The Community Paramedic Technician

Global Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Curriculum Guideline

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Introduction:
This Community Paramedic Technician™ Curriculum Guideline defines a recommended training strategy for the Community Paramedic Technician™ (CPT). Topical competencies, attitudes, knowledge and skills that are critical to community paramedicine should be attained through longitudinal experience that includes educational competencies as defined by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (http://www.caahep.org).

The CPT curriculum must include structured experience in several specified areas. Most of the CPT’s knowledge will be gained by caring for patients who are in need of preventive care or education in the community. Unlike a Community Paramedic Clinician, the CPT is not educationally prepared to be integrated into primary care. This course is designed for the 9-1-1 paramedic who is rerouting patients to alternative care sites, or who is doing “assess and report” post-discharge, follow-up reports to a primary care provider.

Structured didactic lectures, skill competencies, conferences, webinars and workshops must be included in the curriculum with an emphasis on outcome-oriented, evidence-based studies that delineate common and chronic diseases affecting patients of all ages. Targeted techniques for health promotion and disease prevention are skill set hallmarks of the CPT. Appropriate referral patterns and provision of cost-effective care should also be part of the curriculum. This CPT Curriculum Guideline and specific program requirements may be found online at http://www.mobilece.org and http://CommunityParamedic.org. These guidelines and program requirements are periodically updated and endorsed by The Paramedic Foundation and other specialty organizations as indicated.

An accredited institution may request The Paramedic Foundation and Mobile CE™ to establish a partnership agreement to deliver the curriculum by using the form on http://www.mobilece.org or http://CommunityParamedic.org.

Objectives:
Health promotion has been defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the process of enabling people to increase control over their health and its determinants, and thereby improving their health. The concept of optimal health reflects not merely the absence of disease, but also a level of vitality to maintain enjoyment and contentment with life.

Disease prevention encompasses activities focused on health risk profiling of asymptomatic persons and the appropriate use of screening and testing for early detection of disease. Patient education and referral to therapeutic intervention, when indicated, are imperative health maintenance. Principles and education of disease prevention applied to individual patients are based on scientific evidence derived from population studies. CPT protocols should consider age, gender, family history, culture and lifestyle risk factors. Protocols must be dynamic, with regular Quality Assurance evaluation, and revision based on both new scientific evidence and local community factors.
Community Paramedic Technician focuses on health promotion and disease prevention through a patient-centered medical home setting. The CPT and the Community Paramedic Clinician (CPC) can be catalysts for health promotion and prevention by offering continuous, coordinated and comprehensive care for the patients, their families and their communities throughout the patient’s lifespan. As a cornerstone of the medical home for each patient, the CPT and CPC, as part of the interdisciplinary health team, impact the lives of patients by recommending and supporting positive lifestyle changes, promoting appropriate screenings and examinations, and filling appropriate health access gaps, thus improving health and preventing disease. CPT’s will assess, identify, and refer the patients to appropriate resources in the community.

CPT Program Applicant:
The CPT applicant should be able to demonstrate ability that encompasses:

1. An orientation toward health care maintenance, through disease and injury prevention, with appreciation of the importance of anticipatory guidance, including both age and gender appropriate preventative guidelines and immunizations.
2. An expectation of, and experience with, collaboration among patient, family or other support systems, as well as members of the health care interdisciplinary team and community resources.
3. The ability to identify a diverse range of patient behaviors that adversely affect health, such as tobacco, alcohol and illicit drug use, overeating, and sedentary lifestyle, and to address them with compassion, empathy and cultural sensitivity.
4. An understanding of behavioral change, as well as awareness of each patient’s readiness and ability to accomplish recommended lifestyle changes.
5. Commitment to personal health and a balanced lifestyle that facilitates professional growth and well-being.
6. A basic understanding of current public health issues and concerns on global, national, state and local levels.
7. Willingness to advocate for patient health and healthcare systems that are available, accessible and affordable.
8. An approach that is patient-centered, family-centered, and supported by cultural competence.

Upon CPT Program Completion:
Within the appropriate setting, the CPT will demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge of:

1. The CPT’s role in the Health Care System.
2. The role of the CPT in public and primary care referral.
3. Four categories of prevention: primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary.
5. Exercise guidelines for fitness, injury prevention and weight management.
6. The social determinants of health model, including influences on psychosocial well-being, internal perceptions, external stressors and significant life events.
7. Injury prevention at home, during recreation and while driving.
8. Education of safe sexual practices, sexually transmitted infections and prenatal pregnancy care.
9. Pharmacologic prevention through the use of aspirin, sunscreen and vitamin supplements if supported by protocol and medical direction.
10. Environmental issues that influence personal health, such as secondhand smoke, sanitation, exposure to lead or other toxic substances, safe housing, and occupational exposures.
11. Risk assessment based on age, gender, family history, socioeconomic status, lifestyle choices, environmental factors and medical issues.
12. Criteria used for screening tests and vaccinations.
14. Local, regional and national resources to assist patients and their families in the development and maintenance of healthy lifestyles and disease prevention.
15. Psychological and social determinants of patient behavior and action choices, including concept of health literacy and its implications.
16. Fundamental understanding of the natural history of chronic disease, potential complications and outcomes.
17. Patient-centered, family-centered care that considers the influence of positive support relationships, as well as stress, caregiver fatigue, abuse and violence, and other critical points influencing health and happiness.
18. Resources that promote evidence-based practice.
19. Understanding and application of basic clinical and preventive care.

