

The COTS Forum

COTS has several active committees and a 30-member Board of Trustees that drives COTS work. However any stakeholders can bring community issues related to trauma and emergency care to a COTS forum for discussion. COTS' Board & Committee meetings are open to the public.

- **COTS Prehospital Committee**

convenes leadership from local emergency departments and EMS agencies to problem solve issues related to the transfer of care of patients coming to hospitals in emergency situations.

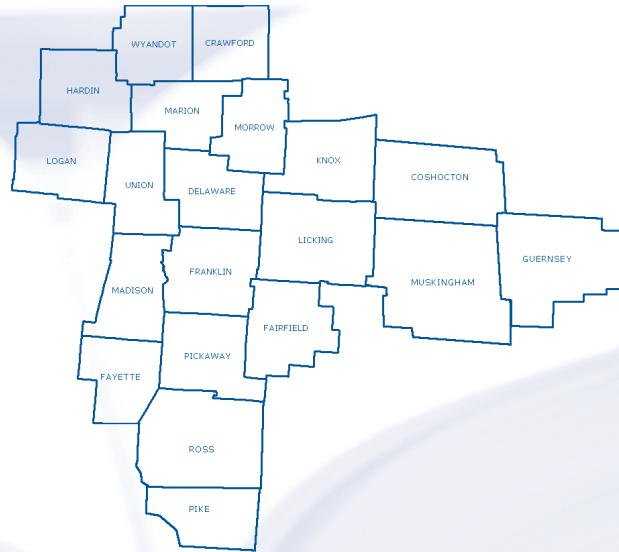
- **COTS Ethics Committee**

addresses ethical issues related to the emergency care of patients within the region. This Committee has published a document titled Ethics & Medical Response in a Mass Casualty Event.

What is COTS?

The Central Ohio Trauma System (COTS) is the regional trauma system in central Ohio.

COTS' Mission is to save and improve lives through the coordination of trauma and emergency healthcare resources. COTS serves as the forum for addressing issues affecting the delivery of trauma/emergency healthcare services and injury prevention in the central Ohio community. COTS also serves as the healthcare preparedness coordination agency for the Central Ohio Homeland Security Region. COTS coordinates the regional planning and response efforts of 27 hospitals across 15 central Ohio counties. COTS maintains an Internal Revenue status of 501(c)(3) and operates with charitable, educational and scientific intent.



COTS is an affiliate of the Columbus Medical Association

431 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Phone: 614.240.7419
Fax: 614.240.7416

www.goodhealthcolumbus.org



COTS' Current Initiatives

- The COTS *Regional Emergency Care Access Plan (RECAP)* addresses hospital diversion when emergency departments are extremely busy. RECAP includes:
 - A memorandum of understanding signed by hospitals that states emergency departments will not divert critical or unstable patients.
 - The regional *Emergency Patient Transport Plan (EPTP)* which is activated by the Columbus Fire Alarm Office when four emergency departments in Franklin County simultaneously divert EMS patients. The EPTP promotes access to care and has served over 38,000 patients since 2002.
 - A *Diversion Explanation Tool* which is carried on EMS vehicles and helps prehospital personnel explain to stable patients why they are being diverted by a hospital. This tool is available in English, Spanish, French, Russian and Somali.
 - Committee work and consultative services for hospitals working together to improve their diversion protocols and patient flow processes.
 - The *Emergency Department Activity Webpage*, which operates in live time and allows hospitals to rapidly declare how busy they are to area EMS agencies, dispatch centers and each other. This web page helps direct stable EMS patients to less-busy hospitals. It also enables hospitals to see when neighboring institutions are busy in order to anticipate additional patients. The web page is part of a new database that will allow hospitals to trend their diversion data in order to improve emergency services care for the public.
- **COTS' Guidelines for Patients with Concealed Weapons** provide a standardized approach for intervening with patients who are legally carrying a concealed weapon and require emergency care. The guidelines incorporate the use of locked gun safety boxes that are exchanged between

EMS, hospitals and law enforcement personnel. The guidelines seek to minimize accidents to healthcare personnel required to handle firearms while caring for patients.

