



TETAF UPDATE

August 3, 2011

TETAF Board Holds Strategic Planning Meeting

The TETAF Board met July 14, 2011, to strategically plan for the future of the organization. While looking at current resources, the board examined how to expand the organization to better serve as a necessary link for the continued development of the EMS, trauma and acute care systems in Texas as federal, state and local dollars for these systems are becoming more challenged. TETAF will be seeking to add a communications consultant to better link TETAF with its subscribers and interested parties as well as add a grant writer on a consulting basis to provide additional dollars and resources to the systems TETAF represents. With the communications consultant the desire is to make TETAF communications more efficient and targeted while at the same time decreasing the number of meetings. Proposed is to hold TETAF calls bi-monthly or another rotation that would not duplicate meetings in the same month as the face to face TETAF meeting is held (connected to GETAC meetings). A search for both these consulting positions will commence immediately with the intent to have these positions filled by early Fall 2011.

The TETAF Board also reviewed its six divisions focusing on goals for each division in the coming fiscal year. Providing additional resources to each division through www.tetaf.org with the launch of discussion boards and member distribution lists will begin immediately. In addition TETAF will be working to better identify needs of the subscribing RACs and stakeholders and provide educational opportunities throughout the state. As additional educational opportunities are identified and presented to subscribers, TETAF will pursue becoming a CE provider.

TETAF, with oversight from the Board, has been moving forward trying to coordinate benefits for interested RACs. TETAF has been working with several insurance brokers to try and determine the ability and financial viability of TETAF being a group coordinator of benefits. These findings are being shared with the interested RACs and decisions will have to be made rather quickly with current coverage ceasing August 31, 2011.

The TETAF Finance Committee and Board continue to work through the proposed 2011-2012 fiscal year budget and expect to present its recommendations to the TETAF General Meeting August 16, 2011, in Austin.

Standard Dollar Amount Trauma Add-on Rate Adjustments

On July 8, 2011, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) published in the *Texas Register* a new rule for trauma add-on rate adjustments. The rule can be viewed at: <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/texreg/archive/July82011/PROPOSED/1.ADMINISTRATION.html#12> The rule proposes the repeal of current Inpatient Hospital Reimbursement methodology and is replacing it with a state-wide base standard dollar amount (SDA) with add-on rate adjustments. The new proposed rule complies with the 2012-13 General Appropriations Act, in which HHSC was directed to develop a statewide standard dollar amount and was authorized to consider high-cost hospital functions and services, including regional differences. Included will be a section to adjust trauma payments.

The rule will significantly modify the payment percentage rate for Level II-IV trauma facilities. To determine the trauma add-on amount, HHSC multiplies the base SDA by 12.8 percent for hospitals with Level 1 trauma designation; by 8.2 percent for hospitals with Level 2 trauma designation; by 1.4 percent for hospitals with Level 3 trauma designation; or by 1.3 percent for hospitals with Level 4 trauma designation.

However, the rule revision will also link Medicaid trauma add-on payments to payments made from the Designated Trauma Facility and Emergency Medical Services Account 5111, but guarantee hospitals the greater of either distribution.

While the proposed rule is viewed as “out of the box thinking” to try and generate additional dollars for the trauma system, implementation will be the proof of its actual benefit. As proposed, if a hospital's allocation from Account 5111 (the Designated Trauma Facility and EMS Account, a.k.a. “HB 3588 monies”) is greater than the total trauma add-on amount estimated to be paid to the hospital under this section during the state fiscal year, the Department of State Health Services will pay the hospital the difference between the two amounts at the time funds are dispersed from that account to eligible trauma hospitals. If a hospital's allocation from Account 5111 is less than the total trauma add-on amount estimated to be paid to the hospital under this section during the state fiscal year, the hospital will not receive a payment from Account 5111. Many experts believe that this change may in fact result in additional hospitals electing to become designated trauma facilities in the coming year.

Comments regarding the proposed rules may be submitted through August 8, 2011.

TETAF Accepting Applications for Additional Trauma Surveyors

TETAF is currently accepting applications for new trauma surveyors with the application available online at www.tetaf.org. Completed applications may be submitted to TETAF through August 4, 2011. Applications will be reviewed and TETAF plans to credential up to six new physician trauma surveyors as well as up to six new nurse trauma surveyors. Surveyor candidates will be presented to the TETAF Board for credentialing at the August 16, 2011, TETAF General Meeting. These candidates then will be required to complete the Trauma Surveyor's Course that is scheduled for October 14-15, 2011, at Texas Health Presbyterian Plano.

Stroke Support Facility Surveys

The first Stroke Support Facility survey in Texas was conducted in July! The survey was conducted by TETAF Credentialed Stroke Surveyors with oversight by DSHS staff. Several additional applications for facilities seeking Stroke Support Facility designation have been received by DSHS. Questions regarding the stroke survey process can be directed to DSHS, Brenda Putz with TETAF and or the TETAF Acute Care Division.

TETAF Stroke Symposium

The TETAF Level III Stroke Support Facility Symposium will be held Thursday, October 6, 2011, at St. David's Medical Office Building in Austin. Topics to be covered will include:

- How to Become a Texas Stroke Support Center
- Essential Criteria: Texas Stroke Support Center
- Data Collection & Process Improvement
- Pre-hospital Assessment
- Emergency Department Nursing Assessment & Management
- Application Completion

CNEs will be provided for participants. Registration information can be found at www.tetaf.org or specifically at

http://www.tetaf.org/TETAF_Docs/Save%20the%20Date%20Stroke%20Symposium%20Sept%202011.pdf

TETAF Fundraiser – A Night with the Bats!

Buy your tickets now! Limited tickets remain! The first ever TETAF Fundraiser will be held Wednesday, August 17, 2011, in Austin. The evening will include a cruise on Lady Bird Lake to view the famous Congress Avenue Bats with TETAF Board members and supporters. Live music, appetizers, a cash bar and raffle tickets will all be onboard the M.V. Pride and Joy. Boarding will begin at 7:30 p.m. and the boat is set to cruise at 8:00 p.m. **Tickets for the cruise are extremely limited and are \$45 each.** Sponsorship opportunities are still available through August 10. Event and ticket information can be found at <http://tetafbatcruise.eventbrite.com> Please make plans now to join this fun evening to help support TETAF!

TETAF Board Nominations

In November 2011 elections will be held for four positions on the TETAF Board - Vice-chair, Secretary, Board at Large #1 and Board at Large #3. Currently the Vice-chair of TETAF is David Rives from SETRAC, Secretary is Dudley Wait with Schertz EMS, the Board at Large #1 position is held by Eric Epley with STRAC, and Scott Christopher with Nacogdoches Memorial Hospital is the Board at Large #3 member. Nominations for these seats will be opened August 16, 2011, and an election to fill these positions will be held at the November TETAF meeting that will be held in conjunction with the GETAC and Texas EMS Conference Meetings in Austin.

TETAF to Provide Internet Streaming of GETAC Committees and GETAC Meeting in August

On August 17 & 18, 2011, TETAF will live stream for the first time ever the Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC) Committee Meetings. While these committees will be available to be viewed live they will also be available for archiving to view at a later date. In addition, TETAF will once again provide a live webcast of the GETAC Meeting on Friday, August 19, 2011. This broadcast will also be available to be viewed at a later date if desired. To access the meetings you may link through the TETAF website – www.tetaf.org. TETAF is thrilled to offer this opportunity for more stakeholders to observe the GETAC meetings from their offices and homes but continues to encourage your live participation in the GETAC process.

Respectfully submitted,

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