

Pediatricians key in rural emergency medical services

October 29 2012



In rural areas, pediatricians can play a key role in the development, implementation, and ongoing supervision of emergency medical service for children, according to a policy statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics published online Oct. 29 in *Pediatrics*.

(HealthDay)—In rural areas, pediatricians can play a key role in the development, implementation, and ongoing supervision of emergency medical services for children (EMSC), according to a policy statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) published online Oct. 29 in *Pediatrics*.

Brian Moore, M.D., and colleagues on the AAP's Committee on Pediatric Emergency Medicine, updated a previous policy statement on the role of the [pediatrician](#) in rural EMSC.

The committee noted that pediatricians may be the only source of pediatric expertise for a large region and are a vital resource for rural

physicians and [health care professionals](#). Their roles include provision of education about management and prevention of pediatric illness and injury; appropriate equipment in cases of acute illness or injury; and acute, chronic, or rehabilitative care. Pediatricians may also be involved in quality assurance, development of clinical protocols, and advocacy. They may serve as a liaison between EMSC and other entities such as school nurses or child care centers. Pediatricians are encouraged to be aware of areas that may benefit from their involvement, such as advocacy for legislative initiatives supportive of EMSC; work with local [EMS agencies](#) for system design and development, including education; aid in recruiting and retaining community EMS providers; and becoming aware of rural EMSC issues for American Indian/Alaska Native communities.

"Pediatricians can develop strategies for community-sensitive outreach to rural areas and assist in the organization of regionalized [pediatric emergency care](#), using available rural expertise and assets to optimize outcomes of seriously ill or injured rural children," the authors write.

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Citation: Pediatricians key in rural emergency medical services (2012, October 29) retrieved 20 March 2024 from

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