

# THE PULSE

HCFAS-  
PROUDLY  
VOLUNTEERING  
SINCE 1967

THE HEARTBEAT OF THE HUNTINGTON COMMUNITY FIRST AID SQUAD

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## President's Report- Seth Fischer

Happy March!

Thankfully, it appears the COVID numbers are heading in a promising direction. While we are not in a position to start the celebrations just yet, it is exciting that there is finally a light appearing at the end of what was a very dark tunnel. It is amazing to think that a year has gone by since this global pandemic began. We are grateful of everyone's hard work and dedication.

Over the next few days, I hope to sign our 2021 contract with the Town of Huntington. A few small revisions had to be made, but we are confident this will be wrapped up this week.

As a reminder, please continue to do your best to get as much insurance information as possible from our patients. I cannot stress enough how important this is. If anyone has any questions, please speak with your Day Captain, or one of the Chiefs.

If there is anything the Board and/or Operations can assist with, that will benefit our members and their experience with HCFAS, please do not hesitate to share your suggestions. Over the past few weeks, we have gotten great feedback from our members, and we have acted quickly. Let us know how we can help.

Questions? Submissions?

Email Editor  
Katie Donegan at  
thepulse.hcfas@gmail.com

I sincerely thank everyone for going above and beyond. Seeing our members pick up multiple shifts per week, joining committees, and simply helping in any way they can is amazing. You should all be very proud of what we all accomplished over the last year.

Be well, and stay safe...

Seth



## Chief's Report - David Kaufman

Dear members,

This month marks one year into the pandemic and The Huntington Community First Aid Squad is still going strong. Thank you all for everything you're doing to cover calls and shifts, and most importantly to stay safe.

Keep up with your ambulance checkouts as you never know when we might be inspected.

There will not be an in person St. Patrick's Day parade this year, but perhaps later in the year, we'll have the opportunity to gather at some of the parades we usually attend. I will certainly miss the Kitchen Committee's corned beef and cabbage. I hope you all enjoy the holiday regardless, and have a joyous Passover.

Keep up the excellent work.

David

## 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Chief – Ryane Como

A year ago, many of us attended the 2020 installation dinner just as COVID-19 was ramping up locally. Many of us were blissfully unaware of how our lives, and especially our lives at the squad, would change very quickly over the coming weeks. I would like to thank each and every one of you for your continued resiliency and dedication; your courage and adaptability has not gone unnoticed or unappreciated. Hopefully, sometime this year we can get back to group gatherings, and at some point, see each other's smiling faces without masks again.

With that said, please continue to take all precautions while at the building and especially on calls. We have done a tremendous job keeping each other, our family and friends, and the public safe from community spread. Regardless if you have been vaccinated, all policy and procedures remain in place. Please wear your masks while in the building unless you are actively eating or drinking. Please wear N95s and eye protection on calls regardless of call type or patient complaint, and be vigilant with hand washing and decontaminating surfaces and equipment.

If you are experiencing any symptoms or you have a COVID exposure, please stay home and contact me (716-807-5913) before entering the building. Although the CDC has recently changed some of their guidance, NYS has not, and we are continuing to follow NYS DOH policies. Please continue to adhere to NYS travel guidelines.

The first quarter ends on March 31<sup>st</sup> – everyone needs 48 hours by that date. Please remember to finger in and out on the same shift. If you are unsure about your hours or don't know if you need finger read corrections, please contact your Day Captain.

### Vaccine

Suffolk County is continuing PODs for the completion of Phase 1a and Phase 1b first responders. If you have not received a first dose of the vaccine please email me at [first.deputy@hcfas.org](mailto:first.deputy@hcfas.org) so that I can add your name to the list.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to Michele Miller who helped coordinate appointments for a lot of our members at the last Suffolk County POD held at Long Island Community Hospital. Thank you Michele!

Once you have received both doses, please place a copy of your vaccine card in Brian Canty's mailbox.

If you are an EMT and are interested in becoming a volunteer vaccinator, please email [MRC@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:MRC@suffolkcountyny.gov) (Suffolk Medical Reserve Corps).

