



Healthcare Do's and Don'ts from Urban and Rural Perspectives...

with a focus on Emergency
Medical Services/Prehospital
Emergency Medicine

Dr. Todd Husty



EMS Lessons

- ▶ You get what you pay for.
- ▶ First, however, we have to know what we want.
- ▶ Or, just because we spend money doesn't mean we get what we want.
- ▶ I assume we want the highest quality within a reasonable, affordable budget.



EMS Systems



- ▶ Each of these can provide quality prehospital emergency medicine but some have greater potential for higher quality.
- ▶ Volunteer.
- ▶ Hospital-based.
- ▶ Private/Commercial.
- ▶ Fire Based Service



EMS Systems



- ▶ Urban systems have higher volumes, shorter response and transport times, more scrutiny, less familiarity, more politics and greater citizen expectations.
- ▶ Rural systems have closer interactions with receiving facilities, moderate to long response and transport times, fewer hospitals scrutinizing the care, fewer entities with an opinion and more reasonable citizen expectation.
- ▶ The best and most well-trained paramedics should work in rural environments with expansive, far-reaching protocols.



EMS Systems



- ▶ Quality prehospital emergency medicine/EMS is dependent on the same factors regardless of where they are located.
- ▶ Training.
- ▶ Education/retraining.
- ▶ Protocols.
- ▶ Quality improvement process.
- ▶ Interaction with hospital providers.



The Common Denominator

...Medical Direction

- Maitland Fire Department, 29 years ago, had a crazy request:
- Paramedic firefighter, Dan Hardester (now, retired Fire Chief): "I want a medical director to meet with everyone, once a month."
- The purpose was to aim for higher quality through open discussion. But most paramedics are afraid to discuss their cases openly for fear of retribution. Most QA plans are punitive.
- "Nobody gets fired because of what is discussed in a medical director meeting."
- Non-punitive quality improvement.



A True Team Approach

- ▶ We discovered that the protocols were overly limiting.
 - ▶ We became nimble and could change rapidly because everyone could be trained within months.
 - ▶ We have learned from our mistakes.
 - ▶ We learn from suggestions and challenges from every team member.
- 



But will it work in a bigger system?

- ▶ Seminole County, Florida. 27 fire stations and multiple separate agencies under one medical director.
- ▶ The eastern third of Seminole County is rural with long response times and long transport times.
- ▶ Every firefighter attends a medical director meeting for two hours in small groups of 30 to 35, once a quarter.
- ▶ The improvement was obvious within the first year.
- ▶ Now, 14 years later, we have been recognized as having the most advanced protocols and some of the highest quality of care in the state, and even in the nation.



Tail Wagging The Dog

- ▶ Our protocols are not political, they focus only on quality patient care.
- ▶ That is not always the case in the house of medicine. There is a focus on quality care but change comes slowly even when needed.
- ▶ STEMI, stroke, sepsis alerts. The use of end tidal CO₂.
- ▶ The rational use of Narcan in overdose patients.
- ▶ Quality Council. A cooperative meeting with all the hospitals and other stakeholders. We promote change and demand professionalism from ourselves and the emergency departments. They have improved through the process.

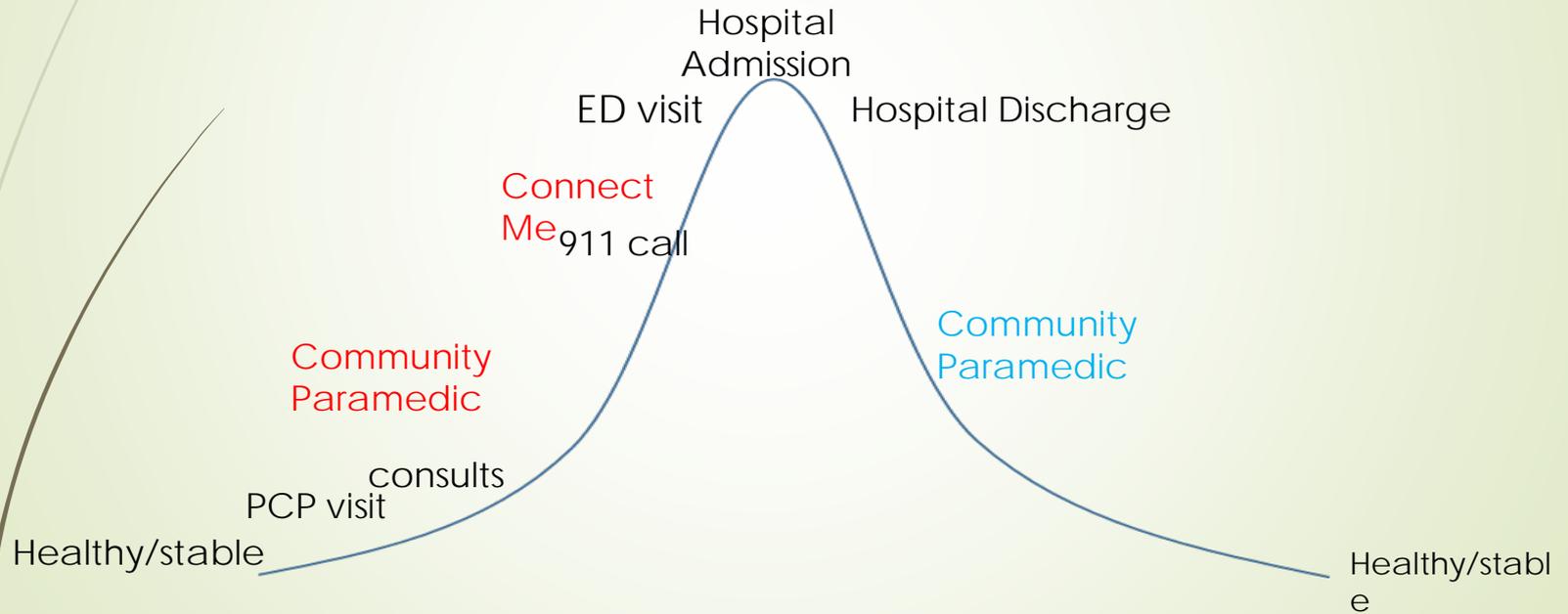


Tail Wagging The Dog...

Community Health Initiatives

- ▶ Community paramedics
- ▶ Connect Me... On duty paramedics can give a third choice to patients, that is, have a caseworker follow-up with the patient to help reconnect them to care
- ▶ FL Blue Grant for "frequent flyers" ... Have called 911 more than six times in one year... Send a paramedic and a caseworker to the home to help monitor health status
- ▶ Next Initiative... Follow-up on recently discharged patients... Hospitals and health plans become clients

Continuum of Care





Todd M. Husty, D.O., FACEP

- ▶ Tmhusty@ himexperts.com
- ▶ 407-679-6794

- ▶ Personal assistant
- ▶ Pat Price
- ▶ Pat @himexperts.com