pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

# EMS Information Bulletin- #079

**DATE:** December 23, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Continuing Education Requirements for ALS Medical Command Authorization

**TO:** Regional EMS Directors

**FROM:** Bureau of Emergency Medical Services
PA Department of Health
(717) 787-8740

**THIS REPLACES EMS INFORMATION BULLETIN #053 DECEMBER 1, 2007**

The EMS regulations require completion of 18 credits of continuing education (CE) each calendar year (January – December) for those ALS providers who choose to apply for and maintain medical command authorization. At least nine (9) of the 18 hours of instruction shall be in medical and trauma education.

New ALS practitioners, who have secured initial certification in the current year, are required to complete CE credits prorated equal to 1.5 credits per month, with at least 50% of the total CE in the medical/trauma category, in order to apply for medical command authorization for the next year. Prorating begins with the month that the ALS practitioner secures certification.

For example, if an ALS practitioner receives certification on June 1st, that ALS practitioner will be responsible for 1.5 credits, with at least 50% of the CE in the medical/trauma category, for every month until the end of the year (June thru December). The ALS practitioner will, therefore, be required to complete 10.5 total CE credits, with at least 5.25 CE in the medical/trauma category, prior to applying for medical command authorization for the next year.

Prerequisites to determine medical command authorization/reauthorization are:

- The individual seeking medical command authorization must complete an application on a form prescribed by the PA DOH.
- The individual must verify the completion of the required CE credits for the calendar year prior to the calendar year for which the practitioner is requesting authorization/reauthorization. It is recommended that this be completed at least sixty (60) days prior to Medical Command Authorization Review.
- The ALS Service Medical Director shall inquire whether disciplinary action has been or is currently being imposed against the individual by DOH through the Regional EMS Council.

- The ALS Service Medical Director shall verify that the individual can competently perform each of the services set forth within the scope of practice authorized by the individual's certification or recognition.
- The ALS Service Medical Director shall grant, restrict or deny the medical command authorization.

The EMS regulations **require** the ALS Service Medical Director to deny medical command authorization if continuing education requirements are not satisfied in accordance with 28 Pa. Code § 1003 (b)(2). The ALS Service Medical Director is not empowered to waive these requirements. If the ALS Service Medical Director or the practitioner believes that circumstances exist, which justify a waiver, an application for an exception to the requirements may be filed consistent with 28 Pa Code § 1001.4.

In consideration of ALS Service Medical Directors who are responsible for many ALS providers and who, therefore, experience an excessive workload at the end of the calendar year in completing an annual review of all providers by December 31, the Department will permit the ALS Service Medical Director additional time to review the practitioners' records. The additional time permitted is 30 days from December 31. Therefore, completion of all medical command authorization application materials must be completed by January 30 of the new calendar year. Medical command authorization or denial must be evaluated using the calendar year (January 1-December 31) regardless of the review time extension given to the ALS Service Medical Director.