- **COTS' Regional Guidelines for Pre-Hospital Newborn Safe Haven** provide direction for local EMS and peace officers who are presented with a relinquished newborn as allowed under Ohio Law (§2151.3515 & §2151.3517) since 2001. These guidelines pertain to infants who are less than 72 hours old with no indication of abuse or neglect.
- **COTS Regional EMS Infectious Exposure Guidelines** promote consistency in prompt care for EMS personnel exposed to potentially infectious body fluids while in the line of duty in Central Ohio.
- **COTS Emergency Medical Services Clinical Information for Prehospital Performance Improvement** guidelines expedite information from hospitals to EMS providers about their patient care and outcomes. EMS providers depend upon patient outcome information to make improvements in care for subsequent patients. These guidelines are HIPAA-compliant.
- **COTS' White Paper for Central Ohio EMS Agencies on the Prehospital Transport of STEMI* Patients to Local Hospitals** is a resource to help EMS providers make informed destination decisions for patients having heart attacks. These guidelines are based on AHA/ACC guidelines. (*ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction)
- **COTS** is the *Hospital Incident Liaison (HIL)* for 27 Central Ohio hospitals during a catastrophic event. The COTS HIL is on call 24/7 as a clearinghouse for information and to assist with allocation of emergency resources to hospitals. The HIL pager number is (614) 637-4939. COTS also coordinates central Ohio hospitals' collective emergency preparedness so that strategies are interoperable and comprehensive in relation to local, state and federal plans. COTS worked with the Ohio Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and local EMS providers to establish three portable trailers filled

with emergency equipment to assist EMS in the triage of large number of casualties from a disaster.

- **COTS** established regional adult and pediatric prehospital trauma triage guidelines for EMS that are compliant with state criteria and optimize use of trauma care resources available in the region.
- **COTS' Regional Trauma Registry** has data on 55,000 trauma admissions from 23 hospitals in central Ohio since its inception 1999. This data is used by:
 - COTS to drive system-wide improvements in trauma & emergency care
 - The public at-large via an annually published community injury report
 - Public health departments in planning community prevention initiatives
 - Local hospitals to improve patient care
 - EMS in assessing compliance with Ohio's trauma triage criteria
 - Community researchers
- **The COTS Registry** captured information on over 11,500 critically injured trauma patients in 2006 alone. *Falls* are the leading cause of injury hospitalizations; *gunshot wounds* are the leading cause of intentional trauma deaths; & *motor vehicle crashes* are the leading cause of unintentional trauma fatalities in Central Ohio.
- **COTS** coordinates professional and public education related to trauma and emergency preparedness.
 - COTS partners with the *Columbus Coalition Against Family Violence* to train healthcare professionals in uniform screening for domestic violence. Over 3,000 Franklin County healthcare professionals have received this training to date.
 - COTS is the regional provider for continuing trauma education courses for physician and nurses, including the *Advanced Trauma Life Support*

(*ATLS® Course for Doctors, the Emergency Nursing Pediatric Course (ENPC®)*, and the *Trauma Nursing Core Curriculum (TNCC®)*). An average of 21 of these courses are offered each year by COTS, which leads to improved trauma care for citizens of Central Ohio.

- COTS has trained over 900 healthcare professionals including physicians, nurses, medics, safety and security staff in *Basic Disaster Life Support (BDLS®)* courses since 2005. BDLS is a national standard for disaster preparedness education among healthcare professionals.
- COTS provides on-site burn prevention education to Central Ohio school-age children. Six hundred central Ohio fifth and sixth graders have received COTS *Burn Smarts* program since 2004.
- COTS has created a number of brochures to help educate the public about trauma, injuries and emergency services issues. These publications are utilized by interested stakeholders and include *Injury While Drinking Alcohol is No Accident; Autopsies in Injury-Related Deaths; Emergency Department Diversion: What Does it Mean?; Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash and Assault Injuries in Central Ohio---A Public Health Assessment* (published jointly with the Columbus Public Health Department).



Central Ohio
Trauma System

www.goodhealthcolumbus.org/cots