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**For Immediate Release**

## **DHHR Employee Receives National EMS Award**

Vicki Hildreth, Coordinator of West Virginia's Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) program, received a 2012 National Recognition Award for advice, inspiration, and leadership at the Emergency Medical Services for Children National Program meeting in Bethesda, MD, on May 10, 2012. The award was presented by Elizabeth Edgerton, Branch Chief for EMSC and Injury and Violence Prevention within the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration.

The Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Program, under the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, ensures that all children living, attending school, or travelling in West Virginia, can receive appropriate care in a health emergency. The focus of the EMSC program is that emergency medical equipment and supplies suitable for use in small children – including newborns and toddlers – is available on ambulances and in hospitals. Under Hildreth's leadership, West Virginia's EMSC Program has become a model for other state EMSC Programs.

Hildreth revitalized the *Always Ready for Kids Program*, so that all West Virginia hospital emergency departments are prepared to manage life-threatening medical and trauma pediatric emergencies for our small patients.

One improvement to ambulances in West Virginia is the addition of a child restraint system which allows children, weighing between ten and forty pounds, to be properly secured for safe transport during an emergency situation. According to Karen Schuech, RN NREMT-P, with Berkeley County Emergency Ambulance Authority, "Prior to receiving the child restraint systems, we used the patients' car seats for medical cases, and/or backboards with a lot of extra padding when needed, or commercially made pediatric car seats, many times improvising to "make it fit" to the child's size. Due to the adaptability of the child restraint system to many different sizes and age groups, a lot of the improvising was eliminated, making our job a whole lot easier and more efficient, not to mention, safer for the child."

Another improvement is a special Infusion System carried by Advanced Life Support ambulances, which allows trained paramedics to gain vascular access for providing medications when traditional intravenous access is not possible. Paramedic Lori Short with Camden Clark Medical Center Ambulance Service recently used the Infusion System on a two month old patient. Short expressed gratitude for the availability of this tool for the small patients she transports in emergency situations.

To learn more about DHHR's EMSC program go online to [www.wvoems.org](http://www.wvoems.org)