



RURAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT (REMCDP)



DEFEND TODAY, SECURE TOMORROW

OVERVIEW

Congress authorized the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to establish the REMCDP, a \$2 million competitive grant program, with awards in 2016, 2018, and 2020. The grants were awarded to the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC), which proposed to use existing communications infrastructure, improve operational effectiveness, and provide communications training to enable improved rural medical services through its *First Hands Program* and *First Voice Program*, as well as other enhancements.

FIRST HANDS PROGRAM

UMMC developed the *First Hands Program* to improve the State of Mississippi’s public safety communication system—Mississippi Wireless Information Network (MSWIN)—and to extend its use to support rural medical care. The program combines medical and land mobile radio communications education and hands-on training to empower first responders providing medical aid in rural communities. Participants receive training in communications (e.g., radio frequency and channels), medical response (e.g., trauma assessment, basic life support, bleeding control), and evacuation (e.g., air-to-ground communications).



FIRST VOICE PROGRAM

UMMC also designed a course for all Mississippi public safety communication personnel and dispatchers entitled the *First Voice Program*. The course delivers a strong foundation for all professionals involved in medical emergency and crisis communications and is designed to educate public safety communication professionals and dispatchers in the use of MSWIN. Additional course topics include communications with medical assets and medical emergency information, among others.



REMCDP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- As of March 31, 2021, hosted 350 *First Hands Program* classes with more than 6,300 participants from across Mississippi
- Purchased portable MSWIN radios, just-in-time operational platform vehicles, and bleeding control kits to support and enhance training
- Designed an Automatic Vehicle Location system tied to existing public safety radio infrastructure
- Launched a mobile smart phone application to allow first responders to reference the *First Hands Program* information while in the field
- Transitioned the *First Voice Program* curriculum to an online course format and recorded videos due to in-person meeting restrictions
- Recognized for saving at least eight lives as a result of training and resources provided

2020 REMCDP PLANS

UMMC is building on the success of its previous REMCDP awards from 2016 and 2018 by expanding training opportunities and creating innovative strategies that will increase the reach to more public safety personnel in rural areas. UMMC continues offering the *First Hands Program* and refresher courses, as well as the *First Voice Program* training to fulfill unmet course demand. UMMC also continues offering just-in-time training in situations that require rapid deployment of equipment and support for field operations needing radio communications. Additionally, UMMC is redesigning the existing Mississippi Center for Emergency Services (MCES) mobile application on a more interactive platform to allow for improved collaboration and connectivity among rural public safety professionals and MCES personnel. Finally, UMMC is developing new approaches to disseminate medical response and communication training for public safety professionals using *TeleTraining*, which will help disseminate information to every rural responder in the state.

EXAMPLE FOR OTHER COMMUNITIES

CISA continues to work to improve rural emergency medical communications through various activities where REMCDP information and knowledge can be shared. This includes outreach to rural communities and states with significant rural populations; integration of program outcomes into CISA service offerings; development of tools, templates, and training materials; application of best practices to the Department’s current and future demonstration projects and grants; and replication of the *First Hands Program* and *First Voice Program* in other communities. Figure 1 depicts how CISA is transferring REMCDP information and knowledge to rural communities and beyond.



Figure 1: REMCDP Benefits to Other Communities

TO FIND OUT MORE

The REMCDP grant fulfills the authorizing legislation’s requirement to leverage existing technologies and engage non-medical professionals to help establish or sustain statewide medical communications systems and use existing infrastructures to improve the delivery of rural medical care. Congress has funded a successful demonstration project that will continuously share lessons learned and best practices with other rural communities, enhance existing emergency communications infrastructure, influence other grant programs across the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Government, and ultimately, save lives.

For more information on REMCDP, visit cisa.gov/remcdp or contact ECD@cisa.dhs.gov.