If anyone has any suggestions, complaints, or questions please feel free to contact me by phone or email. We can't make changes or corrections if we don't know about a problem.

Thank you for your continued dedication to HCFAS and our community. Stay safe and healthy!

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy Chief – Jaclyn Rittershaus

It's been about a year now since our lives have been changed by the COVID-19 pandemic. When I look back, I am in awe of the strength we've shown in overcoming this unique degree of struggling, individually and as an organization, physically and mentally. Members have lost loved ones and have sacrificed themselves for others in multiple ways. It has surely been a lot to handle, but please know that each and every one of you are deeply valued and an inspiration.

March's review training will be about the ePCR and ESO software. Jake Levinsky was kind enough to create a tutorial on the subject. This tutorial is applicable not only to crew leaders, but to first aiders and drivers who can help with the tedious task of documentation. Each riding member has an ESO login. If you do not, and need help setting one up, please reach out to me.

In addition to proper patient care and documentation, billing is also a pillar of our organization. Last year, our total call volume was very low. Therefore, missed opportunities to bill due to the lack of insurance or demographic information was a larger blow to our finances than usual. Please treat this seriously, making every effort to gather correctly spelled names, addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers, and of course insurance information. If the call is a motor vehicle accident, be sure to obtain the auto insurance carrier of the vehicle the patient was occupying, as this will be their primary coverage (health insurance is secondary, so try to get this too). If your patient is a pedestrian or bicyclist, obtain the auto insurance carrier of the vehicle that struck him or her. Sometimes it's easiest to get the patient's information and auto insurance off the accident report if you can grab that from the police or the patient. Any questions, I'm here for you! Text or email me anytime- [second.deputy@hcfas.org](mailto:second.deputy@hcfas.org) or 516-329-0140.

Our first BLS CPAP training of the year will be on Monday March 1<sup>st</sup> at 1800 hours. Thank you, John Mancino and Lauren Stalzer, for volunteering the time out of your busy schedules to ensure our members are trained! John also instructed our most recent Check and Inject training on February 18<sup>th</sup> which was a great success. We are looking to set up more classes including ones for BLS-12-Lead, but it can be difficult. If you are available for one class, try your best to come instead of waiting for the next one.

I've reached out to some of you already, but if you know your EMT certifications are expiring this year, please let me know of your intentions for recertification – whether you will be taking a refresher course, are in the CME program, or have decided not to recertify. If you plan on recertifying through the CME program, make sure you contact Pam Brenner to register. Keep in mind, CME paperwork must be gathered and submitted to the county no later than 60 days prior to the expiration of your certification.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy Chief – Jaclyn Rittershaus (cont'd)

All members who have expired CPR certifications, please email Michael Jacoby at [cpr@hcfas.org](mailto:cpr@hcfas.org) immediately. Those who have certifications that will be expiring in the next 6 months, email him as well. As members email him, he can schedule classes.

Once again, don't forget to check out Mark Brenner's "Basics" section in The Pulse. This month's article is especially informative!

I wish you all a happy March!

Sincerely,  
Jackie

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Deputy Chief – Bill Connolly

First, I would like to give a warm welcome to Betty Wood, Diane Tanko and Patty Tufo for joining the BLS supplies committee to share their multiple skills and extra time. I am looking for additional members interested in sharing their skills, so if you want to join the BLS supplies, BLS medications, Oxygen, New vehicle, or the Vehicle maintenance committees please email me at [Third.deputy@HCFAS.org](mailto:Third.deputy@HCFAS.org)

There have been numerous repairs made to the ambulances, so please remember to drive carefully and to report any accidents or incidents and stay safe.

Between the increased cost and demand of PPE these days, we continue to accept donations. Any PPE items can be dropped off at the squad. If you need, I can arrange to pick up supplies as well. If you know someone or an organization that can donate, please be the Squad's advocate.

Sincerely,

Bill Connolly

Join us on ZOOM for the January GMM on  
Monday March 8th at 730 PM.

Check your email for information. Reach out  
if you need any help.

