

Regional Emergency Medical & Trauma Services Systems Development Biennial Plan

V8.0

**San Luis Valley RETAC
Plan Cycle
July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2021**

| | |
|------------------------|---|
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View from Incident Command Post, Spring Fire Costilla County.

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Section 1: RETAC Overview:

Mission Statement:

To develop, foster and support excellence in trauma care and the emergency medical system within the San Luis Valley.

Description:

The San Luis Valley Regional Emergency Trauma Advisory Council (RETAC) is located within the San Luis Valley. The valley is surrounded by majestic mountain ranges with mountain peaks of over 14,000 feet looking down across the valley floor. The valley's ecosystem is home to a wide range of differing biomes such as tundra, desert, grasslands, and differing forests. Temperatures range from well below zero to upwards of 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Due to the nature of desert biomes, the San Luis Valley faces threats of droughts, blizzards, and flooding.

The annual income in some counties is an average of \$10,748 per household per year for approximately 11% of the population. Many households within the valley live well under the federal poverty guidelines. Much of the local economy is dependent on seasonal tourism.

County Description:

Alamosa County: The City of Alamosa serves as the regional hub with the valley's largest hospital, airport, motels, business services, railroad and trucking terminals, industrial parks, federal and state government offices, and regional shopping. Adams State University and Trinidad State Junior College are also located in Alamosa. Major attractions include the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, San Luis and Rio Grande Railroad passenger line, Zapata Falls, San Luis Lakes State Park, Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge, Colorado Gators alligator farm, and Cattails Golf Course. Alamosa County is home to four utility-scale solar plants generating over 85 MW of electricity.

Conejos County: Major attractions include the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad that travel a narrow-gauge track from Antonito to Chama, New Mexico. Other attractions include Mormon Pioneer Days Rodeo and Parade, Jack Dempsey Museum, Platoro and La Jara reservoirs, Colorado's oldest church in Conejos, and the Los Caminos Antiguos Byway. The Conejos County Hospital is located in La Jara. Small farms and ranches with hay, sheep and cattle are a visible part of the economy. Antonito is a gateway to New Mexico via highways US 285 and US 17.

Costilla County: Major attractions include museums in Fort Garland. San Luis, Colorado's oldest town features the Stations of the Cross and the Shrine of All Saints. Other events include the annual Santa Ana and Santiago celebration each July. Notable fishing areas include Sanchez, Smith, Mountain Home reservoirs, and Culebra Creek. The county also contains the Valley's largest tracts of private lands including the Blanca-Trinchera ranch, which focuses on hunting and real estate. Small villages and farms are notable near San Luis, with larger farms in Jaroso and the Fort Garland area.

Mineral County: Creede is known for its art and sporting goods shops as well as the famous Creede Repertory Theatre. Wolf Creek Ski Area is located on Wolf Creek Pass. Other attractions include a mining museum, ghost towns, North Clear Creek Falls, gold medal fishing

on the Rio Grande river, and access to the Rio Grande headwaters streams, lakes, and reservoirs in neighboring Hinsdale County. Creede is about 40 miles from Lake City on the Silver Thread Byway covering some of the most beautiful scenery in Colorado.

Rio Grande County: Rio Grande is the largest potato and barley-producing county in the state. Monte Vista is known as the valley's agribusiness center but also has other attractions such as a tourist information center, the Colorado State Veterans Center at Homelake and an attractive main street with regional shopping. Del Norte serves as a gateway for tourists and has a newly expanded Rio Grande Hospital. South Fork is the fastest growing town with tourism, a new golf course and is the start of the Silver Thread Byway. Major attractions include Rio Grande County Museum, Beaver Reservoir, Big Meadows Reservoir, gold medal fishing, and backcountry trails. It is also the closest to Wolf Creek Ski Area and the gateway to Pagosa Springs and Durango.

Saguache County: Saguache is the largest county spanning both mountain ranges with many back roads and trails to high lakes and remote areas. Center is a busy potato processing and shipping focus of activity with the San Luis Central Railroad providing freight services. The Crestone/Baca community lies at the foot of the most rugged part of the Sangre de Cristo mountain range and has the greatest diversity of ancestry in the valley including the Haidakhandi Ashram and Mountain Zen Center. Saguache is the gateway to Gunnison via CO 114 and to Poncha Springs via US 285. Attractions include Valley View and Mineral Hot Springs located off US 285 near Villa Grove and the Baca National Wildlife Refuge.

For a map of Hazard Zones, (areas of potential mass movement, geological faults, dams, propane storage sites and areas of no fire coverage) please refer to:

Attachment A

Climate:

The San Luis Valley receives an average of 14 inches of precipitation a year. Of the yearly precipitation it is not unusual for the San Luis Valley to average around 80 inches of snow pack. Throughout the year the valley experiences an average of 205 days of sunshine. Seasonal temperatures range from 78 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer to an average of 11 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter months.

For San Luis Valley Climate Summary Data, please refer to:

Attachment B

San Luis Valley Statistical Profile:

This region encompasses six counties located in some of the most beautiful, wild and rugged frontier lands located in South Central Colorado. These six counties consist of: Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande and Saguache.

According to the ninth annual County Health Rankings conducted by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI) released in March 2018, the rankings show the disparities of the 58 counties in Colorado.

Of these rankings, Costilla county ranked 58th making it the poorest county in Colorado. Saguache follows ranking at 56th, making it the third poorest county. Alamosa ranked 51st, Conejos at 50th and Rio Grande ranking in at 47th. These results show the San Luis Valley is home to the some of the poorest counties in the state.

The town of San Luis in Costilla County is used as an example below to compare the medium incomes of the region. Surrounding counties show similar incomes below the state average.

Estimated median household income in 2017: (it was \$14,213 in 2000)

San Luis: \$26,610

Colorado: \$62,520

Three counties in the San Luis Valley are classified as Frontier and three counties are classified as Rural.

Total Population:

The following Information is from 2017

In 2000, the San Luis Valley's population numbered 46,190, while the 2017 numbers showed an increased total population at 46,578.

Saguache County had the seventh highest growth rate at 3.4 percent for the state and the largest in the San Luis Valley. The population surged from 6,407 in 2016 to 6,626 in 2017. According to DOLA Chief Administrative Office, part of the increase is due to a natural change yet the majority is due to a net migration of 200 new residents.

Alamosa County led the Valley in natural change with an increase of 86 residents but only saw a net migration of nine individuals. The estimated population in Alamosa County for 2017 is 16,551.

Conejos County's population grew from 8,072 to 8,184.

Costilla County went up from 3,705 to 3,776.

Mineral County had a minor increase from 755 to 766 residents.

Rio Grande County was the only SLV county to decrease in population. The county had the fifth largest decline at 37 people and therefore the fifth slowest growth by -0.3 percent. Rio Grande County has an estimated population of 11,301 people.

Square Mileage:

The San Luis Valley is approximately 8,193 square miles (122 miles long and 74 miles wide) of mountains and valleys and represents 10% of the state.

Population Density:

Four out of the six counties experienced a decrease in population in the last ten years.

Alamosa Population in year 2000 14,996
2017 population 16,551, 10% increase

Conejos population in year 2000 was: 8,400
2017 population 8,117, 3 % decrease

Costilla population: in the year 2000 was 3663
2017 population 3,771, 3 % increase

Mineral population in year 2000 was 831
2017 population 752, 1.1% decrease
(Mineral County Population in 1894 was supposedly 10,000)

Rio Grande population in year 2000 was: 12,413
2017 population 11,251, 10 % decrease

Saguache County Population in year 2000 was 5,917
2017 population 6,626, 12 % increase

Largest towns and county population for the valley, all data for derived from 2017 census. *

| County | Main Town | Town Population | County Population |
|------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Alamosa | Alamosa | 9,871 | 16,551 |
| Conejos | Manassa | 975 | 8,117 |
| Costilla | San Luis | 616 | 3,771 |
| Mineral | Creede | 284 | 752 |
| Rio Grande | Monte Vista | 4,295 | 11,251 |
| Saguache | Center | 2,190 | 6,631 |

Participating counties

Counties served by the SLV RETAC include: Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties.

Total population

46,578 people (2017 Census).

