

Proposed Title: Recognition of “Critical Care Paramedic” (CCP-C) and “Flight Paramedic” (FP-C) Certifications from the International Board of Specialty Certifications for a New Critical Care Paramedic Licensure Level at the AR Department of Health Section of EMS

Subcommittee: Preparedness & Education

1. Describe the PROBLEM that the advisory is attempting to address
 - This advisory will address the lack of a clearly defined statewide licensure pathway in Arkansas for paramedics who practice at an advanced level in critical care transport. While some EMS agencies perform interfacility transports requiring advanced critical care skills, such as ventilator management, vasoactive medication infusions, and complex patient monitoring, Arkansas currently does not have a standardized state licensure designation for “Critical Care Paramedic” similar to those recognized in other states. At the same time, nationally recognized advanced certifications exist through the International Board of Specialty Certification (IBSC), including Flight Paramedic (FP-C), Critical Care Paramedic (CCP-C), and Community Paramedic (CP-C). Without a formal mechanism to recognize these credentials within the Arkansas EMS licensing framework, agencies may lack a consistent pathway to credential personnel for advanced transport capabilities and may face barriers to establishing formal Critical Care Transport (CCT) programs.
2. What is the end goal of the advisory and its associated recommendation(s)?
 - The end goal of this advisory will be to evaluate and potentially establish a formal licensure pathway in Arkansas for advanced paramedic practice beyond the standard paramedic license. Specifically, the advisory will recommend consideration of recognizing IBSC advanced certifications as qualifying credentials for specialized EMS licensure designations. This may include evaluating the addition of a Critical Care Paramedic license that could encompass both FP-C and CCP-C certified paramedics, similar to the already existing Community Paramedic license in Arkansas. Establishing this framework will allow EMS systems to identify, credential, and deploy paramedics with advanced training in critical care transport while maintaining clear oversight through state licensure and physician medical direction.
3. What action will you be asking the target audience (i.e. State Legislature, Secretary of Health, Board of Health, Section of EMS, etc) take and is it in their statutory authority to take action?
 - This advisory will ask the Arkansas Department of Health, Section of EMS, and relevant regulatory bodies to evaluate whether nationally recognized IBSC specialty certifications should be accepted as prequalifying criteria

for specialized EMS licensure categories in Arkansas. The advisory will specifically request that the state consider creating or recognizing a Critical Care Paramedic licensure designation, which would include paramedics holding FP-C or CCP-C certification. The advisory will also request that the state review the regulatory and operational framework necessary to support such a license. These actions fall within the authority of AR Department of Health Section of EMS, which oversees EMS licensure categories, scope of practice, and statewide EMS system development.

4. Is the action within the target audience's regulatory authority (Yes or No)? If no, what is the proposed solution to achieve the targeted recommendations?
 - Yes. The Arkansas Department of Health and the Section of EMS have regulatory authority to establish EMS licensure categories and scope-of-practice frameworks within the state's EMS regulatory system. This advisory will recommend that the state evaluate whether additional licensure categories or endorsements should be added to recognize advanced EMS practice. If regulatory changes are required, these could be implemented through the state rulemaking process governing EMS licensure and professional credentialing.
5. Does federal or state guidance already exist for this topic? If so, is there a gap in the guidance provided for EMS? Will this advisory assist in closing that gap?
 - Nationally, advanced EMS certifications administered by the International Board of Specialty Certification (IBSC), including FP-C, CCP-C, and CP-C, are widely recognized benchmarks of advanced paramedic knowledge and competency. Many states incorporate these certifications into credentialing frameworks for specialized EMS roles such as community paramedicine or critical care transport. However, there is currently a gap in Arkansas regarding formal statewide licensure recognition for paramedics performing critical care transport functions. This advisory will help evaluate how Arkansas may align with national licensure practices while maintaining appropriate regulatory oversight. Establishing a Critical Care Paramedic licensure pathway may also support EMS agencies that perform qualifying Critical Care Transports (CCT), allowing them to appropriately staff advanced transports and potentially seek higher levels of reimbursement from Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) when transports meet CCT billing criteria.