In 2022 The Alabama Stroke System introduced a new stroke level designation, Level IIa. Level IIa centers have the capability to mechanically remove blood clots during an ischemic stroke. By integrating EMSA for stroke assessment, implementing SBST routing, and the addition of level IIa stroke center designation, we anticipate enhancements in the quality of stroke care and reductions in long term disability and mortality across the state.



Currently, approximately 84 hospitals are participating in the Alabama Stroke System. These hospitals are located throughout Alabama and the four surrounding states. Section 420-2-3-.04 Inspection Process of the Stroke System rules require stroke center reinspection every four years to ensure designation criteria is maintained. To assist with this, in August 2024, the Alabama Stroke System launched a pilot program for virtual site visits for Level III stroke designation and redesignation. Given that Level III centers account for over 50% of the Alabama Stroke System, this initiative will streamline compliance with inspection requirements.

Emergency Medical Stroke Assessment (EMSA)	
	Abnormal?
E: Eye Movement	
Horizontal Gaze Ask patient to keep their head still and follow your finger left to right with their eyes In aphasic patients, call the patient's name on one side and then the other Abnormal: Patient is unable to follow as well in one direction compared to the other	<input type="checkbox"/>
M: Motor – Asymmetric Face, Arm, or Leg Weakness	
Facial Weakness Ask patient to show their teeth or smile In aphasic patients, look for asymmetric grimace to pain Abnormal: One side of the face does not move as well as the other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arm Weakness Ask patient to hold out both arms, palms up, for 10 seconds with eyes closed In aphasic patients, hold the patients arms up and let go Abnormal: One arm does not move or drifts down compared to the other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leg Weakness Ask patient to lift up one leg and then the other for 5 seconds In aphasic patients, hold up one leg and let go, then repeat on the other side Abnormal: One leg does not move or drifts down compared to the other	<input type="checkbox"/>
SA: Slurred Speech or Aphasia	
Naming Ask patient to name your watch and pen Abnormal: Patient slurs words, says the wrong words, or is unable to speak	<input type="checkbox"/>
Repetition Ask patient to repeat "They heard him speak on the radio last night" after you Abnormal: Patient slurs words, says the wrong words, or is unable to speak	<input type="checkbox"/>



ACUTE HEALTH SYSTEMS UPDATE

Alice B Floyd, BSN, RN, EMT-P

Acute Health Systems Manager

On behalf of the Acute Health Systems staff I would like to invite all EMS Personnel and EMS Training Officers to the inaugural Acute Health Systems Conference scheduled for Monday, December 9 in Clanton. These two groups are part of the target audiences that we hope will attend. The conference will be held at the Clanton Conference & Performing Arts Center, 1850 Lay Dam Road, Clanton, AL 35045.

Other targeted audiences include trauma managers, stroke coordinators, emergency department directors and nurses, and flight nurses. Registration is required and the registration link is <https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/ems/index.html>.

For more information about the conference email altraumasystem@adph.state.al.us. We hope to see you there!



SAVE THE DATE

ACUTE HEALTH SYSTEMS CONFERENCE

Monday, December 9, 2024

Location:
Clanton Conference & Performing Arts Center
1850 Lay Dam Road
Clanton, AL 35045
Adjacent to Jeff State Junior College - Clanton Campus

Intended audience:

- Trauma Managers
- Stroke Coordinators
- ED Directors
- ED Nurses
- EMS Personnel
- EMS Training Officers
- Flight Nurses



For more information, email altraumasystem@adph.state.al.us.

FOCUS ON NEW STAFF:**Alabama Office of EMS**

Trey E. Rogers, NRP

Compliance EMS Specialist

The Alabama Office of EMS wishes to announce the recent employment of Trey Rogers as an EMS Specialist assigned to the OEMS Compliance Section.

Trey graduated high school from Benjamin Russell High School in Alexander City in 1996. He completed training EMT training at Central Alabama Community College and licensed as an EMT in December of that year. He initially practiced in EMS by splitting his time between Eclectic Fire Department and Tallassee EMS. He completed Intermediate training at Central Alabama and licensed in 1997. He attended Paramedic training at Gulf Coast Community College in Panama City, Florida, and licensed in 2001.

