

NEW TECHNOLOGY The ePCR Comes to FDNY*EMS

After many years of review, research and discussion, the FDNY is advancing to a new electronic ambulance call report - the electronic Patient Care Report or ePCR. Today, the FDNY processes more than 700,000 Ambulance Call Reports (ACRs) a year. This represents a huge burden to FDNY staff, with paper forms getting lost or damaged, many containing missing or inaccurate information, and no effective way to track this volume of incoming forms. Most importantly, there is no efficient way to assess patient-care medical trends from the information contained in each ACR.

Several FDNY Bureaus, Technology Design Systems, Office of Medical Affairs, EMS Operations and Finance, worked to introduce in 2001 a commercially available, paper-based product that utilizes a scannable form. Scanning forms is not a new technology, but this particular product coupled an easy to complete paper form with a powerful way to automate many of today's manual functions.

It allows for an easy transition for EMS crews from the FDNY's current ACR to the ePCR. In the future, as handheld and tablet computers mature, a truly electronic paperless solution can be developed. More importantly, this technology allows for an image of the PCR and the information contained on it to be available for review by FDNY Bureaus almost

immediately.

Beginning in July 2004, the ePCR will be implemented in EMS in Division 1. The system will be rolled out citywide over the next 10 months.

To make the ePCR a reality, many hurdles had to be overcome: EMS crew acceptance of the concept, wideband communications in each EMS station, new forms, training, and the necessary operational policies to accommodate the new processes. A pilot test of the concept and technology was successfully completed in late 2001 and the FDNY bid on and purchased the application.

FDNY Bureaus came together to integrate the processes and make this project a reality with tangible benefits. FDNY will be able to submit bills for ambulance call reimbursement in days rather than weeks and individuals needing to review a patient care report will be able to do it online.

FDNY is taking an important first step to solve a major problem that plagues every EMS agency in the country. Our ability to manage our PCRs, images of the forms, and associated data will place the FDNY - the largest EMS provider in the country - as a leader in yet another area of emergency pre-hospital care.

EMS Medal Day 2004



Chief of Department Frank Cruthers and EMS Assistant Chief Jerry Gombo award the Christopher J.Prescott Medal to EMT David Karic on EMS Medal Day held May 17th at FDNY Headquarters at 9 MetroTech Center.

EMS's highest medal was also awarded to EMTs Gamaliel Bonilla, John Manning, Ronald Grubert, David Weissman and Daniel Steward (posthumously).

Thirty-nine members of the FDNY*EMS Command were honored at this year's ceremony for exceptional service and exemplary actions in performance of duty during 1999, 2000, 2002 and 2003.