## Chief Dispatcher - Mike Capotosto

New Dispatchers: Congratulations to Michelle Franco, John Stevens, Sierra Beck, Matthew Phillip, Brooke Brigati, Allison Brown, and Erin Gallagher on passing their dispatch tests. Welcome to Selena Ortiz, Amina Sadiq, Merida Flythe, Landary Rivas Argueta, Alissa Barber, Eve Pollack, Ashley Genao, Sylvie Grand-Pierre, Jamie Suesser, Michael Morrel, and Ori Baer – Our newest dispatch trainees.

Statistics: We closed out January with 461 total calls, down 7% for this time last year. We transported 83% of calls, down from our usual 85%.

We are down in Priority Code 36 calls from 96 in December to only 73 this month. Please make sure you continue to take precautions and wear your PPE.

We had one 24 in January. We've had a few more so far for the month of February. Please be sure to fill out a Mutual Aid Form from the file cabinet whenever you 24 a call – even if we take the call back.

Please remember to add your paramedics to personnel and put the (P) or (Cc) next to the unit any time an ALS provider responds to a call.

Reminders: Suffolk County is still allowing us extended time to identify crews – up to 20 minutes for Alpha calls, or 6 minutes for Bravo, Charlie, Delta, or Echo calls. Any EMT or Paramedic on-scene can shorten or lengthen this time.

We can dispatch calls based on priority code order. We can redirect crews to respond to a higher priority calls if they are not “within sight or sound” of the scene.

If you receive a phone call requesting any information regarding a call, please take a message and pass it on to a chief and send them a text message or phone call. This includes requests from anyone claiming to be a patient, police/detectives/DA, hospitals, attorneys, family of patients, media, etc.

Pagers are available for anyone who lives in the district and is willing to respond. If you're interested, speak to your captains.

Thank you,  
Mike Capotosto

## Company 1 – Captain Dale Bartolomeo

SUNDAY

Thank you to everyone who has helped out recently with all the snow standbys we've had. It is greatly appreciated.

As always, please keep an eye out for weekly Facebook posts and messages from all the captains for shift openings. We really appreciate everyone's help and support.

Please keep up with your **Review Trainings!**

## Company 2 – Captain Paul Bayer

MONDAY

Monday is doing really well in 2021. We've been able to cover all of our shifts so far - even those without permanent members! We owe a great Thank-You to Tim Quigley, Steve Zeth, Jeff O'Neill, Jake Levinsky, John Connors, Tom Lemp, Betty Wood, Aaron Surette and Kevin Solano for their help in covering shifts. We miss the regular help (but we understand) from Esteban Lopez as he concentrates on his schooling in his senior year at Cornell.

We've added new member Amina Sadiq (#1633) to the 1100 shift on Mondays, although she's currently dispatch training with Stephanie Carraciolo on the 1900.

Come on in and say "Hello" to our newest Crew Leader - Emily Berkowitz - on the 0700!!

Juliet Costa (also Mondays 0700) will be ACL'ing soon enough, as she's an EMT who just passed her Ambulance Orientation.

We're always looking for additional help (Drivers and Crew-Leaders) on the 1100 and 1500 shifts - so please let me know if you're around on a random Monday to help out!! Thanks!!

## Company 3 – Captain Elizabeth Mohr

TUESDAY

Thank you to everyone who has helped out on Tuesdays, you guys are amazing. We would like to welcome new member Merida to the Tuesday 1100 shift! Merida is already signing up for an EMT class and we look forward for her to finish dispatch training soon. I appreciate everyone who came in and helped on Tuesdays with the several snowstorms and fires we have had; it has kept us busy! Please remember to stay up to date on all your review trainings and do your checkouts!

## Company 4 – Captain Eric Nazinitsky

WEDNESDAY

No Report.

## Company 5 – Captain Colin Weigele

THURSDAY

Hello again everyone!

I'd like to thank everyone on Thursdays for their amazing work this past month. So far, we've managed to handle every call we've received on Thursdays without an issue, even on one of the snowier days where we received 20 calls throughout the day. I would also like to thank everyone who has continued to come in and cover open spots throughout the day, including Andrew Taylor, Aaron Surette, Jim Mallillo, Shannon Gore, Esteban Lopez, Jake Levinsky, Kenny Cadet and Brandon Eybergen.