Trey lives in Tallassee, Alabama and has practiced EMS in the area his entire career. He has been married since 2004 and is the father of one, who is currently a high school senior. Trey is a big fan of Alabama football and is looking forward to the challenge of moving into his new role as an EMS Specialist.

The Alabama Office of EMS is proud to welcome Trey into our work family. The role of EMS Specialist is demanding as rules enforcement is essential to providing excellent patient care. We welcome Trey's experience and insights, and we look forward to many years of working together.

**FOCUS ON NEW STAFF:****Alabama Office of EMS**

Joel A. Garrett, NRP

Compliance EMS Specialist

The Alabama Office of EMS is pleased to announce the recent employment of Joel Garrett as an EMS Specialist assigned to the OEMS Compliance Section.

Joel began his career at nineteen years of age as a volunteer in 2006. He then completed his EMT licensing process in 2007 and finally his Paramedic in 2017. Joel reports that he has worked at many EMS companies throughout central Alabama and participated in some COVID response EMS work in other states.

When asked about his experiences he stated "Being a Paramedic has been a rewarding, yet challenging job. I'm blessed to have had some amazing people in EMS to help me along the way."

Joel is married with three children, ranging from 9 to 17 years of age. Of he and his family he reports "We can be found at the football field, the volleyball court, or around the firepit. He reports that he is looking forward to working at the Office of EMS and the new challenges that his role will bring.



Office of EMS Celebrates 4th Year in New Building

July 15, 2024

The Alabama Office of EMS, along with the Office of Radiation Control and Center of Emergency Preparedness celebrated four years in the Alabama Department of Public Health Training Center and Administrative Annex on Monday, July 15, 2024. The building is located at 208 Legends Court in Prattville, Alabama.

The Training Center is used by ADPH for classes which bring Department and other state employees from throughout Alabama to the facility. The facility includes large, combinable classrooms with advanced audiovisual equipment and onsite technical support, as well as a computer lab and conference room areas.

The Alabama OEMS has been housed in the State Office Building, the Moffett Building, the Normandale Shopping Center, and the RSA Tower (in two separate floors). We enjoy our present location as we believe it is accessible to our constituents, has excellent training facilities and enjoys convenient parking for visitors (compared to downtown Montgomery) as well as many stores and restaurants for the convenience of those visiting our office.

Members of the three resident offices took advantage of the facilities to set up a dining area in the main combined classroom complex to enjoy a lunch buffet catered by Blessed Catering of Montgomery. Afterward the members took advantage of the opportunity to enjoy camaraderie and play some games, including Head's Up, Jenga, and Cornhole among others.



OEMS Staff

Jamie Gray, BS, AAS, NRP, TP-C - State EMS Director
Stephanie Payne, BS - Director's Assistant and Office Manager
Conyona Ware, AS - Administrative Assistant
Jessica Winston - Administrative Assistant
Timikel Robinson, BBA, MSM - Financial Manager

Medical Director Staff

William E. Crawford, MD, NRP, FACEP - State EMS Medical Director
Shea Duerring, MD, NRP, FAAP - Assistant State EMS Medical Director for Pediatrics

Acute Health System Staff

Alice B. Floyd, BSN, RN, EMT-P - Acute Health System Program Manager
Jeff Kerby, MD, PhD, FACS - State Trauma Consultant
Sara Matthews, RN - Trauma Registrar
Tabatha Ross, BSN, RN - Stroke Coordinator

Compliance Staff

Steven Stringer, BS, AAS, NRP, FP-C - Compliance Coordinator
Rhonda Caples, NRP, FP-C - Compliance Specialist
Trey Rogers, NRP - Compliance Specialist
Joel Garrett, NRP - Compliance Specialist

Provider Services Staff

Christopher Hutto, MBA, NRP - Provider Services Coordinator
Kembley Thomas, AS, BA - Licensure Assistant

Education Staff

Christopher Hutto, MBA, NRP - Acting EMS Education Coordinator

Licensure Staff

Vickie Turner, BS, NRP - Licensure Coordinator

EMS for Children Program Staff

Epidemiology/Data Staff

Gary Varner, MPH, NRP - Senior Epidemiologist
Kezia Laster, MPH - Epidemiologist

Information Technology Staff

Lori Stringer - Information Technology Support
Chris Palmer - Information Technology Support