

Highlights from the Program Directors Focus Group (PDFG) Meeting
October 12, 2023, 2:00P-3:30P Central Time

The Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the EMS Professions (CoAEMSP) Program Directors Focus Group (PDFG) met via Zoom on October 12, 2023, for its quarterly meeting. The highlights from the meeting follow.

1. **Reviewed the PDFG Meeting Minutes and CoAEMSP Board Meeting Highlights.**
 - a. **PDFG Meeting Minutes (July 27, 2023).**
 - b. **CoAEMSP Board Meeting Highlights (August 4, 2023).** Discussion centered on the work of the IDEA Working Group and the NASEMSO AEMT Student Minimum Competency Recommendations.
2. **CoAEMSP Surveys.** CoAEMSP has developed and deployed a number of surveys.
 - a. **AEMT Accreditation Survey** – Developed to understand who is participating in AEMT education and to gauge interest in pursuing voluntary AEMT accreditation. CoAEMSP is in the process of finalizing the survey results which will be shared broadly.
 - b. **Paramedic Program Director Survey** – Sent to existing program directors to glean what advice they would give to new program directors. A significant number of responses have been recorded and the survey remains open. PDFG members shared the idea to utilize the data to create a CoAEMSP course for new program directors perhaps having a foundational course and an advanced course, and as a starting point for creating a mentor group.
 - c. **CoAEMSP Experience Survey** – Scheduled to be deployed in January 2024.
3. **Announcement Highlights.**
 - a. **ACCREDITCON.** PDFG members are eligible for discounted ACCREDITCON-24 conference registration in appreciation for service on the PDFG.
 - b. **Publication.** Prehospital Emergency Care publication on August 25, 2023 titled: *Medical Directors, Facilities, and Finances: Resource Deficiencies in Accredited Paramedic Programs* utilized data from the CoAEMSP Resource Assessment survey.
 - c. **Site Visitor Applications.** Site visitor application have opened with a site visitor training to occur prior to ACCREDITCON in 2024.
4. **NREMT Examination.** The PDFG members expressed concern for student adaptation to the new examination and how to train their students in preparation for the exam. Discussion included tracking of how the transition to technology-enhanced items affects students and NREMT process for determining new items for live examination. Members with first-hand experience positively expressed that it “makes sense” when navigating the new examination. With the PDFG members interested in the opportunity for further discussion, a request was made for a NREMT representative to present at the next PDFG meeting.
5. **Recruiting Quality Instructors.** The PDFG members discussed the challenge to find and hire quality instructors. There was agreement that this issue is occurring in EMS but also broadly across professions. Conversation focused on creative solutions to include involving preceptors in the classroom and skills labs, developing instructors with the opportunity for paramedic students to teach CPR and EMT skills, working with industry and agency partners, and aiding educators in receiving their associate’s degree. Others indicated need to rethink the approach to hiring and, instead of posting an open position and seeing who applies, proactively seek out candidates.

Next Meeting: 2024: January date TBD web meeting