I would also like to congratulate Selena Ortiz of the Thursday 1500 on passing her dispatching test! Selena did wonderfully, and I'd like to thank Elizabeth Beach for doing an amazing job training Selena.

Some help is needed on Thursdays: a driver is needed on the 1500 and 2300. Additionally, a crew leader is needed on the 1900 and 2300. If anyone is able to help please let me know!

Colin Weigele 1553

## Company 6 – Captain Kathy Castillo

FRIDAY

I wish to extend my deepest condolences to Mary and the Sissini family. Matt will be forever in our hearts.

I need the following help each week:

0700- 2nd due CL  
1100- 2nd due crew  
1500- 2nd due CL  
2300- dispatcher and 2nd due crew

## Company 7 – Captain Casey O'Riordan

SATURDAY

HCFAS Membership,

Thank you to everyone who comes in and answers up when needed! I'd like to welcome Landary to the 0700 and Alissa to the 1500. We look forward to having them! The 1100 still needs a second due CL and the 2300 needs two full crews. ALS is needed on all shifts as well.

## Notes from Board Secretary Bob Franz

### NYS Income Tax Claim for Volunteer Firefighters' & Ambulance Workers' \$200 Refundable Credit for 2020 – Bob Franz

You can claim the \$200 refundable credit for 2020 on the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance Form IT-245. As per the instructions, you cannot claim the credit if you receive a real property tax exemption that relates to your volunteer service under Real Property Tax Law. The ambulance workers' credit is available to full-year NYS residents who are active volunteer ambulance workers for the entire tax year for which the credit is claimed. A copy of the Form IT-245 & instructions is posted on the bulletin board. If you have any technical questions, consult your independent tax advisor.

### LOSAP 2020 Points – Bob Franz

The 2020 LOSAP Point listing posted on the bulletin board is being updated periodically. It is requested that each member review their points and report in writing any discrepancies to the LOSAP point committee no later than March 12, 2021. All review trainings had to be completed & submitted by December 31, 2019 to be eligible for LOSAP points for 2020. The final LOSAP point listing must be submitted to the TOH by March 26, 2021 for Town Board approval.

Please check the basket located on the right side counter top above the mail folder drawers for any LOSAP forms that were rejected for various deficiencies. Please correct the deficiency and resubmit to the LOSAP form mail box before March 12, 2021.

### HCFAS Group Term Life Insurance Program -A New VFIS Beneficiary Form Needs to be Completed – Bob Franz

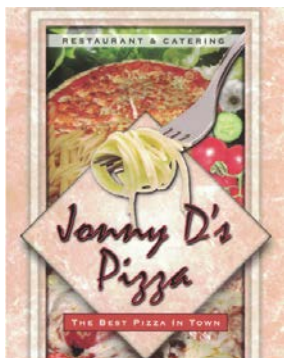
Thank you to everyone who has complied with this request. I request any non-probationary member who has not completed a form to do so and return the completed, signed and dated form to Secretary Bob Franz's mail box. This is a requirement to maintain coverage under the group life insurance program.

### 10 % Property Tax Exemption – Bob Franz

All bulk renewals for 2021/2022 were delivered to the Town Assessor's office on February 24, 2021. Thank you to everyone who filed the separate renewal application required by the new Town Law by the March 1, 2021 deadline date. Approximately 125 members will be receiving the property tax exemption for 2021/2022.

## HCFAS Discounts- Dave Mohr

There are many places that offer discounts to Squad members. Even if you don't know if they do or don't, it can hurt to ask. I have had times when I have asked and the answer was 'we don't, but hold on' and they would go and talk to a manager/owner and in the end a discount was given. We have accumulated just some of the places in Huntington that offer a discount to Squad members. **If you know of a place that offers a discount to Squad members, put a note in Director David Mohr's mailbox or email me at davidmohr@yahoo.com.**



### Jonny D's Pizza

946 New York Avenue

**631-385-4444**

**15% Discount**

Show Squad  
Membership Card



**15% Discount**

Show Squad Membership Card



**15%  
Discount**

Show Squad  
Membership Card



**10% Discount**

Show Squad Membership Card



*Flowerdale by Patty*

"Elegance with a personal touch"

1933 New York Avenue

**10% Discount**

Show Squad Membership Card

BASICS – March 2021  
Refusal of Medical Attention (RMA)  
By Mark Brenner, CIC

There is nothing basic about an RMA. For many years, Suffolk County EMS has had an RMA policy that we have been required to follow. It was not until January of 2019, that New York State published an RMA Protocol in the NYS BLS Protocols (see page 88).

