



Paramedic Education Programs Face Challenges Accessing Clinical and Field Experiences – Spring 2025

CoAEMSP surveyed paramedic education programs regarding access to clinical and field resources. The findings are clear: programs are struggling to maximize clinical and field learning experiences for paramedic education students.

The challenge - and opportunity – for the broader EMS community is to enhance strategies for ensuring access to these critical learning experiences. This will require coordinated engagement with national organizations representing clinical and field sites, as well as other key stakeholders.

Clinical Experience

Required clinical units *most frequently* accessed:*

- Emergency department - 99%
- Obstetrics – 82%
- Operating Room – 72%
- ICU/ CCU – 62%
- Pediatric – 60%

Required clinical units *less frequently* accessed:*

- Burn unit – 11%
- NICU – 20%
- Psychiatric – 37%
- Respiratory – 38%
- Cath lab – 45%

More than half of all programs (55%) experienced a decrease in clinical facility access attributed to competition with health sciences students (75%) and other EMS programs (53%).* Half (50%) of survey respondents report the lingering effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the healthcare system as an ongoing barrier to access to clinical units.

Field Experience

Nearly one-third of programs have experienced a decrease in access to EMS agencies for field experience (32%) and capstone field internships (32%).

Most challenging patient encounters to access in any environment include:*

- Neonate – 80%
- Infant – 65%
- Toddler – 52%
- Preschool – 41%
- Obstetric – 41%

Accreditation standards require programs to ensure that students are able to demonstrate competency to enter the profession. While there is no required number, schools reported students complete an average of 288 clinical hours in the program.

** Respondent could choose more than one answer. The survey was distributed by CoAEMSP to 768 programs in Spring 2025 with 573 responding (75%) from 45 states. A summary of the full survey results is available [here](#).*