

Kern County EMS Department – Single Paramedic Base Hospital Statewide Survey:

Introduction/Overview:

The Kern County EMS Department has been requested to explore the possibility of a single Paramedic Base Hospital for Kern County. Currently, Kern County has five (5) Paramedic Base Hospitals (4 in Bakersfield, 1 in Delano).

This request was based upon state-mandated emergency department nurse to patient staffing ratios and the inability to count an MICN into emergency department staffing numbers. Other factors include the costs of maintaining Paramedic Base Hospital designation, general trends toward protocol-driven prehospital advanced life support, and very few prehospital cases requiring actual Paramedic Base Hospital orders to Paramedic field personnel beyond standard protocol intervention.

As part of the evaluation process, the Department decided to conduct an email survey of other Local EMS Agencies in California.

Statewide Survey:

A survey of County and Regional EMS Agencies within California was conducted. The survey included the following questions:

The Kern County EMS Department is requesting a few moments of your time to complete this brief survey. We are considering an EMS system change from multiple Paramedic Base Hospitals to a single Paramedic Base Hospital for the entire County. We would like to have feedback from other jurisdictions regarding any positive and/or negative experiences. Please reply to blindr@co.kern.ca.us with feedback.

1. Does your County (or one County within your region) have a single Paramedic Base Hospital that covers all Paramedic Base Hospital duties for the County?
Yes ____ No ____ (if No, further responses are not needed for this survey)

2. Have there been problems with any of the following (please check any that apply):
____ Radio, Telephone and/or Recording Equipment Failure
____ No MICN Staffing
____ ALS Call Demand that Exceeds Radio Frequency Capacity
____ ALS Call Demand that Exceeds MICN Staffing
____ Issues with Paramedic Base Hospital orders carried out on a patient transported to another hospital (i.e. problems with the orders issued).
____ Other – Please Specify _____
____ No Known Significant Problems

3. Does the single Paramedic Base Hospital for the County have (please check any that apply):
____ Complete redundancy in radio, phone, and recording equipment.
____ An MICN exclusively assigned to manage Paramedic Base Hospital calls (i.e. no patient care duties).

4. Does your jurisdiction allow Paramedics to provide advanced airway control, IV access and limited medication administration before Paramedic Base Hospital communications are attempted?
 _____ Yes _____ No
5. How is the single Paramedic Base Hospital operation funded?
 _____ All Hospitals Contribute
 _____ EMS Fund
 _____ Solely Funded by the Hospital
 _____ Other – Please Explain _____
6. Any general comments or opinions regarding the subject of a single Paramedic Base Hospital for a County?

Survey Results (42 Counties Represented):

1. ***Does your County (or one County within your region) have a single Paramedic Base Hospital that covers all Paramedic Base Hospital duties for the County?***
 Yes _____ No _____ (if No, further responses are not needed for this survey)
No - 34 (Solano, Ventura, Alameda, Santa Barbara, Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, Trinity, Alpine, Calaveras, Stanislaus, Humboldt, Lake, San Mateo, San Joaquin, Monterey, Fresno, Kings, Madera, Tulare, Placer, Nevada, Yolo, Sacramento, El Dorado, Napa, Mendocino)
Yes - 8 (Amador, Mariposa, Del Norte, Contra Costa, Imperial, Sutter, Yuba, Sonoma)
2. ***Have there been problems with any of the following (please check any that apply):***
 _____ **5** Radio, Telephone and/or Recording Equipment Failure (Amador, Mariposa, Imperial, Sutter, Yuba)
 _____ **5** No MICN Staffing (Amador, Mariposa, Imperial, Sutter, Yuba)
 _____ **0** ALS Call Demand that Exceeds Radio Frequency Capacity
 _____ **0** ALS Call Demand that Exceeds MICN Staffing
 _____ **0** Issues with Paramedic Base Hospital orders carried out on a patient transported to another hospital.
 _____ **2** Other – Please Specify (Del Norte) The hospital dropped their nurse coordinator position, want to shift CQI to the provider, and are not encouraging continuation of MICNs. (Sonoma) One of the reasons the MICN issue has not been a significant one is because we are phasing out MICNs.
 _____ **2** No Known Significant Problems (Contra Costa, Sonoma)
3. ***Does the single Paramedic Base Hospital for the County have (please check any that apply):***
 _____ **1** Complete redundancy in radio, phone, and recording equipment. (Del Norte)
 _____ **1** An MICN exclusively assigned to manage Paramedic Base Hospital calls (i.e. no patient duties). (Contra Costa)
4. ***Does your jurisdiction allow Paramedics to provide advanced airway control, IV access and limited medication administration before Paramedic Base Hospital communications are attempted?***
 _____ Yes _____ No
Yes - 7 (Amador, Mariposa, Contra Costa, Imperial, Sutter, Yuba, Sonoma)
No - 0

5. ***How is the single Paramedic Base Hospital operation funded?***

 0 All Hospitals Contribute

 0 EMS Fund

 8 Solely Funded by the Hospital (Amador, Mariposa, Contra Costa, Imperial, Del Norte, Sutter, Yuba, Sonoma)

 0 Other – Please Explain _____

6. ***Any general comments or opinions regarding the subject of a single Paramedic Base Hospital for a County?***

Contra Costa: We went from 4 to 1 base over the past 10-15 years by hospital attrition. At the same time, medical treatment protocols become more and more standing orders. So calls/base hospital have stayed about the same or decreased over the same time period.

Sierra-Sac: It seems to me the more hospitals that “opt out” of prehospital involvement / responsibility, the more the quality of care diminishes.

Sonoma: Overall, it has worked well for us.

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