HCFAS Medical Advisor Dr. Ethan Brandler illuminated this topic with last month's call review CME. It is not only important for us to know the RMA protocol, but to adequately document our findings to validate the rationale for executing a refusal of medical attention.

Suffolk County EMS requires us to follow these guidelines.

**RMA HIGH RISK CRITERIA:** An RMA should not be considered without contacting Medical Control if any of the following High-Risk Criteria are present. A physical assessment may be necessary to rule out these criteria when the patient:

- has received a medication, either by administration or self-assistance of an EMS provider, regardless of patient condition;
- has an altered mental status or a suspected head injury;
- is less than (<) eighteen (18), including situations where the legal guardian is on scene;
- is older than (>) seventy (70) years of age for any condition;
- has neurological, cardiac, or respiratory symptoms;
- Glasgow Coma Score is less than (<) fifteen (15);
- vital signs are outside of normal limits;
- has known or suspected alcohol or drug use involved;
- has a known carbon monoxide exposure, determined by atmospheric and/or non-invasive co-oximetry monitoring; or
- attempted suicide.

EMS personnel must contact Medical Control by telephone at 631-689-1430. For confidentiality purposes, and for ease of use by patients, the radio must not be used for RMA consultations. This policy cannot address every issue or possibility regarding RMA situations, therefore questions regarding appropriate action must be directed to Medical Control.

New York State goes further in helping us to identify those patients who are considered "high risk"

- Age greater than 65 years or less than 2 months
- Pulse >120 or <50
- Systolic Blood Pressure >200 or <90
- Respirations >29 or <10
- Significant mechanism of injury or high index of suspicion
- Fever in a newborn or infant under 8 weeks old

In the NYS RMA protocol, there is a section of Key Points/Considerations. It states that:

The evaluation of any patient refusing medical treatment or transport should include the following:

- Visual Assessment – To include responsiveness, level of consciousness, orientation, obvious injuries, respiratory status, and gait.
- Initial assessment – Airway, breathing, circulation, and disability.
- Vital signs – (if patient allows) pulse, blood pressure, and respiratory rate and effort; pulse oximetry and/or blood glucose, when clinically indicated.
- Focused exam – As dictated by the patient's complaint (if any)

Medical decision-making capacity determination – As defined below

- Patients at the scene of an emergency who demonstrate the ability to understand the nature and consequences of their medical care decisions shall be allowed to make decisions regarding their medical care, including refusal of evaluation, treatment, or transport.
- A patient, who is evaluated and found to have any one of the following conditions shall be considered incapable of making medical decisions regarding care and/or transport and should be transported to the closest appropriate medical facility under implied consent:
  - o Altered mental status from any cause.
  - o Age less than 18 unless an emancipated minor or with legal guardian consent.
  - o Attempted suicide, danger to self or other, or verbalizing suicidal intent.
  - o Acting in an irrational manner, to the extent that a reasonable person would believe that the capacity to make medical decisions is impaired.
  - o Unable to verbalize (or otherwise adequately demonstrate) an understanding of the illness and/or risks of refusing care.
  - o Unable to verbalize (or otherwise adequately demonstrate) rational reasons for refusing care despite the risks.
  - o No legal guardian available (in person or by telephone) to determine transport decisions.

Patient consent in these circumstances is implied, meaning that a reasonable and medically capable adult would allow appropriate medical treatment and transport under similar circumstances.

Law enforcement should be considered, if needed, to facilitate safe management of patients who lack capacity and require involuntary transport.

