



PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES COUNCIL
Your Voice In EMS

CONCEPT FOR CONSIDERATION

Board Meeting Date: December 14, 2022

Subject: Practical Skills Verification for Certification Courses

CFC#: 1222-01

Committee/Task Force: EMS Education Task Force

Concept Statement

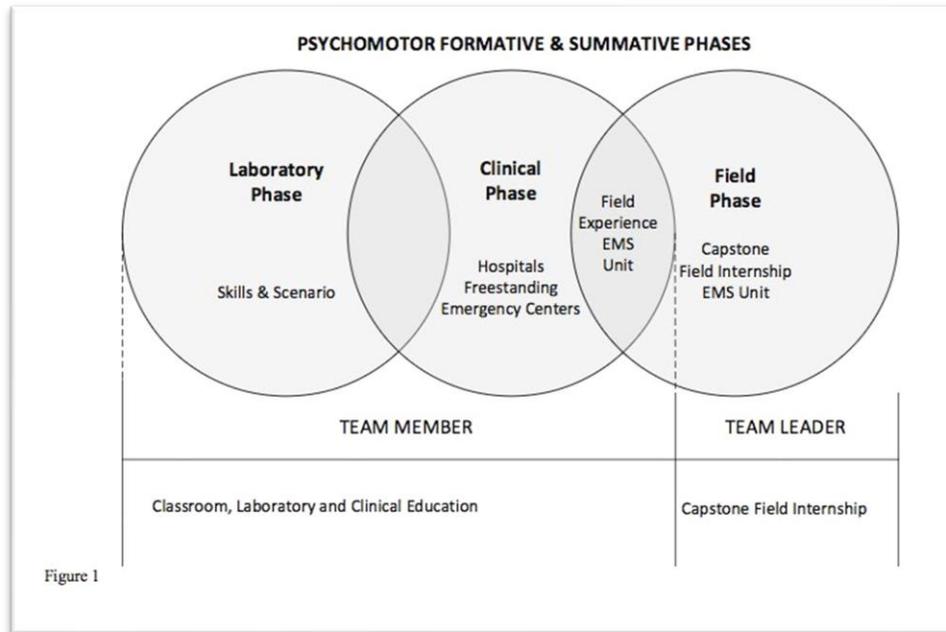
The Pennsylvania Emergency Health Services Council, as the statewide advisory board on EMS related matters, requests the Department's consideration of the concept to replace the current practical skills exam with successful student completion of a skills portfolio.

Rationale

Currently, EMS certification students at all levels must complete a practical skills exam. At the BLS levels, these practical exams are a state exam developed by the Department and administered on behalf of the Department by the regional EMS councils. At the ALS levels, these practical exams are a national exam developed by the National Registry of EMTs (NREMT) and administered approved NREMT Representatives from the regional EMS councils. Both these exams are somewhat subjective in nature because they rely on an evaluator to consider the student's skill competency based on a skill checklist without regard to how a skill was taught. The only captures a shot-in-time on the day of the test and is not always indicative of a student's true capability.

The NREMT recently announced its intention to discontinue the use of practical testing as a condition of NREMT certification for paramedic students in 2025. The legacy process will be replaced by enhancements to the NREMT's adaptive cognitive exam and their skills portfolio that looks at a student's skill proficiency over a period of time, which culminates with an instructor/medical director sign-off.

The NREMT has previously developed a portfolio of vital skills that each paramedic student must master to qualify for their practical examination. The portfolio tracks each student's progress and competence in those identified vital skills throughout the formative and summative phases of education in the laboratory, clinical, and field internship settings. The completed portfolio provides a mass of evidence that documents a student's acquisition of psychomotor competency.



Paramedic programs in Pennsylvania are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) through the Commission on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions (CoAEMSP). CoAEMSP and NREMT assembled a workgroup to review and revise the student minimum competency recommendations included in the skills portfolio for students enrolling in paramedic programs on or after January 1, 2023.

To ensure consistency with EMS education at all levels in Pennsylvania, the Department should follow the lead of the NREMT and CoAEMSP to create a skills portfolio for EMR, EMT and AEMT programs in the commonwealth. The vision for the educational process using the skills portfolio includes:



Each skill included in the portfolio will have a procedure checklist (aka skills sheet) developed and approved by the Department or the NREMT to ensure consistency during the learning process and provide a tool for peer and instructor evaluation. The skill sheet(s) would be retained with each student's record for a period of time determined by the Department and/or CoAEMSP accreditation guidelines.

