Disclosures

- No interests to disclose

Background

- Delivery of death notifications is not an uncommon practice for first responders

- Currently there is no standardized training for EMS professionals in delivering bad news
Background

• Unknown what training, if any, is given to providers and how it affects the ability to deliver notifications

• Unknown how prepared and comfortable providers are with death notifications

Objective

Describe the prevalence of death notification training by provider level and its association with preparation and comfort in performing the task.

Hypothesis: A lack of training is associated with lower preparation and comfort amongst prehospital personnel delivering death notifications.

Methods

• Electronic questionnaire sent to random sample of 19,330 EMS providers registered with NREMT in April 2017.

• Respondents reported:
  • death notification training
  • adult death notifications in the last 12 months
  • preparedness and comfort level rated on a 4 point scale

• Inclusion criteria: currently practicing, non-military, EMT or higher certification
Methods

• Key Measures and Data Analysis
  • Data were stratified by EMS certification level (BLS vs ALS)
  • Comparisons performed with Chi-square tests
  • Odds ratios were calculated to estimate association between training and provider comfort and preparation, controlling for certification level

• Independent Variables
  • Self-reported training and instruction, adult death notifications delivered

• Outcome Variables
  • Preparation and comfort in providing death notifications

Results

• 2,333 responses (12.1% response rate)
  • 1,514 met inclusion criteria
  • 88% of ALS respondents and 42% of BLS respondents have performed at least one death notification in their career
  • Of these, 87% of the ALS respondents have performed the notification within the past 12 months, compared to 78% for BLS respondents.

| Received Death Notification Training during Initial EMS Education Program |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|
| BLS | ALS | BLS | ALS |
| 51% | 52% | 68% | 44% |

| Received Death Notification Training outside of Initial EMS Education Program |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|
| BLS | ALS | BLS | ALS |
| 32% | 44% | 0% | 0% |
Results

Percent of Respondents Feeling Prepared to Provide Death Notifications

- Did Not Receive Instruction
- Received Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification Level</th>
<th>Did Not Receive Instruction</th>
<th>Received Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BLS</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>86.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p-value < 0.001

Results

Percent of Respondents Comfortable Providing Death Notifications

- Did Not Receive Instruction
- Received Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification Level</th>
<th>Did Not Receive Instruction</th>
<th>Received Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BLS</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>56.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALS</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>72.2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

p-value < 0.001

Results

Association of Previous Training with Comfort and Preparedness in Delivering Death Notifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>OR (95% CI)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>2.20 (1.77-2.75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparedness</td>
<td>6.05 (4.73-7.74)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Controlling for certification level.
(p<0.001)
Limitations

- Recall Bias
- Response Bias
- Self reported

Conclusions

- Death notification training was associated with increased EMS provider comfort and preparedness
- Training for delivering death notification is not wide-spread
- Future work should assess barriers to receiving death notification training