Square mileage

8,193 square miles (122 miles long and 74 miles wide)

Population density

Population density ranges from 20.81 people per square mile in Alamosa County to 1.86 per square mile in Saguache county. These densities are well below the population densities of Colorado (41.52) and the United States (79.50).

Urban Centers and Local Geography:

Alamosa is the largest town in the SLV with a population of 9,871 living in the city limits. The population of Alamosa County is approximately 16,551.

There are only five major roads leading into and out of the SLV. Four of the five roads travel over mountain passes (9,000 to 10,000 feet high). In winter months this can be a considerable barrier as roads can be closed due to inclement weather. Flights (helicopter and fixed wing) may also be grounded due to severe weather.

The time it can take for a patient to be transported to a level 1 or 2 trauma center out of the SLV can drastically vary. This is due to the valleys large land mass, variable weather conditions, long transport times and service availability. The SLV RETAC monitors different factors throughout the year to help hospitals and agencies work efficiently and effectively to maximize the care of trauma and medical patients. Currently, San Luis Valley Health provides the highest level of trauma care designated as a level III trauma center.

Agriculture provides the major economic base for the San Luis Valley. All counties in the SLV are considered economically depressed. The poverty rate in some of these counties being among the highest in the State of Colorado. As a result, the population in the SLV does not follow the typical increase seen in urban areas. With high unemployment rates and decreasing industries, the younger generations tend to move to the city for education, career and a more urban social life. For example, a 1950 census of Costilla County showed a population of 6,067. In 2013 it decreased to 3,524.

This trend has a significant impact on the graying of EMS in the SLV as few of the younger generations remain in the valley. For example, in Costilla County the median age of the population is 14 years older than the state average. This provides a barrier to the local medical community as they work to retain employees to provide for that area.

Median resident age Costilla County: 50.6 years

Median resident age Mineral County: 61.2 years

Colorado median age: 36.3 years

San Luis Valley Regional Profile:

Major economic activities are farming with crops of barley (grown for COORS Brewing Company), potatoes, lettuce, wheat and canola. Ranching includes cattle, horses and goats being raised in the valley.

The major transportation routes through the SLV are US Highway 285 and 160. Both are considered hazardous material routes.

The primary communication center in the SLV is with Colorado State Patrol who dispatches for Monte Vista (Rio Grande County), Alamosa, Costilla and Conejos County. Rio Grande County also has a dispatch center for the towns of Del Norte and South Fork. Mineral County and Saguache County have their own dispatch centers.

The valley has 10 ambulance services, 7 are volunteer. One service is part time paid and two are full time paid. One of the full-time paid ambulance services is based at San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center (SLVRMC), the other has a base in Costilla County in the town of San Luis.

Eagle Air Medical (Fixed Wing Aircraft) has bases located in Alamosa and Del Norte. The closest helicopter services are Care Flight out of Taos New Mexico, Flight for Life located in Pueblo and REACH Air Medical in Salida. There are airfield landing strips in Del Norte, Monte Vista and Alamosa. Alamosa is also considered the regional airport for the SLV, which includes commercial flights. Each hospital facility has their own helipad on site.

Rio Grande Hospital and Conejos Hospital are Critical Access Hospitals while San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center is an Acute Care Hospital.

There are three designated trauma centers in the SLV. Conejos County Hospital and Rio Grande Hospital are designated trauma level IV centers while San Luis Health is a designated level III trauma center.

Any patient requiring care above a Level III is transported by ground or air to Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Denver and occasionally to cities in New Mexico.

| Alamosa County Quick Facts | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------|
| Alamosa County | Colorado | |
| Population (2017) * | 16,056 | 5,609,445 |
| Population Change (2010 to 2017) * | 582 | 559,113 |
| Total Employment (2017) * | 10,302 | 3,309,391 |
| Median Household Income ** | \$36,315 | \$65,458 |
| Median House Value ** | \$152,900 | \$286,100 |
| Percentage of Population with Incomes lower than the Poverty Line ** | 27.8% | 11.5% |
| Percentage of Population Born in Colorado ** | 58.1% | 42.7% |
| * State Demography Office | | |
| ** U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey | | |

| Conejos County Quick Facts | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------|
| Conejos County | Colorado | |
| Population (2017) * | 8,117 | 5,609,445 |
| Population Change (2010 to 2017) * | -165 | 559,113 |
| Total Employment (2017) * | 2,608 | 3,309,391 |
| Median Household Income ** | \$35,657 | \$65,458 |
| Median House Value ** | \$113,100 | \$286,100 |
| Percentage of Population with Incomes lower than the Poverty Line ** | 21.1% | 11.5% |
| Percentage of Population Born in Colorado ** | 78.5% | 42.7% |
| * State Demography Office | | |
| ** U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey | | |

| Costilla County Quick Facts | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------|
| Costilla County | Colorado | |
| Population (2017) * | 3,771 | 5,609,445 |
| Population Change (2010 to 2017) * | 239 | 559,113 |
| Total Employment (2017) * | 1,446 | 3,309,391 |
| Median Household Income ** | \$29,000 | \$65,458 |
| Median House Value ** | \$114,200 | \$286,100 |
| Percentage of Population with Incomes lower than the Poverty Line ** | 29.6% | 11.5% |
| Percentage of Population Born in Colorado ** | 59.3% | 42.7% |
| * State Demography Office | | |
| ** U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey | | |

| Mineral County Quick Facts | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------|
| Mineral County | Colorado | |
| Population (2017) * | 752 | 5,609,445 |
| Population Change (2010 to 2017) * | 47 | 559,113 |
| Total Employment (2017) * | 696 | 3,309,391 |
| Median Household Income ** | \$50,385 | \$65,458 |
| Median House Value ** | \$279,000 | \$286,100 |
| Percentage of Population with Incomes lower than the Poverty Line ** | 12.0% | 11.5% |
| Percentage of Population Born in Colorado ** | 34.2% | 42.7% |
| * State Demography Office | | |
| ** U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey | | |

Rio Grande County Quick Facts

| Rio Grande County | Colorado | |
|--|-----------------|-----------|
| Population (2017) * | 11,251 | 5,609,445 |
| Population Change (2010 to 2017) * | -750 | 559,113 |
| Total Employment (2017) * | 5,549 | 3,309,391 |
| Median Household Income ** | \$38,534 | \$65,458 |
| Median House Value ** | \$143,000 | \$286,100 |
| Percentage of Population with Incomes lower than the Poverty Line ** | 18.1% | 11.5% |
| Percentage of Population Born in Colorado ** | 59.1% | 42.7% |
| * State Demography Office | | |
| ** U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey | | |

| Saguache County Quick Facts | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------|
| Saguache County | Colorado | |
| Population (2017) * | 6,631 | 5,609,445 |
| Population Change (2010 to 2017) * | 487 | 559,113 |
| Total Employment (2017) * | 2,704 | 3,309,391 |
| Median Household Income ** | \$34,765 | \$65,458 |
| Median House Value ** | \$150,100 | \$286,100 |
| Percentage of Population with Incomes lower than the Poverty Line ** | 21.0% | 11.5% |
| Percentage of Population Born in Colorado ** | 47.5% | 42.7% |
| * State Demography Office | | |
| ** U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey | | |

More information can be found in
Attachment C

Ongoing Organization and Planning Process:

Organization:

The San Luis Valley RETAC is a 501(C)(3) Non-Profit Organization.

Membership of RETAC Board and Committees

Key Resource Member: Outside Region: Mike Archuleta from Centura Health.

Meetings: SLV RETAC meetings are held quarterly at different locations throughout the SLV. They are held on the third Thursday of the month at 6:00 pm. The Regional Trauma subcommittee meeting is held quarterly at 4:00 pm with the EMS/RMD subcommittee meeting held at 5:00 pm prior to the RETAC meeting. The Key Resource subcommittee meeting varies according to need and availability.

Chairman: Kelly Gallegos, CEO of Conejos Hospital in Conejos County. The Chairman of the SLV RETAC presides over all RETAC meetings and performs duties as assigned by the council. The Chairman shall be ex-officio, non-voting member of all standing and all other committees assigned by the council. Should there be any ties in the voting process, the Chairman shall have the tie-breaking vote.