CPT Skills and Competencies:
Within the appropriate setting, the CPT will demonstrate the ability to perform independently or refer as needed. At the completion of the Community Paramedic Technician™ Program, a CPT will:

1. Gather information on patient history, related family history, vaccination history, diet, chemical substance use, exercise, stress management, socioeconomic status, health literacy, occupation and recreational activities, health, spiritual and cultural beliefs, and safety practices.
2. Perform physical assessment of fitness, BMI and blood pressure.
3. Apply preventive health principles by modeling healthy lifestyle, personal safety and wellness.
4. Stimulate behavioral change through coaching, motivation techniques, exercise and nutrition.
5. Implement or use an existing system for patient call back or follow-up in the outpatient and home settings for medication and preventative screening reminders.
6. Mobilize or refer to community resources, local health department and mental health providers as it relates to patients of all ages and to patient-centered care.

8. Demonstrate effective, compassionate, and culturally competent communication with the patient and the patient's family regarding reduction of risk factors, recommendations for healthy lifestyles and disease prevention strategies.

9. Identify the social determinants of health.

10. Describe evaluation techniques and be able to evaluate program success.

11. Educate patients on chronic disease processes and monitor care plans prescribed by other medical team members, to promote health and secondary prevention.

12. Advocate for patients within the current health care system and continually strive toward system improvements to improve health maintenance and prevention of disease.

CPT Curriculum Implementation:

This curriculum should be taught longitudinally, with topical learning experiences offered throughout the CPT program. Curricula content should traverse learning formats, including didactic lectures, conferences, webinars, preceptor time, discussions, skill competencies and patient care in all settings. The curriculum should include content that teaches CPTs to critically evaluate prevention recommendations and approaches, inciting healthy behavior and healthy behavior change for patients. Reference materials should be available to support these endeavors.

Preventive health and health promotion lessons should occur in settings consistent with the patient-centered medical home. CPTs should have the opportunity to observe and partner with other health professionals for clinical skills.

The CPT should also engage in preceptor-supervised interactions with patients focusing on lifestyle and mental health. The CPT should actively participate in interdisciplinary discussions regarding prevention and health promotion. Electronic charts should be structured to efficiently support this model of care. CPT records of contact with patients should be reviewed for appropriate inclusion of notes regarding health promotion and disease prevention.

Health promotion and disease prevention in the home setting should be taught by example and implied by structure. Faculty should model healthy and balanced lifestyles, demonstrating dedication to family, patients, community, and care of the self through exercise, community service, and other valued activities. The CPT's responsibilities should be structured to ensure opportunity for similar self-care. CPT programs should seek opportunities for students to participate in community outreach and education, which can help the students learn to act as community leaders and experts, as well as provide other settings for the active promotion of healthy lifestyles and behavior.
About the Authors:

Paramedic Health Solutions™

Paramedic Health Solutions™ offers unique and specialized expertise in the field of health promotion. We engage providers in a transformative process to create new resources for a wide range of clinical, behavioral health and social service needs. From assessing the dynamics of your current environment through developing a strategic plan to deliver health services in your community, we focus on best practices for patient-centered care and share your goal of improving health while reducing healthcare costs.

Mobile CE™

Utilizing a global network of industry experts, Mobile CE™ provides outstanding learning opportunities that prepare health providers to meet community needs, including the future direction of:

- Community Paramedicine
- Critical Care Transport
- Interfacility Transport
- Emergency Medical Services
- Human Services
- Healthcare Providers

Mobile CE™ offers world-class educational services in both online and site specific venues. Through innovation, technology and consistent and sustaining support, we provide our students with the tools to improve patient care and strengthen community health.
About the Authors (cont.):

The Paramedic Foundation

The mission of the Paramedic Foundation is to further the profession of paramedicine. Our vision is to provide resources and expertise through education, governance, credentialing, research, and provider safety. We value accountability, competence, creditability, professional recognition, paramedic self-governance, and knowledge.

North Central EMS Institute

The mission of the North Central EMS Institute is to bring to life EMS innovations focused on value-added best practices and emerging ideas. Our vision is improved EMS through the promotion of industry innovation, and the elevation of its community recognition. We value creativity through innovation, accountability through transparency, and collaboration with other thought leaders.
Resources:

The 2006 Alaska Community Health Aide/Practitioner Manual (CHAM) [http://www.akchap.org](http://www.akchap.org)


Website Resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement (ICSI), Health Care Guidelines [http://www.icsi.org/guidelines_and_more/](http://www.icsi.org/guidelines_and_more/)

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium; Community Health Aide Program. [http://anthctoday.org/index.html](http://anthctoday.org/index.html)


World Health Organization (WHO), Health Promotion. [http://www.who.int/topics/health_promotion/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/health_promotion/en/)

National Rural Health Association. [http://www.ruralhealthweb.org](http://www.ruralhealthweb.org)