- o Capacity is a clinical decision; therefore, it is not necessary for law enforcement to place a patient in their "protective custody" in order to safely manage those who lack the capacity and require further evaluation and treatment

## Documentation

It is important for us to fully document our assessment of every patient, even those who wish to refuse medical assistance. All vital signs are to be documented, including temperature. Click on the assessment tab and document your findings. Be certain to document that you assessed the patient's neurological status to indicate that the patient had the decision-making capacity to execute an RMA.

1. According to the NYS RMA Protocol, which of these exemplifies patients who are considered “High Risk” and Medical Control should be contacted prior to allowing the patient to RMA?
  - a. Greater than 60, less than 2 years of age.
  - b. Greater than 65, less than 2 years of age
  - c. Greater than 65, less than 2 months of age
  - d. Greater than 55, less than 2 weeks of age
2. Your 50-year-old male patient of a motor vehicle collision, car vs telephone pole, is found standing outside of the car. He is conscious and alert. There is minor front-end damage. He states he was wearing his seatbelt, and the airbag is deployed. He appears to have a rash on his face, presumably from the airbag. He is coughing and states that he has asthma and that the dust from the airbag deploying may have caused the coughing. He states that he does not want to go to the hospital. You should:
  - a. Consider this call to be “No Patient Found” and document it accordingly.
  - b. Document your findings and allow the patient to RMA.
  - c. Continue your assessment of the patient including neurological status along with vital signs including temperature and call Medical Control if there are no additional findings.
  - d. Hope that the man changes his mind.
3. You respond to a call for a 1-month-old child who has suddenly become unconscious. Upon arrival you find the child in the mother’s arms, awake, with pink skin color and equal pupils, and very cute. The mom is relieved. She said she was holding the baby when she suddenly became limp and unresponsive. After calling 9-1-1, the baby became conscious and is now “more herself”. The child has no medical history and was not feeding when the episode occurred. The child’s mother doesn’t think it is necessary for the baby to go to the hospital. According to the NYS BLS ALTE/BRUE protocol, it would be a good idea to transport the baby, but if the mother is reluctant, you should contact Medical Control.
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. You respond to a motor vehicle collision involving two cars, one operated by a 17-year-old, the other by a 33-year-old. Neither car has passengers. The vehicles have minor damage. Both drivers have minor injuries and are refusing treatment and transport. The 17-year-old states that she is an emancipated minor. Can you RMA both drivers?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
5. When executing an RMA, it is important to document that the patient has capacity to understand/comprehend the ramifications of their decision to RMA. What should be included on the RMA ePCR?
  - a. A physical assessment of the patient.
  - b. Vital signs, preferably two sets to show that there have been no changes to the vital signs.
  - c. Evidence that you have assessed the patient’s neurological status.
  - d. All of the above

## March 2021

### HCFAS Birthdays

| Sunday                          | Monday          | Tuesday      | Wednesday                            | Thursday                                         | Friday                                   | Saturday             |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------|
|                                 | 1               | 2            | 3                                    | 4                                                | 5                                        | 6                    |
|                                 |                 | Robin Smiles | Danny Mugavero<br>& Tiffany Gonzalez |                                                  | Will Burton                              |                      |
| 7                               | 8               | 9            | 10                                   | 11                                               | 12                                       | 13                   |
| Casey<br>McCormack              |                 |              |                                      |                                                  |                                          | Vasken<br>Kazandjian |
| 14                              | 15              | 16           | 17                                   | 18                                               | 19                                       | 20                   |
| Richie Cortes &<br>Joe Grant    | Jon Menard      |              |                                      | Keith<br>Rubenstein                              |                                          |                      |
| 21                              | 22              | 23           | 24                                   | 25                                               | 26                                       | 27                   |
| Sheryl Roach &<br>Jonathan Bram | Bob Biersack    |              |                                      | Stephanie<br>Caracciolo &<br>Caityln<br>Dimaggio | Cynthia<br>Feliciano &<br>Lauren Stalzer |                      |
| 28                              | 29              | 30           | 31                                   |                                                  |                                          |                      |
| Todd Atkin                      | Kristin Tiersch |              |                                      |                                                  |                                          |                      |

March Length of Service and Longevity Awards  
to be presented at March GMM

25 Years  
Ann Gabriel #919

Thank you for your continued service!