Vice-Chairperson: Ryan Daugherty, Director of Alamosa Ambulance Service in Alamosa County. He shall assume the duties of the Chairperson in her absence and shall have the authority to direct the business of the RETAC.

Treasurer: Arlene Harms, CEO Rio Grande Hospital in Rio Grande County. Oversees all money, funds and property activities of the SLV RETAC. The Treasurer shall present the financial reports quarterly at regularly scheduled meeting of the SLV RETAC Council.

Secretary: Julie Ramstetter, Trauma Nurse Coordinator of SLV Health in Alamosa County. Documents and publicly posts the minutes and correspondence of all SLV RETAC meetings. The minutes are placed on the SLV RETAC website.

Committees: Additional committees are formed as needed by the SLV RETAC Council. Recent ad hoc committees were created to review regional EMS policies and procedures and implement new valley wide protocols for the participating agencies of the San Luis Valley. Committees typically consist of EMS medical and service directors who preside on the RETAC council.

Permanent Sub-Committees:

Subcommittees have been developed or have active participation to help the RETAC board meet the goals and expectations of the state and local population.

The sub committees are as follows:

- SLV Regional Trauma Committee
- SLV EMS/RMD Committee.
- SLV Key Resource Committee.

- All Hazards Council Homeland Security.
- Emergency Operation Center council and planning team.
- Combined Communication Network of Colorado.
- Trinidad State Junior College Education Council.
- EMS/Fire Science Board of TSJC.
- Citizen Corp and Medical Reserve Corp.
- Local Emergency Planning Committee.
- Interoperable Communication Committee.
- CERT Team.
- SLV HCC Coalition.
- Valley Educators Credit Union board member
- Region 8 representative for EMSAC.
- All Valley Haz-Mat Board.

Distribution of the RETAC Council members among the counties.

- Alamosa – 3
- Conejos – 1
- Costilla – 1
- Rio Grande - 4

Attachment D: Membership of RETAC Council and Positions

Needs Assessment and Planning Process:

Barriers to patient care are typically due to difficult geographic locations, inclement weather, rough mountain terrain, remote areas, distance to medical facilities, lack of EMS service resources and inconsistent communication capability.

Three main challenges of the area include:

1. Recruitment and Retention:

It can be difficult to recruit additional EMT's while trying to stay competitive with pay rates. As a result, there are gaps in coverage in certain areas which can lead to delayed response times and access to care.

There are also concerns with services that experience a low call volume which can result in lack of experience and comfort level when caring for emergency situations. The volunteer services also need to have flexibility with their primary jobs to allow them to be scheduled on an ambulance service for their community.

These challenges have allowed ambulance service directors to get creative and are now working together to share personnel to help with primary coverage and filling the schedule gaps for their services. The RMD program is also developing training situations

via Adobe Connect that will allow remote services to participate in trainings without having to leave their area. The SLV RETAC and RMD program will continue to support these efforts.

2. Severe economic conditions:

Many of the counties within the SLV rank amongst the poorest in the state. Lack of employment, low payer mix and decreasing population add to the existing conditions. Some EMS agencies are at the verge of discontinuing services due to lack of reimbursement, rising costs of supplies and inability to pay personnel.

The RMD program has also worked with the services in the SLV and have developed ways to help provide support. The program provided training on proper billing of services, documentation techniques to help support reimbursement efforts as well as providing training on writing CREATE grants. The services are also working to combine purchasing abilities to reduce costs of supplies. Each of the hospitals are also working with the ambulance services to exchange supplies that are close to expiration to avoid waste. The SLV RETAC and the RMD program will continue to provide this support in the effort to keep services up and running.

3. Significant weather problems:

The SLV weather verges on the extreme, especially during the winter months. Poor driving conditions can make transport within and out of the SLV hazardous and on many occasions impossible. The SLV RMD program has provided courses such as the EVOC Emergency Operation Course to help emergency personnel with driving in poor conditions.

The RETAC Coordinator also collaborates with CSP and CDOT to update the community with storm warnings and poor driving conditions via social media. This has helped increase public awareness and deter others from getting on the roads.

Section 2: Accomplishments:

RETAC Council: *“Reformation of the RETAC Council and its Bylaws.”* Before 2019, the RETAC Council had approximately 30 to 35 voting members which leaned heavily towards Emergency Management. Under the guidance of Dr. Pat Thompson, Julie Ramstetter, Suzanne Bothell, Matthew Passwaters, and Eric Schmidt, and in collaboration with the County Commissioners of the SLV, a new RETAC leadership organization was developed. A new nine-member voting team was developed with new officers elected. New bylaws were created to reflect the changes. The goal was to develop a RETAC council that focused on emergency and trauma services.

Medical Direction: The Regional Medical Director for the SLV RETAC is Dr. Pat Thompson. Dr. Thompson is an Emergency Department provider at Rio Grande Hospital and also serves as the medical director for Center, Baca/Crestone, Saguache and Del Norte ambulance services. Dr. Thompson is assisted by RMD Program coordinator, Reyna Martinez. Some of the highlights of the RMD program include:

- **The Regional Transportation Plan:** This plan was geared to assist in transporting patients outside the SLV to a higher level of care that do not necessarily warrant transfer by air ambulance. This program has been in place for over five years and has been a great service for the patients of the SLV. The program continues to save hundreds of thousands of dollars in unnecessary flight costs as well as saving air transport availability for more critical patients. There are currently 4 agencies participating in this program. The original goal was to be able to transport 50% of the transfers that were going by flight. Last year that figure increased to 92% of transports going by ground that would have originally had to go by flight. This program is supported by the 3 hospitals in the SLV as they contribute money to help with compensation and incentive to continue providing this service.
- **Regional Protocol Development:** The RMD director and program coordinator have implemented the development of regional protocols that are streamlined and available to each of the ambulance services via a phone app and hard copy. The protocol meetings are also held quarterly to update existing policies and assist with state waivers. Each of the EMS services actively participate in the development and updating of these protocols.
- **New Website Development:** The RMD Program coordinator is in the process of developing a new website for the SLV RETAC that will have current capabilities to support online training opportunities using Adobe Connect. This will allow each of the services to share education without having to take personnel out of service to attend trainings in person.
- **EMS Training:** The RMD Program has hosted a regional training conference for the past several years. This year the program hosted United for Safety 2019 SLV Training Summit. Topics included: EVOC Emergency Vehicle Operation Course, MCI/Extrication, Protecting a Crime Scene, Human Trafficking, Fluid Resuscitation in Trauma, Acute Burn Care, Sepsis, Airway Management, Cardiology/LVAD, Stroke Recognition and Treatment and Opioid Use & Medication Assisted Therapy. The training also offered BLS, ACLS and PALS recertification. The program will continue to provide educational opportunities offering CE's at little to no cost to SLV EMS and Emergency responders.
- **CQI Program:** This program is in the early stages of development for the SLV RETAC. Each agency has worked with the program coordinator to implement data collection for areas of improvement.



Above photo: The new RETAC Board of Directors meets to review and update policies and procedures

Hospital Updates and Community:

Rio Grande Hospital provides community outreach and education to several of the school districts and community partners throughout the SLV. RGH collaborates efforts with Colorado State Patrol, Public Health, SLV RETAC and EMS services in their area. Some of the education topics include:

- Distracted Driving
- Seat belt use
- Dangers of driving under the influence
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Helmet use and safety
- Heart Saver and First Aid courses
- Stop the Bleed program

Rio Grande Hospital also collaborates efforts with SLVRMC and Conejos County Hospital to provide trauma trainings and education to EMS and nursing staff. Each facility shares instructors to assist in education trainings that include:

- TNCC – Trauma Nurse Core Course
- ENPC – Emergency Nurse Core Course
- ACLS – Advanced Cardiac Life Support
- PALS – Pediatric Advanced Life Support
- BLS – Basic Life Support with First Aid

San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center and Conejos County Hospital (SLV Health) also provides community outreach and education throughout the SLV. SLV Health collaborates efforts with Colorado State Patrol, Public Health, SLV RETAC, EMS, Fire and Law Enforcement services, American Red Cross and other community partners to provide outreach education to the community. SLV Health is also an American Heart Association Training Center for the SLV. SLV Health offers the following courses routinely for health care personnel.

