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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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Emergency medical service providers recognized during week long observance

This year's theme: EMS: Dedicated. For Life.

ANCHORAGE — Whether transporting a patient with abdominal pain through the busy streets of Anchorage, stabilizing a snow machine crash victim for transport to the nearest village, or responding to a reported heart attack, Alaska's emergency medical service providers are often the difference between life and death.

National Emergency Medical Services Week, May 18–24, celebrates and honors the thousands of emergency medical practitioners serving our communities across Alaska and the nation. Citizens often are unaware of the 24/7 system readiness and commitment by both paid and volunteer EMS professionals, especially given the unique climate and geographical separation challenges of Alaska.

“This week recognizes those professionals and volunteers who give generously of their time and talents to make a difference in their communities,” Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Commissioner William J. Streur said. “Emergency medical service providers save lives and medical costs by providing critical care when needed. I salute their vital contribution to the overall medical care picture in Alaska.”

Currently in Alaska there are more than 3,300 emergency medical services providers, more than 800 emergency trauma technicians, and more than 380 mobile intensive care paramedics. Alaska emergency medical providers, including ground transport, aeromedical services and military providers respond to approximately 38,000 requests for service in Alaska annually.

Emergency Medical Services for Children Day is also marked on May 21, 2014, celebrating training and awareness of pediatric emergencies. The Alaska Emergency Medical Services for Children Program aims to ensure that state-of-the-art emergency medical care is available, that pediatric services are well-integrated into an emergency medical services system, and that the

entire spectrum of emergency services — including primary prevention of illness and injury, acute care, and rehabilitation — is provided to children and adolescents.

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The state of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services promotes and protects the health and well-being of Alaskans. We help individuals and families create safe and healthy communities. For more information, visit <http://hss.alaska.gov/>.