

# The Medical Director as Politician and Advocate



- ▶ Ritu Sahni, MD, MPH, FAEMS
- ▶ Past-President, NAEMSP (like now really past)
- ▶ EMS Medical Director, Clackamas County, OR
- ▶ EMS Medical Director, Washington County, OR

**#NAEMSP2025**

# Disclosures

NONE



# Three scenarios to think about

- ▶ The police chief approaches and would like you to teach hands-only CPR to the City Council
- ▶ You learn that new federal regulations are going to make it impossible to provide important and potentially life-saving clinical care
- ▶ An elected official has taken an interest in supporting EMS



Politics? Politician? Political?





- ▶ Politics (from Greek: Πολιτικά, politiká, 'affairs of the cities') is
  - ▶ the set of activities that are associated with making decisions in groups, or other forms of power relations among individuals, such as the distribution of resources or status.
  - ▶ the total complex of relations between people living in society





# Navigating politics







# Political power blocs in an EMS system



# Political power blocs in an EMS system

- ▶ Local government
- ▶ EMS administration
- ▶ Hospital systems
- ▶ Line personnel
- ▶ Union

- Patients
- Taxpayers
- Regulatory bodies
- Insurance companies
- Subspecialty centers
- Other medical directors



# Principles for political SUCCESS

- ▶ Identify relationships
- ▶ Build your own relationships
- ▶ Understand authority vs relational power
- ▶ Realize that no one (especially you ) is indispensable
- ▶ Identify all of the stakeholders
- ▶ Mr. Scott – Life is all about expectation management
- ▶ You must be present to win...or even play



Fire Chief  
asks you to  
teach CPR  
to City  
Council

▶ Should you?



# Lake Oswego City Councilor takes life-saving message to heart

Saundra Sorenson Apr 16, 2015



Police Chief Don Johnson demonstrates Hand-Only CPR for restaurant employees at Babica Hen Cafe in Lake Oswego.

REVIEW PHOTO: VERN UYETAKE





## Scenario 2

- ▶ EMS is called to a pediatric seizure. On arrival, the 2-year-old child, who has a known seizure disorder, is still seizing. Paramedic's start an iv and check a glucose (98). The child persists in seizing and is becoming cyanotic. Paramedics draw up 2mg of midazolam and contact online medical control for permission to give midazolam...
- ▶ EMS arrives on the scene of a house fire. The fire department has just extracted a patient with significant burns across the torso and back. The patient is protecting her away but is in extremis from pain. Paramedics start an iv but are unable to contact online medical control during transport...



- ▶ The controlled substances act did not know how to spell EMS
- ▶ Results?
  - ▶ Most EMS agency's DEA registration is actually MDs personal DEA
    - ▶ Increased personal risk to MD
  - ▶ Regional DEA offices with local interpretations
    - ▶ Some agencies required to get a DEA number for each station or rig
    - ▶ Some agencies required to get a DEA distributor registration
    - ▶ No specific rules for storage, disposal, etc
  - ▶ Oh by the way – STANDING ORDERS FOR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES WERE NOT LEGAL



# HR 304 – The Protecting Patient Access to Emergency Medications Act of 2017





# What is advocacy?



- ▶ ad·vo·ca·cy
  - ▶ 'advəkəsē/
    - ▶ noun: advocacy
    - ▶ public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.
    - ▶ synonyms: support for, backing of, promotion or championing of; argument for, push for; informal boosterism of
- ▶ Legislative and regulatory advocacy are efforts to influence the introduction, enactment or modification of legislation and proposed rulemaking



# Why advocacy matters to you

- ▶ The Federal Government is the key source of funding for biomedical research that can advance treatments and ultimately cures for mitochondrial disease.
- ▶ Competition for discretionary budget resources has never been more intense.
- ▶ The federal government is making more of the rules governing insurance coverage and reimbursement not just for federal programs (Medicare) but for private insurance as well.
- ▶ The federal government has a pivotal role in the testing and approval of medical devices and treatments.
- ▶ Voicing your concerns to government is one of the most important steps to influencing the decisions that impact you and your family.







# Scenario 3

- ▶ A legislator has taken special interest in EMS and is supportive of the system.





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<sup>2</sup> The limits in this column apply to a national party committee's accounts for: (i) the presidential nominating convention; (ii) election recounts and contests and other legal proceedings; and (iii) national party headquarters buildings. A party's national committee, Senate campaign committee, and House campaign committee are each considered separately.

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One last crazy  
suggestion...





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**REDEFINE POSSIBLE**  
IN OREGON.

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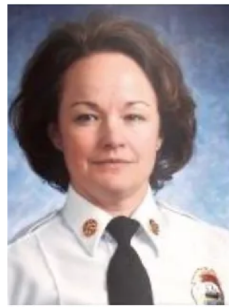




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