- TNCC – Trauma Nurse Core Course
- ENPC – Emergency Nurse Core Course
- ACLS – Advanced Cardiac Life Support
- PALS – Pediatric Advanced Life Support
- BLS – Basic Life Support with First Aid
- STABLE Program
- NRP – Neonatal Resuscitation Program

SLV Health also provides community education on safety and injury prevention topics such as:

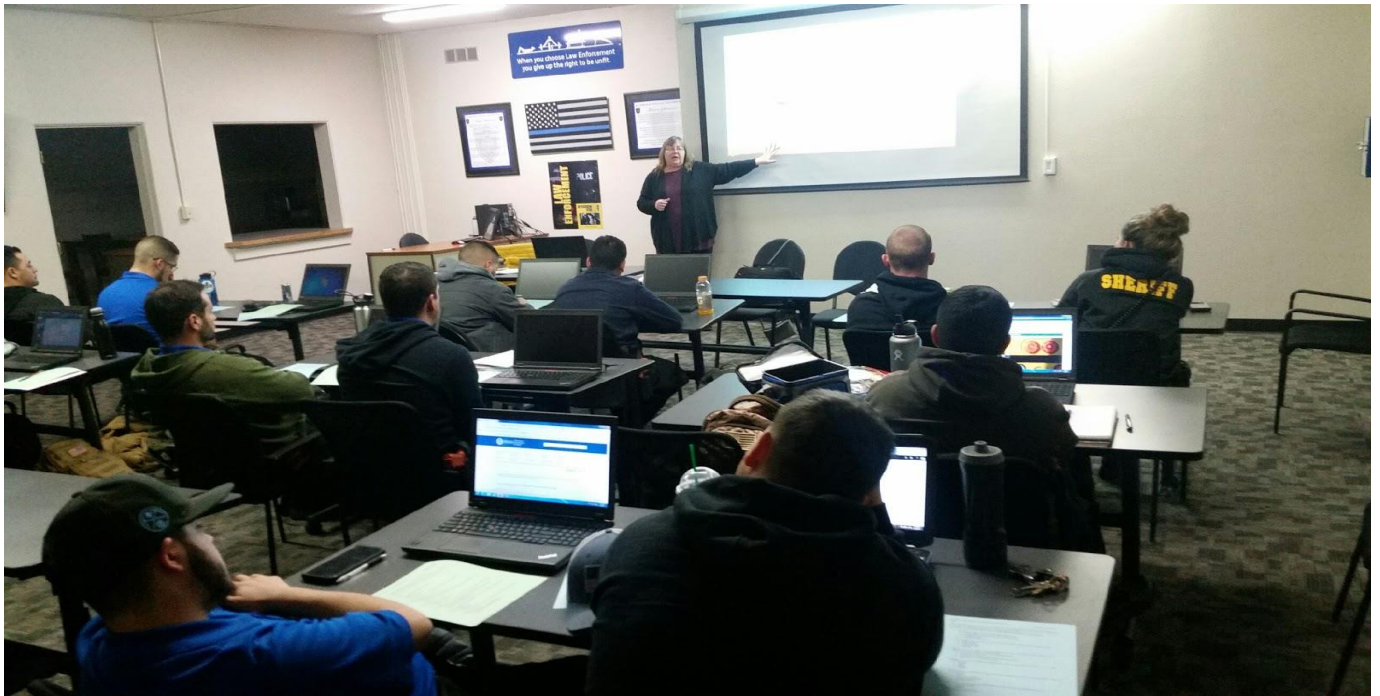
- Fall Prevention
- Sports Injury Prevention: Bumps and Bruises clinic
- Lids for Kids Safety Event: Helmet safety, bike safety, sunburn/skin care, seatbelt safety, fire safety, Stop-the-Bleed, Heart Saver and First aid courses.

Each of the hospitals also work to provide regional training opportunities such as:

- RTTDC – Rural Trauma Team Development Course
- TCAR – Trauma Care After Resuscitation
- Each facility is a clinical site for EMS and nursing students from many institutions such as Trinidad State Junior College, Adams State University and Pueblo Community College.
- Regional EMS Trainings

The RETAC Coordinator also collaborates efforts with institutions and community partners to provide the following outreach and education:

- Adams State University - Provides online college level Incident Command Courses.
- Training for ambulance, fire departments, CERT (Citizen Emergency Response Teams), Public Health, churches and local schools, in the topics of first aid, trauma, NIMS 700/100 and AED use.
- DTR Radio system and VHF, UHF Training - Train on DTR radio use and inform its members and first responders of changes in fee structures, developments and changes due to technology, and economy. MAC Group (Multi Agency Coordination Group).
- Trinidad State Junior College – Instructor for EMT Basic, Intermediate, CPR and IV classes.
- Regional health fairs (Alamosa, Rio Grande, Mineral and Costilla) - RETAC provides Incident Command vests, radios for communication and helps coordinate phlebotomists and planning for the events.
- CSP, CCNC and Interoperable Communication Committee (ICC) – To remain updated on news and laws that will affect radio users in the region.



Above Photo: NIMS 100/700 course for the Alamosa area Law Enforcement.



Above Photo: NIMS 100/700 for EMT students which took place at Trinidad State Junior College Alamosa Campus.



Above Photo: Students participate in an IV Class held at Trinidad State Junior College, Trinidad Campus.



Above Photo: People participate in a class about proper sheltering

Goals not accomplished in the last cycle:

Conejos County has donated a section of land has been acquired by the RETAC with the idea to build an ambulance base next to Conejos Hospital. Since that time RETAC has been unable to procure any funding to accomplish the goal of building the base. Search efforts for grant availability to fund this project has been unsuccessful. Conejos EMS currently uses the tech lab at CCH for their ambulance base

Education and training of new EMT's in the SLV is a component that is constantly being addressed. The SLV RETAC Council continues to seek out the capability to offer an Intermediate to Paramedic class in the area. Last year a Paramedic class was tested in the SLV with one day being taught in Alamosa and one day in Pueblo. The course was taught through Pueblo Community College in conjunction with Trinidad State Junior College. This year TSJC would like to try to offer a paramedic class in the SLV.

The Intermediate class in the fall of 2018 will be the last Intermediate class in Colorado. The last class finished May of 2019.



Above Photo: Students gather to celebrate another successful completion of an EMT Basic course at TSJC- Valley Campus

While significant progress was made to purchase equipment for the SLV EMS agencies, the much more difficult task of recruitment and retention continues to be an issue. Grant monies were secured to help with daytime volunteers in the Saguache area but this is only a temporary fix. SLV RETAC Council and the RMD Program will continue to focus their efforts on providing training on proper billing of services, education on documentation techniques to help support reimbursement efforts as well as providing training on writing CREATE grants to keep existing

services operating. The RETAC Coordinator will look into attending job and career fairs in an effort to entice a younger generation to the EMS field.

Section 3: EMTS System Components:

SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT:

The SLV RETAC created a subcommittee named the SLV Regional Trauma Committee. This committee focuses on efforts to improve the trauma care in the SLV. Pre-hospital patients are transferred to one of the three area hospitals in our region. Conejos County Hospital located in La Jara, Co, Rio Grande Hospital located in Del Norte, CO and San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center located in Alamosa, CO. The subcommittee incorporated a destination statement opposed to specific destination protocols that allows EMS services to reach out for medical control when there is a question of transporting to the nearest facility or a higher level of care. Rio Grande Hospital and Conejos County Hospital are both critical access hospitals and designated level 4 trauma centers while SLV Regional Medical Center is a designated level 3 trauma center. This committee also works on sharing policies and documents amongst the three facilities to help improve the transfer process. The committee also developed a rapid through-put process for critically injured patients requiring emergent surgery/higher level of care to be transported quickly to SLVRMC. The three facilities have also worked to collaborate efforts with professional and community outreach and education.