A program instructor from the accredited EMS education institute will be required to sign-off on each portfolio skill attesting to the student's competence prior to the conclusion of the educational program or prior to any required summative/field internship. The EMS educational institute may also choose to offer a legacy style comprehensive practical exam at the completion of the educational process that captures portfolio skills competence as a terminal objective.

As such, the portfolio process meets the regulatory requirement for students to “*successfully pass a practical skills test approved by the Department.*” Additionally, at the conclusion of the education program, the program medical director will review and approve each student’s portfolio prior to the EMS educational institute marking the student as program complete for NREMT cognitive exam eligibility. This requirement creates consistent oversight by the medical director, which currently is only required in regulation for ALS programs.

Future Considerations

Should the Department adopt the proposed concept for further development, PEHSC is prepared to assist in identifying skills to be mastered at all certification levels; development of skill checklist for those skills; development of the portfolio tool and the required number of demonstrations of each skill.

* See Appendix A for a portfolio example from the State of Louisiana. Development of a Pennsylvania specific portfolio and skill sheets will be developed following Department action on the general concept.

Board Comments and/or Actions

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. J. ...', written over a horizontal line.

12/14/2022

Signed _____

Date _____

President

APPENDIX A:

Skills Portfolio Example – State of Louisiana



Appendix B
LOUISIANA BUREAU OF EMS
EMT PSYCHOMOTOR COMPETENCY PORTFOLIO MANUAL

COMPETENCY CRITERIA AND AVERAGE MINIMUM/MAXIMUM

| LABORATORY PHASE: SKILLS LAB SKILL SHEETS NOTE: All forms listed with * must have at least one successful instructor documented performance before starting the related Scenario Lab. | MINIMUM POINTS REQUIRED | AVERAGE | |
|---|---|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | MIN Required | Faculty Eval. Required |
| History Taking and Physical Examination | | | |
| Obtain a Patient History from an Alert and Oriented Patient | 80% of all points | 2 | * |
| Comprehensive Normal Adult Physical Assessment Techniques | that are possible | 2 | * |
| Comprehensive Normal Pediatric Physical Assessment Techniques | and relevant. | 2 | * |
| Airway, Oxygenation, and Ventilation | | | |
| Nasopharyngeal airway | 80% of all points that are possible and relevant. | 5 | |
| Oropharyngeal airway | | 5 | |
| Oxygen Administration by Non-Rebreather Mask | | 5 | |
| BVM Ventilation of an Apneic Adult Patient | | 5 | |
| Supraglottic Airway Device Adult | | 2 | * |
| CPAP | | 1 | * |
| Trauma | | | |
| *Trauma Adult Physical Assessment | 80% of all points that are possible and relevant. | 2 | * |
| Spinal Immobilization Adult (Supine Patient) | | 1 | |
| Spinal Immobilization Adult (Seated Patient) | | 1 | |
| Joint Splinting | | 2 | |
| Long Bone Splinting | | 2 | |
| Hemorrhage Control | | 1 | |
| Traction Splinting | | 1 | |
| Medical | | | |
| *Medical and Cardiac Physical Assessment | 80% of all points that are possible and relevant. | 2 | * |
| Intranasal Medication Administration | | 2 | |
| Inhaled Medication Administration | | 2 | |
| Intramuscular Medication Administration | | 2 | |
| Use of auto-injector | | 2 | |
| Oral medication administration (patient assist) | | 2 | |
| Glucometer | | 2 | |
| Cardiac | | | |
| Cardiac Arrest Management/AED | 80% of all points that are possible and relevant. | 5 | |
| Obstetrics | | | |
| Normal Delivery with Newborn Care | 80% of all points that are possible and relevant. | 3 | |
| *Abnormal Delivery with Newborn Care | and relevant. | 2 | * |
| Scenario Lab | | | |
| Team Member | 80% of all points that are possible and relevant. | 2 | |
| Team Leader | | 2 | |

NOTE: Failure must be noted for any skill where the examiner has checked one of the "Critical Criteria" statements and documented the performance as required.