

50 EMS System Benchmarks

A Self Assessment



303 Marshall Road, Box 170
Platte City, MO 64079

50 EMS System Benchmarks

A Self Assessment

EMS managers often ask: How do I measure up or Are we a quality operation? This can be a difficult question to objectively answer. No industry standards are universal, existing system and clinical research does not provide conclusive guidance, and each system's local factors influence its individual design and operations. What does exist in the literature and what can be drawn from decades of system review and design consulting experience is a host of general benchmarks. These fifty (50) benchmarks offer a window into assessing your system. No perfect score exists.

Considering your EMS system, read each statement. If the statement is true for your system, assess one (1) point. If it is not, assess zero (0) points. If not applicable, mark the statement with an "N/A." Do not read too much into the question and answer based on your first gut impression.

EMS Communications

- Public has access through a single number, preferably enhanced 911: _____
- Coordinated PSAPs exist for the system: _____
- Certified personnel provide pre-arrival instructions & priority dispatching (EMD) & this function is fully medically supervised: _____
- Data collection exists allowing for key service elements to be analyzed: _____
- Technology supports interface between 911, dispatching, & administrative processes: _____
- Radio linkages between dispatch, field units, & medical facilities provide adequate coverage & facilitate communications: _____

Total = _____ (6 points)

Medical First Response

- First responders are part of a coordinated response system & medically supervised by a single system medical director: _____
- Defined response time standards exist for first responders: _____
- First response agencies report/meet fractile response time goals: _____
- AED capabilities exist on all first line apparatus: _____
- Smooth transition of care is achieved: _____

Total = _____ (5 points)

Medical Transportation

- Defined response time standards exist: _____
- Agency reports/meets fractile response time goals: _____
- Units meet staffing & equipment requirements: _____

- Resources are efficiently & effectively deployed: _____
- There is a smooth integration of first response, air, ground, & hospital services: _____
- System develops/maintains coordinated disaster plans: _____

Total = _____ (6 points)

Medical Accountability

- Single point of physician medical direction for entire system exists: _____
- Written agreement (job description) for medical direction exists: _____
- Physician has specialized medical director training/certification: _____
- Physician is effective in establishing local care standards that reflect current national standards of practice: _____
- Proactive, interactive, & retroactive medical direction is facilitated by the activities of the medical director: _____
- PCR/QA data transparency exists for MD review: _____
- Clinical Education/Development is effective: _____
- Clinical Education is efficient: _____

Total = _____ (8 points)

Customer/Community Accountability

- Legislative authority to provide service & written service agreements are in place: _____
- Units & crews have a professional appearance: _____

- Formal mechanisms exist to address patient & community concerns: _____
- Independent measurement & reporting of system performance are utilized: _____
- Internal customer issues are routinely addressed: _____

Total = _____ (5 points)

Prevention & Community Education

- System personnel provide positive role models: _____
- Programs are targeted to “at risk” populations: _____
- Formal & effective programs with defined goals exist: _____
- Targeted objectives are measured & met: _____

Total = _____ (4 points)

Ensuring Optimal System Value

- Clinical outcomes are enhanced by the system: _____
- Ambulance response utilization & transport utilization (UHU) is measured & hours are deployed in a manner to achieve efficiency & effectiveness: _____
- Ambulance cost per unit hour & transport document good value: _____
- Service agreements represent good value: _____
- Non-emergency ambulance service is effective & efficient: _____
- Non-Ambulance, but medically necessary (MAV) services are effective & efficient: _____
- System facilitates appropriate medical access: _____

- Financial systems accurately reflect system revenues & both direct & indirect costs: _____
- Revenues are collected professionally & in compliance with regulations: _____
- Tax subsidies when required are minimized: _____

Total = _____ (10 points)

Organizational Structure & Leadership

- A lead agency is identified & coordinates system activities: _____
- Organizational structure & relationships are well defined: _____
- Human resources are developed & otherwise valued: _____
- Business planning & measurement processes are defined & utilized: _____
- Operational & clinical data informs/guides the decision process: _____
- A structured & effective performance based quality improvement (QI) system exists: _____

Total = _____ (6 points)

EMS System Scorecard

1. EMS Communications: _____ (6 points)
2. Medical 1st Response: _____ (5 points)
3. Medical Transportation: _____ (6 points)
4. Medical Accountability: _____ (8 points)

5. Customer/Community Accountability: _____ (5 points)
6. Prevention & Community Education: _____ (4 points)
7. Ensuring Optimal System Value: _____ (10 points)
8. Organizational Structure & Leadership: _____ (6 points)

Total Score: _____ (50 points)

There is no perfect score. Review the statements where you assessed your system zero (0) points and consider these as areas of opportunity for improvement. Any statement marked as “N/A” should also be reevaluated to see if they are also areas of opportunity or improvement.



For over 22 years, the partners and associates at **Fitch & Associates** have served a diverse range of EMS and public safety clients in 49 states and 12 nations worldwide. Whether industry research, system design and improvement, or leadership development, the firm is known for its personal work style, innovative approaches, and practical solutions. For more information visit the website (www.fitchassoc.com) or contact us at info@fitchassoc.com or (816) 431-2600.