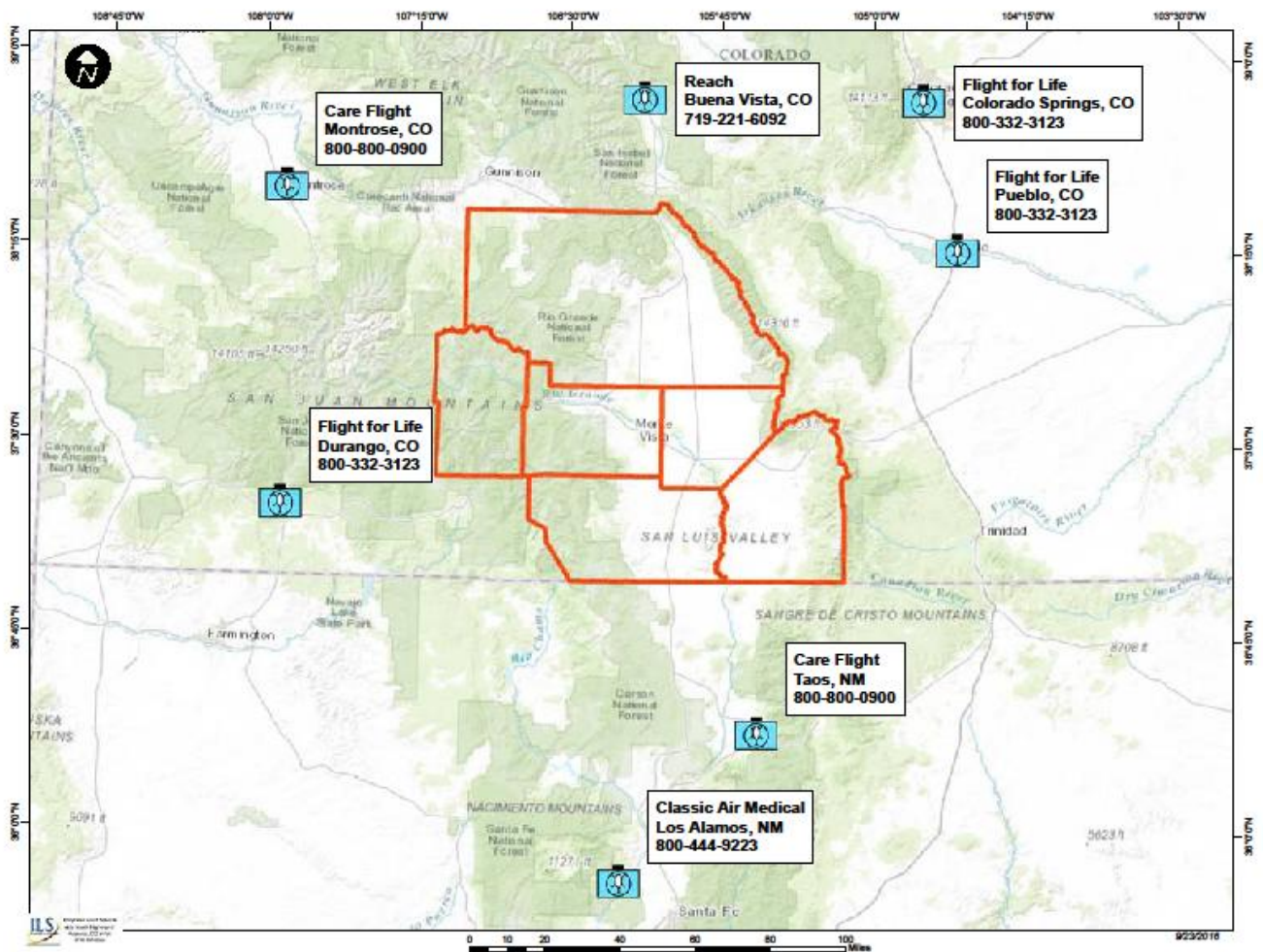
The EMS/RMD subcommittee was also developed with the goal to improve emergency training and education opportunities, develop regional protocols and develop a CQI program for system improvement. This committee works together to develop and update protocols and share existing waivers to help advance care and provide consistent care throughout the SLV. The group also works to provide education for services to improve reimbursement opportunities, supply sharing and personnel sharing. Recruitment of EMS personnel (especially ALS providers), provision of training for providers, navigation of EMS funding/billing/reimbursement issues in an area with an overall low payer mix are areas we have been working to improve. The committees are currently working as a RETAC to improve in all of these areas by working on interoperability of services, providing training and securing available grant and other funding to enhance our capabilities within our region. We are also enhancing our ability to train regional providers as a RETAC and to utilize funding options to bring in outside instructors to our region as well as send providers from the San Luis Valley to training opportunities outside of our region

Integration of Health Services:

The RETAC Coordinator is an active member of many healthcare, communication and emergency management committees within the SLV to assist in bridging the gaps with those committees to avoid duplicating efforts. The RETAC Coordinator office is located in the Alamosa County Nursing building which also houses Public Health and Homeland Security. This allows for more effective collaboration, planning and training with these committees. The RETAC Coordinator is an active member in the following committees within the San Luis Valley:

- SLV Regional Trauma Committee
- SLV EMS/RMD Committee.

- SLV Key Resource Committee.
- All Hazards Council Homeland Security.
- Emergency Operation Center council and planning team.
- Combined Communication Network of Colorado.
- Trinidad State Junior College Education Council.
- EMS/Fire Science Board of TSJC.
- Citizen Corp and Medical Reserve Corp.
- Local Emergency Planning Committee.
- Interoperable Communication Committee.
- CERT Team.
- SLV Healthcare Coalition.
- Valley Educators Credit Union board member
- Region 8 representative for EMSAC.
- All Valley Haz-Mat Board.
- 911 Advisory Board



Helicopter Location Map

Eagle Air Medical is a fixed wing service with two bases located in Del Norte and in Alamosa. There are helipads located at all the hospitals and can additionally transport via rotor directly from the field dependent upon area, distance and need. The nearest rotor transport bases are located in Buena Vista, Pueblo, Durango, Los Alamos and Taos. The SLV does not currently have a dedicated rotor base. Maps were made by the RETAC coordinator and distributed to hospitals, ambulance agencies and dispatch centers so that the closest flight agency would be known to whoever is placing the call for flight transport. . All flight agency services provide outreach training and education within the RETAC.

EMTS Research

The CQI program for the SLV RETAC and RMD program are in its early stages of development. The goal for the future is to develop specific goals for each individual service as well as for the RETAC as a whole. Each EMS service within the SLV is incorporating chart reviews and educational trainings to their staff meetings with the guidance of their medical directors.

The SLV Regional Trauma subcommittee takes the opportunity to review trauma cases transferred between facilities and evaluates the rapid through-put process in collaboration with the EMS services involved in that transport. The case reviews allow EMS directors, ED providers and the Trauma Medical Directors to evaluate the decisions made for those specific cases and look for opportunities for improvement. This committee focuses on early activation of EMS, need for mutual aid assistance and transport times. Each hospital is responsible for evaluating the appropriateness of EMS transports to their own facility and address those fall-outs at the quarterly subcommittee meetings. The committee also reviews the utilization of the ground transportation system out of the SLV and the appropriateness of those transfers.

The SLV Regional Medical Center is the key resource facility for the San Luis Valley. The facility hosts many regional trainings such as Trauma Development Courses, SLV EMS trainings and is an American Heart Association Training center. Dr. Geiger is the Trauma Medical Director for SLVRMC. Dr. Geiger chairs the SLV Regional Trauma subcommittee and sits on the SLV RETAC board. Dr. Geiger provides evidence based and standard practice education for the EMS services regarding trauma resuscitation and care. SLV Regional Medical Center is a clinical site for EMS, nursing and medical students.

Legislation and Regulation

The SLV RETAC does not have direct involvement in the legislative processes but continues to monitor legislative activities being held at the state level. The SLV RETAC Coordinator actively participates in meetings held across the state to keep informed of any changes that may affect the care and resources for the citizens in the San Luis Valley. Currently there is no representation at the state level from the San Luis Valley.

A goal for the SLV RETAC and RMD programs is to set aside future funds for EMS medical and service directors to attend state and national conferences and participate in committees at the state level.

System Finance

Full Time Agencies:

- *Alamosa Ambulance*- is a special district county ambulance service with a management agreement from SLV Health Hospital Organization (formerly San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center, SLVRMC). Funding is obtained through the tax district and patient billing. This ambulance service is Hospital based and is a full time ambulance service. Alamosa employs full time Paramedics on staff and secondary crews on call 24/
- *Costilla Ambulance Service* – Funded through a special tax district and patient billing. This ambulance is not hospital based but does have crew quarters. The Costilla Ambulance Service provides Advanced Life Support Capability (ALS).

