

Customer Spotlight Q&A:

Lurie Children's Hospital

Mary Otting, EMS Coordinator, RN, BSN, CEN



Can you tell us about your organization, role, and career in pediatric EMS education?

I am the EMS Coordinator at Lurie Children's Hospital, a pediatric Level 1 trauma center and tertiary care center with 395 beds. We provide EMS education to the Region II city of Chicago providers that includes 3,900 EMTs and 900 paramedics. In addition, I oversee EMS activities for the institution. I have been in EMS for over 20 years and involved in EMS pediatric education for close to 30 years. I was a PALS instructor and ENPC instructor, and now I'm a PEPP instructor.

What needs led you to consider PEPP for pediatric training?

EMS providers were having difficulty getting into and finding PALS classes, and the focus in those classes changed to being much more hospital-based. Having the privilege of Dr. Susan Fuchs as my EMS medical director made it easy and a no-brainer to teach and offer PEPP classes to providers. More than 17 years ago, we proposed to the Chicago Fire Department that Children's Memorial Hospital (the former name of Lurie Children's Hospital) should begin offering PEPP classes to their paramedic candidates while in the fire academy. The rest is history. We have been offering PEPP for new fire academy graduates and continuing education ever since.

What kind of successes can you point to after training with PEPP?

Data-wise, our classes have always received excellent evaluations. Two of our medics who had taken PEPP courses were awarded the McArthur award for saving the life of an 8-year-old girl choking on a balloon. [Saving the Life I WGN-TV \(wgntv.com\)](#) Ron Kent and Brendan Hehir had taken our PEPP class and recalled the skills we spoke of for removing a foreign body: "When all else fails, rely on your BLS skills and suction."

PRODUCTS USED:

- Pediatric Education for Prehospital Professionals, Fourth Edition (PEPP)

Key Benefits

- ✓ Administered excellent EMS-related training for the street medic through the PEPP training curriculum
- ✓ Allowed for easy administration of course material in a hybrid format (both in-person and online training)
- ✓ Students and trainees rate the PEPP curriculum highly in evaluations

How would you compare PEPP to PALS or other well-known training programs?

PEPP is much more EMS-related for the street medic, whereas PALS is very much a team approach and hospital-based. PEPP has expanded over the years and grown into a nationally accepted form of education.

How has PEPP evolved since you began using it?

PEPP is very much for the street medic and includes not only the A & P portion of different children's experiences, but also the Pediatric Assessment Triangle (PAT), which has become world-renowned for assessment and picked up by other courses, such as ENPC.

The addition of pertinent case reviews, along with skills not frequently used for adult patients, has grown the course. The new hybrid models encourage online learning and then coming together in person to utilize the new knowledge and skills.

In terms of evolution, the hybrid course options have recently evolved. Do you train via traditional or hybrid models? If hybrid, please elaborate on your experience with this option.

The courses I offer are all vastly hybrid for a couple of reasons. First, the hours we have been able to secure for participants have dropped over the years. Sitting in classrooms all day is not an option anymore. The hybrid course allows for this and provides information needed that we can build upon when bringing people together. In addition, we are usually offering classes to both EMTs and paramedics at the same time. This allows them to work together as a team while encouraging further learning opportunities and teamwork while caring for the pediatric patient.



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Are there any updates in the *Fourth Edition* that stand out as particularly important changes?

The update on behavioral health was an excellent addition. We know that, nationally, cases have gone up and the confidence level of caring for these patients has not. In addition, the addition of street medic skills in IN and MADD devices, EZIO, CAT, and more have been valuable.