**EMS Week 2014**

Item or theme ideas

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**Children-related events** *(I know that someone is already doing children safety education but these are some events that we had on the agenda last year and it also appears to work throughout the year)*

Teddy Bear Clinics

* A teddy bear clinic can be a great way to bring out the children in your community and educate them about emergency medical services. Focus on daycares, preschools, early elementary classes, library groups and organized play groups.
* Arrange a date with the coordinator from the child care group. Perhaps there could be some preparation by the teacher such as an introductory to 9-1-1, what to do in an emergency, etc.
* The participants will be asked to bring a stuffed animal or doll the day of the teddy bear clinic. The paramedic will ask the bear what is wrong, where it hurts, where they are sick, etc. The paramedic will treat the bear medically, much as they would treat the child presenting with the same injuries. *We are at an advantage here where our mascot is actually a bear (In Nova Scotia). Different services may adapt for their different mascots*
* Paramedics should use the equipment that makes noise and is potentially scary to children in order to introduce the procedures and teach that the equipment helps - it doesn’t hurt. Try introducing the following procedures.
  + oxygen therapy
  + taking a blood pressure
  + fix cuts with band-aids
  + monitor the heart beat if time allows
  + splinting and bandaging
* If time allows, allow the children to play with the equipment so that they get used to it.

Colouring or Poster Contest

* A lot of paramedics enjoy reaching out to the schools in their community. Have the paramedics reach out to individual teachers or schools and ask if they would like to be involved in an EMS Week colouring or poster contest.
* Split the children up into age groups for the contest (Ages less than 6; 6-9; 10-12)
* *Colouring contest:* Have the children colour a page (predetermined by the local paramedic(s)) and get them to include at least 2 safety messages on the page.
* *Poster contest:* Have the children create an EMS-themed poster that includes at least 2 safety messages
* Every child who completes the contest will get a promotional item but paramedics will pick the best coloured page/poster and present them with a bigger prize (TBA)
  + Tip for this contest is to do it at the beginning of the week so that the coloured pages/posters can be posted at the local paramedic base (maybe during the open house?). If this happens, you can maybe get the public to vote on which ones they like better.

Art or poem contest

* This falls in line with the previous contest with more of a broad approach.
* Initial phase: Paramedic service will initiate a contest for whoever can create the best EMS Week art or poem from scratch. The groups will be (Ages under 6; ages 6 to 13; ages 14 to 17; college/university). The announcement about this could be a press release, newspaper ad, paramedics reaching out to their closest school, etc.). This advertisement would need to be put out there a couple of weeks before EMS week, with the deadline being the Friday before EMS week.
* Secondary phase: The top pictures from each age group (number TBD), from each region, will be posted on the internal website so that paramedics can vote on the best art/poem. These can also be displayed at the bases that are planning to have an open house, as well.
* Third phase: Voting will come to a close on the Thursday of the EMS Week and all votes will be calculated. The winning poem/art from each region will be framed by the service and posted at the regional office. If we can get enough media attention around this, maybe we can get some photos of the winners with their framed art/poem at the paramedic base, with paramedics, and get the picture printed in the paper…
* Prizes can vary as well depending on the service
  + Options to this would be to include a paramedic category as a lot of paramedics are artistic. Prize for them could be something with the service’s logo, a new jacket, flashlight, etc…

**Senior-related events**

Senior home visits

* Something most services tend to do already but it is a great way to promote our profession during EMS week (especially since this represents a bulk of our patient population)
* Will need to contact the coordinator of the facility to see if there is a date that can be arranged
* Injury prevention for seniors is an important topic to discuss. Touch on these topics during your talk.
  + Burns (cooking with fat, turn pot handles in, clothing, etc.)
  + Tripping / falling hazards (tape mats, clear hallways, cords, etc.)
  + Lighting (night lights, lamp near bed, light on in bathroom, etc.)
* Identify the 911 process and what happens when an ambulance is dispatched; as well as what preparations the paramedics go through before a call. Speak to what may happen at the hospital as well as transport back to their residence (if you know that information)
* Show off the equipment that paramedics carry and allow them to be interactive during the presentation. Show them items that may be related to some of the common injuries (back board; stretcher; medication for chest pain, CHF, Diabetes; stair chair).
* This may differ per service but a hot topic is usually the costs regarding transport to the hospital and will sometime depend on where they are (home, nursing home, retirement living, transport for appointment, etc.).
* You could speak on the benefits of an emergency 911 trigger (ex. Lifeline, etc.) in case something happens.
* Include the staff in the presentation as well. From my experience in doing these presentations, some staff are just as confused about what paramedics offer the community and the skills/medications that we possess.
* If it is a retirement or assisted-living residence, speak on the importance of gathering medical history, medications, allergies, health card, and any advanced directives (DNR). Could possibly speak to the importance of the Vial of Life or a similar container with all of the important information.
* If the older adults are mobile, encourage them to tour through the ambulance to ease some of their fears.
* Some seniors in your group may have been transported by ambulance. Approach them prior to your visit to see if they’ll talk about the experience. First-hand experience is one of the best educators!

**General Public**

Mall Displays

* These open up the opportunity to have paramedics, communication officers, and support staff all in one spot to answer any questions that the general public may have. The information that you can provide, and the questions, may be endless!
* Make sure that you have a vibrant display board as well as some promotional items to hand out.
* Show off some of the kits or put up a schedule as to which kit you will be showing off at what time. This schedule could also be set up for different skill demonstrations.
* Think about adding a blood pressure clinic to promote health and wellness.