Part Time Agency:

- *Monte Vista Community Ambulance Service* - Funding is heavily maintained through patient billing. The service receives a percentage of funds from a county wide special district tax. The service also receives support from the community through fundraisers and donations. The Monte Vista Ambulance Service provides ALS level care through part-time and full-time paid providers.

Volunteer Agencies:

- *Baca/Crestone Ambulance Service*- Funded through the Baca Property Owners Association (POA) and patient billing. This service does have a Paramedic and does have ALS capability.
- *Center Ambulance Service*-Funded through a special tax district and patient billing. The service also receives partial funding from Alamosa, Rio Grande and Saguache counties. This service does have part time ALS capability.
- *Conejos Ambulance Service*-Funded strictly by collections from patient billing. The Ambulance service can get help for funding from the county as needed. Conejos County Ambulance service has ALS capability.
- *Del Norte Ambulance Service*- Funded through a special tax district and patient billing. Del Norte Ambulance service has part-time ALS capability.
- *Mineral County Ambulance Service*: Funded from a special tax district and patient billing. ALS service is available part-time. This agency is a true volunteer agency as the crew does not receive compensation hourly or otherwise.
- *Saguache Ambulance Service*: Funded from a special tax district and patient billing. ALS service is available part-time.
- *South Fork Ambulance Service*: Funded from a special tax district and patient billing. ALS service is available the majority of the time. This agency is the primary agency providing ground transportation out of the SLV.

The SLV RMD program assists with the navigation of EMS funding/billing/reimbursement issues in an area with an overall low payer mix and are all areas we have been working to improve. The committees are currently working as a RETAC to improve in all of these areas by working on interoperability of services, providing training and securing available grant and other funding to enhance our capabilities within our region. The EMTS funding system has also provided the availability to obtain grants for equipment and training within the SLV.

The SLV RETAC also receives funds from the HUTF (Highway Users Tax Fund) as directed by statute. The SLV RETAC receives \$75,000 plus \$15,000 x 6 (6 counties in the valley). The funding is used for RETAC operations, region wide training and special projects as directed by the SLV RETAC council. The board determines the yearly budgets to help address the needs of the San Luis Valley. The SLV RETAC contracts with an outside accountant for tax purposes and to help manage the RETAC fund accountability.

Human Resources

There are several EMS services within the SLV that share personnel in an effort to help with primary coverage in their area. The availability of EMS in the SLV are:

- EMT Basic – 69
- EMT-Intermediate – 38
- EMT-Paramedic – 32

There are ten ambulance services located in the San Luis Valley. Of these services:

- 2 are full time paid
- 1 is part time paid
- 7 are volunteer

One of struggles for the volunteer services is the lack of secondary coverage. Secondary calls are covered on a volunteer basis depending on personnel availability. Most services rely on mutual aid assistance when needing to cover secondary calls. Secondary crews are not feasible for many services due to lack of funding and staff availability to cover concurrent shifts. EMS services have been working together as some agencies are sharing EMS staff and also sharing information for applicants from elsewhere. Our main focus has been to look at the possibility of a float pool of ALS or Paramedic Level providers that can be shared throughout the region, specifically in areas that struggle to recruit or retain ALS providers.

Education Systems

The RETAC has made tremendous strides by offering EMS education and training within the SLV. The RETAC partnered with Trinidad State Junior College to offer an experimental Firefighter EMT class. This class was well attended with 21 students participating. The goal was to educate fire personnel to become more comfortable and assist in emergency situation such as motor vehicle crashes and mass casualty situations. RETAC Coordinator also instructs EMT-B classes, IV certification and CPR classes for the institution. The goal for the future is to continue offering EMT-B and AEMT courses but also look into incorporating a paramedic

course. In the past, TSJC and Pueblo Community College combined efforts to offer their own paramedic course which allowed some classes to be held at TSJC in Alamosa to help decrease some of the commuting done by the SLV students. The SLV RETAC and TSJC anticipate a paramedic course could be successful and well attended. TSJC also offers an ADN nursing program for the SLV.

Trinidad State Junior College hosts an annual EMS symposium. This symposium attracts EMT's throughout the region and from neighboring RETAC's. The educators volunteer their time to contribute to this event. The symposium is able to support CE's for EMS providers. The SLV RETAC Coordinator assists in planning and preparation for the symposium.

The SLV RETAC and RMD Program has hosted a regional training conference for the past five years. This year the program hosted United for Safety 2019 SLV Training Summit. Topics included: EVOC Emergency Vehicle Operation Course, MCI/Extrication, Protecting a Crime Scene, Human Trafficking, Fluid Resuscitation in Trauma, Acute Burn Care, Sepsis, Airway Management, Cardiology/LVAD, Stroke Recognition and Treatment and Opioid Use & Medication Assisted Therapy. The training also offered BLS, ACLS and PALS recertification. The program will continue to provide educational opportunities offering CE's at little to no cost to SLV EMS and Emergency responders. The education is provided by EMS Medical Directors, local ED providers, local surgeons, flight services as well as providers from the Front Range.

Adams State University offers a BSN Nursing program for the San Luis Valley. ASU also provides online college level Incident Command Courses.

Each of the hospitals in the SLV are clinical sites for EMS, nursing and medical students.

The SLV RETAC has also been working on opening up the AHA RQI training modules for ACLS, PALS, NRP, STABLE, and BLS and extending that to all providers in our region. Tacking on to the hospital systems saves our EMS services a considerable amount of money and effort as we seek to continue to keep certifications current, enhance our training, and make a more sustainable certification upkeep model.



United for Safety SLV Training Summit

Public Access:

The San Luis Valley residents have access to 911 dispatch through the Colorado State Patrol Dispatch Center located in Alamosa, Colorado. The towns of Saguache, Del Norte, Center and Creede each have their own dispatch centers but still utilize Colorado State Patrol for the initial 911 call. The Colorado State Patrol dispatch center is trained and can provide emergency medical instructions on calls.

Each agency uses different paging systems or a combination of the following:

- Minotaur 5 from Med 9 channel.
- DTR communication.
- Digital phone paging system.

Reverse 911 (Everbridge) and I-PAWS are resources utilized throughout the SLV for sending out information regarding emergency alerts/events.

Evaluation:

The SLV RETAC Council is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the goals set forth in the biennial plan. The RETAC Council meets quarterly to discuss issues, trends, and implementing new ideas to help support the needs of the emergency and trauma services. EMS/RMD and Regional Trauma Subcommittees also meet quarterly to evaluate the effectiveness of destination guidelines, CQI, interfaculty transfers, protocol development,

document sharing and training opportunities. The RETAC Council oversees the activities of the subcommittees.

The Key Resource committee for the SLV RETAC is a subcommittee that consists of Emergency Management, Emergency Preparedness, Healthcare Coalition, Homeland Security, law enforcement, Search and Rescue, fire fighters and other emergency volunteer services. This committee reports on MCI education, response, capability and resources within the SLV. The resource personnel from this committee also assists the RETAC Coordinator and Regional Medical Director with yearly testing and evaluation of EMS services.

Communication Systems:

The San Luis Valley utilizes the DTR communication system and has done so since its inception. All ambulance and fire departments within the have VHF/UHF radio as a backup system in the event the DTR towers are not functioning. Other means of communication within the SLV include:

- Ambulance and fire personnel are dispatched using 911 through Colorado State Patrol located in Alamosa. There are also dispatch centers located in Del Norte, Saguache, Center and Creede.
- Communication between EMS and hospitals is done via DTR communication systems and by using UHF and cell phones as backup systems.
- Hospitals also communicate utilizing a DTR system as well as EM-Resource System to share information such as bed status, medical/trauma surges and alerts.
- Mutual Aid resources available in the SLV include; Advanced EMS, fire, dive teams, high angle rescue, water and ice rescue and Search and Rescue teams.
- Mass casualty events are communicated with reverse 911, Everbridge and I-Paws.

The SLV RETAC is in the process of working with Broadband Communications to upgrade the communication system within the valley to include priority cell phone service to emergency personnel and expanding areas of coverage.

Medical Direction:

Medical Direction in the San Luis Valley is under the guidance of Regional Medical Director Dr. Pat Thompson in compliance with chapter 2 rules and the SLV RETAC Regional protocols. Dr. Thompson is an Emergency Department provider at Rio Grande Hospital and also serves as the medical director for Center, Baca/Crestone, Saguache and Del Norte ambulance services. Dr. Thompson is assisted by RMD Program coordinator, Reyna Martinez. Some of the highlights of the RMD program include:

- The Regional Transportation Plan: This plan was geared to assist in transporting patients outside the SLV to a higher level of care that do not necessarily warrant transfer by air ambulance. This program has been in place for over five years and has been a great service for the patients of the SLV. The program continues to save hundreds of

thousands of dollars in unnecessary flight costs as well as saving air transport availability for more critical patients. There are currently 4 agencies participating in this program. The original goal was to be able to transport 50% of the transfers that were going by flight. Last year that figure increased to 92% of transports going by ground that would have originally had to go by flight. This program is supported by the 3 hospitals in the SLV as they contribute money to help with compensation and incentive to continue providing this service.

- **Regional Protocol Development:** The RMD director and program coordinator have implemented the development of regional protocols that are streamlined and available to each of the ambulance services via a phone app and hard copy. The protocol meetings are also held quarterly to update existing policies and assist with state waivers. Each of the EMS services actively participate in the development and updating of these protocols.
- **New Website Development:** The RMD Program coordinator is in the process of developing a new website for the SLV RETAC that will have current capabilities to support online training opportunities using Adobe Connect. This will allow each of the services to share education without having to take personnel out of service to attend trainings in person.
- **EMS Training:** The RMD Program has hosted a regional training conference for the past several years. This year the program hosted United for Safety 2019 SLV Training Summit. Topics included: EVOC Emergency Vehicle Operation Course, MCI/Extrication, Crime Scene Preservation, Human Trafficking, Fluid Resuscitation in Trauma, Acute Burn Care, Sepsis, Airway Management, Cardiology/LVAD, Stroke Recognition and Treatment and Opioid Use & Medication Assisted Therapy. The training also offered BLS, ACLS and PALS recertification. The program will continue to provide educational opportunities offering CE's at little to no cost to SLV EMS and Emergency responders.
- **CQI Program:** This program is in the early stages of development for the SLV RETAC. Each agency has worked with the program coordinator to implement data collection for areas of improvement.
- Each county utilizes the RETAC Coordinator to assist with ambulance inspections. The goal for the RETAC Council is to standardize this process with each of the ambulance services for thoroughness and consistency.

Clinical Care:

There are three designated trauma centers in the SLV. Conejos County Hospital and Rio Grande Hospital are designated trauma level IV centers while San Luis Health is a designated level III trauma center. The residents of the San Luis Valley also have access to care with multiple clinics located throughout the valley. Rio Grande Hospital has clinic access in both Rio Grande and Mineral Counties. Valley Wide Health Systems has clinics located in Costilla, Conejos, Alamosa, Saguache and Rio Grande Counties. San Luis Valley Health also has clinic access in Alamosa, Conejos and Rio Grande Counties. Each healthcare system provides primary care as well as select specialty services.

The SLV RETAC created a subcommittee named the SLV Regional Trauma Committee. This committee focuses on efforts to improve the trauma care in the SLV. The committee incorporated a destination statement opposed to specific protocols that allows EMS services to reach out for medical control when there is a question of transporting to the nearest facility versus a higher level of care. Rio Grande Hospital and Conejos County Hospital are both designated level 4 trauma centers while SLV Regional Medical Center is a designated level 3 trauma center. This committee also works on sharing policies and documents amongst the three facilities to help improve the transfer process. The committee also developed a rapid through-put process for critically injured patients requiring emergent surgery/higher level of care to be transported quickly to SLVRMC. The subcommittee reviews the appropriateness of the transfers among the three hospitals. This process is reviewed quarterly during the committee meetings.

The subcommittee also collaborates care with the flight services within southern Colorado and northern New Mexico. These processes are reviewed to ensure the patients of the SLV have the quickest and safety access to care. The SLV RETAC Coordinator has also provided information regarding helicopter access for EMS in the field. This map and the flight services contact information was shared with each ambulance service, hospitals, clinics and dispatch centers to allow for the quickest helicopter response.

The healthcare facilities in the San Luis Valley utilize the trauma facilities of southern Colorado. Accessibility is limited to bed availability and weather delays.

See attachment E

Mass Casualty

The SLV RETAC created a subcommittee, Key Resource Committee, that includes representation from the Emergency Operations Center, Medical Reserve Corp, Local Emergency Planning Committee, Haz-Mat, Citizen Corp and the Healthcare Coalition. The committee collaborates with the SLV RETAC to plan and prepare for MCI situations and to assist with educating and training on emergency service response.

The SLV RETAC assists with testing the MCI capabilities of each ambulance service. Throughout the year each agency has partnered with its adjoining agency or agencies and have conducted MCI training incidents. These MCI incidents have been either table top or full-scale trainings. The trainings have included multi-agency EMS, fire personnel, hospital emergency preparedness programs as well as the SLV Regional Airport.

Disaster preparedness and trainings continue to be offered throughout the region. The SLV RETAC Coordinator assists with providing NIMS 100/700 and 300-400 classes throughout the SLV. The coordinator also partners with Public Health, Red Cross, Citizens Corp to provide WEB EOC trainings as needed for community partners. The SLV RETAC communicates with the Emergency Operations Center for all Incident Command situations within the SLV. The RETAC Coordinator also assists with providing trainings on EM-Resources for hospitals to allow local and state communication regarding bed availability status, hospital divert, medical and trauma surges.

The SLV RETAC assists in providing active shooter trainings to the school districts within the SLV. The trainings offered include table top and full-scale incidents. The SLV RETAC currently does not have any stockpile of supplies or pharmaceuticals for use in a pandemic situation.



Active shooter in Conejos County School District. RETAC Coordinator captured and being held at gun point for being the active shooter, taking hostages, stealing the police car and hijacking an ambulance!

Public Education

The RETAC Coordinator also collaborates efforts with institutions and community partners to provide the following outreach and education:

- Adams State University - Provides online college level Incident Command Courses.
- Training for ambulance, fire departments, CERT (Citizen Emergency Response Teams), Public Health, churches and local schools, in the topics of first aid, trauma, NIMS 100/700 and AED use.
- DTR Radio system and VHF, UHF Training - Train on DTR radio use and inform its members and first responders of changes in fee structures, developments and changes due to technology and economy. MAC Group (Multi Agency Coordination Group).
- Trinidad State Junior College – Instructor for EMT Basic, Intermediate, CPR and IV certification classes.
- Volunteer Organization Active in Disasters (VOAD) to help educate local church groups and other community groups with CPR, AED use, active shooter drills and Stop the Bleed classes.
- CSP, CCNC and Interoperable Communication Committee (ICC) – To remain updated on news and laws that will affect radio users in the region.
- Health and Wellness classes provided to Alamosa County employees on weight loss, dieting and exercise.

- Incident Command classes: 100/700 courses for school districts, long term healthcare facilities and assisted living centers.

Prevention

Currently, SLV RETAC assists in several programs throughout the SLV. Some of the programs and trainings include:

- Fire safety and fire extinguisher trainings.
- Stop the Bleed training.
- Wildfire mitigation education.
- MCI drills: Assist with local school districts to provide active shooter drills.
- 911 education: Work with school age children about the use of 911 and access to help in emergency situations.
- Healthcare Coalition: Collaboration with the HCC to provide public education on MCI situations, medical surges and PPE education.
- Hospital based programs include topics such as: Fall prevention, Distracted driving, Seat belt safety, Driving under the influence, Drug and alcohol abuse, Helmet safety, Sexually transmitted diseases, Swim Safety, Heart Saver and First Aid courses. Each hospital facility coordinates with the SLV RETAC to provide outreach and education to various communities throughout the SLV.
- Centauri High School in Conejos County offers EMT Basic courses to their high school students.

Pediatric specific education is focused on topics such as:

- Sunburn and skin care
- Swim safety
- Seat belt use
- Helmet safety
- Drug and Alcohol
- Fire safety

See Attachment F

Information Systems

All EMS agencies submit data to the state database through the Image Trend program. The compliance rate on data submission from the SLV EMS services to the state ranges from 90-100%. Trainings on the Image Trend program have been provided by the SLV RMD program for EMS service directors to educate on data retrieval. This will allow service directors to pull agency statistics for process and quality improvement programs. The RMD program is in its early stages of their CQI program. The goal for this program is to develop individual and regional goals to monitor trends and tailor the educational needs of the EMS system in the SLV.

Each of the hospitals within the San Luis Valley also submit trauma data to the state database as well as the nation trauma database systems. Conejos County Hospital and Rio Grande Hospital submit a shortened version data spreadsheet through the Image Trend program that's required for all Level IV and V designated trauma centers. San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center utilizes the vendor Clinical Data Management to collect its initial trauma data that is later submitted to CDPHE through the Image Trend program as required for all Level III designated trauma centers. The data collected is also utilized by each facility's Process Improvement program. Each facility also participates in a process improvement research program through Centura Health focusing on trauma care in rural Colorado. The process improvement programs have helped with streamlining processes between the three hospitals in the SLV and identified areas to expand services.



San Luis Valley on alert for flooding. Above picture, fields flooded next to Rio Grande River.



South Conejos Schools Active Intruder Exercise



Hot wash for South Conejos Schools Active Intruder Exercise

Section 4: Goals and Objectives

Goal #1

- A. **Goal Statement:** Improve EMT education training and programs.
- B. **Background:** Regional Medical Director Dr. Pat Thompson and Monte Vista/Costilla EMS Medical Director Dr. Grant Hurley have envisioned a regional training program that is available to all SLV EMS agencies.
- C. **Components Addressed:** EMTS System Component # 6 Education Systems.
- D. **Project description:** The RETAC RMD Program has purchased the Adobe Connect in the effort to support this training format. The education would be provided by the EMS Medical directors
- E. **Estimated Cost:**

| | Description | Estimated Cost |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| RETAC Staff | RMD CQI | 50 X \$130.00 per hr |
| RETAC Operating | | |
| Outside Funds | | 50 Facilities X \$30.00, per hr |
| Donated / In-Kind | RMD,EMS Dir. - Instructor | 50 Trainings X \$100.00 per hr |
| | Total | \$13,000.00 |

- F. **Desired Outcome:** The goal is to provide one day trainings and have them recorded for those unable to attend the live training.

Goal #2

- A. **Goal Statement:** Improve EMT education training and programs.
- B. **Background:** With the valley's location and distance from urban areas it is difficult and costly to recruit outside EMS trainers. With 7 of the 10 ambulance services being volunteer, combined with staffing (recruitment and retention) issues it is difficult to provide regional training for EMS without having them leave their area and possibly leaving gaps in primary coverage.
- C. **Components Addressed:** EMTS System Component # 6 Education Systems.
- D. **Project Description:** Through grants and partnering with Trinidad State Junior College the goal would be to have the SLV RETAC become its own training center to continue to

provide regional trainings for the EMS providers of the San Luis Valley offering education for little to no cost and continuing education credits.

E. Estimated Cost:

| | Description | Estimated Cost |
|-------------------|-------------|----------------|
| RETAC Staff | | \$15,000.00 |
| RETAC Operating | | \$5,000.00 |
| Outside Funds | | \$15,000.00 |
| Donated / In-Kind | | \$25,000.00 |
| | Total | \$60,000.00 |

- F. Desired Outcome:** The desired outcome is to provide quality training and education programs to all levels of EMT's on a continuous basis. The outcome would be measured on improved patient care and a better trained more knowledgeable EMS System. If the RETAC was its own training center the cost associated with providing EMT's classes could be substantially reduced!

Goal #3

A. Goal Statement: Continue Regional Medical Direction

- B. Background:** Regional Medical Direction allows each agency to provide standardized care by streamlining protocols and procedures. This allows each Medical Director to implement the same protocols for the agencies throughout the region.

Currently our RMD and CQI Coordinator have made tremendous strides in accomplishing and setting goals for our region. Plans for the coming year are to evaluate the Regional Transport System, develop a robust CQI program, streamline protocols and continue to develop and expand the EMS training symposium

C. Components Addressed: EMTS system components # 10 Medical Direction

- 1. Project Description:** The Valley has undertaken this project with the goal to provide quality training, education and medical direction from one source. We feel that as this project progresses, the need for more funding would decrease and could be utilized in other areas.

- D. Desired Outcome:** To have Regional Medical Direction that would require minimal funding to endow the Medical Directors with the knowledge and training to enhance the capabilities of their agency. To continue refining the Regional Protocols so EMT's throughout the area have up to date information access.

E. Estimated Cost:

| | Description | Estimated Cost |
|----------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| RMD / CQI | | \$28,800.00 |
| Printing, Phone app, misc. | | \$4,200.00 |
| Outside Funds | | \$0 |
| Donated / In-Kind | | \$0 |
| | Total | \$33,000.00 |

- F. **Desired Outcome:** To develop a robust RMD program to incorporate a quality process improvement program.

Goal # 4

- A. **Goal Statement:** Improve EMT education training and programs.
- B. **Background:** There are probably more EMT Intermediates in the valley than in many other areas throughout the state. An Intermediate to Paramedic class would be extremely beneficial to the agencies and the community. This concept of providing a Paramedic course is being researched with the support of Trinidad State Junior College
- C. **Components Addressed:** EMTS System Component # 6 Education Systems.
- D. **Project Description:** An Intermediate to Paramedic program. Offering the course in the San Luis Valley could potentially attract more EMS providers to advance their training. The hospitals could continue to allow students to do clinical rotations.
- E. **Estimated Cost:**

| | Description | Estimated Cost |
|--------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Paramedic Tuition | | \$10,525.50 |
| Fees | | \$2,947.14 |
| Teaching Materials | | \$1,200.00 |
| CREATE Grant | | |
| CREATE Grant | | |
| Accreditation | | |
| Total | | \$14,672.04 |

- F. **Desired Outcome:** The joint Paramedic class being held in conjunction with Pueblo Community College will foretell of the possibility of a class next year in Alamosa.

Goal # 5

- A. **Goal Statement:** Enhance EMT training through Resuscitation Quality Improvement Program.

B. Background: The newly formed RETAC Council has made training the top priority. It has allocated monies to be used for training that has been approved by the council and RMD. With the collaboration of the hospitals and their expertise and equipment, the Regional Medical Directors will provide, oversee and deliver the RQI Program. The money allocated for training will be utilized for all training not just RQI.

C. Components Addressed: EMTS System Component # 6 Education Systems.

D. Project Description: SLV Health own Trauma Nurse Coordinator Julie Ramstetter has suggested with Dr Grant Hurley to provide RQI training to EMT's through the hospital.

E. Estimated Cost:

| | Description | Estimated Cost |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Training funds | | \$18,000 |
| In Kind Match | Dr and Nurses Per training | \$200.00 per hour |
| Teaching Materials | | ?? |
| | | |
| | | |
| Total | | |

F. Desired Outcome: This joint hospital and EMT training would allow CPR, PALS, ACLS training in an environment unavailable to all of the ambulance agencies previously. This training would provide for a better and more thorough understanding of principles and events that occur in life threatening situations. With the help from the Medical/hospital community this training would deliver a better trained individual to enhance patient survival in the SLV.

Section 5: Attest Statement

ATTEST STATEMENT

Biennial Plan

By signing below, the RETAC Chairman and the RETAC Coordinator/Executive Director attest that the information contained in this document, to the best of their knowledge, completely and accurately represents the most current information available to complete the RETAC Biennial plan. The goals and objectives incorporated herein have been reviewed and agreed upon by the RETAC Board of Directors to be included in this document.

Print Chairperson Name

Chairperson Signature

Signature Date

Print RETAC Coordinator/Executive Director Name

RETAC Coordinator/Executive Director Signature

Signature Date

Appendix

Supporting Documents

Attachments

- A. Hazard Zones**
- B. San Luis Valley Climate**
- C. San Luis Valley Population**
- D. SLV RETAC Council**
- E. SLV RETAC Destination Statement**
- F. Lids for Kids Safety Event Flyer**