



EMS Strategic Improvement in Rural Areas

Addressing the inequities in EMS care & expanding access in underserved communities

Presented By:
Abongile Xeketwana

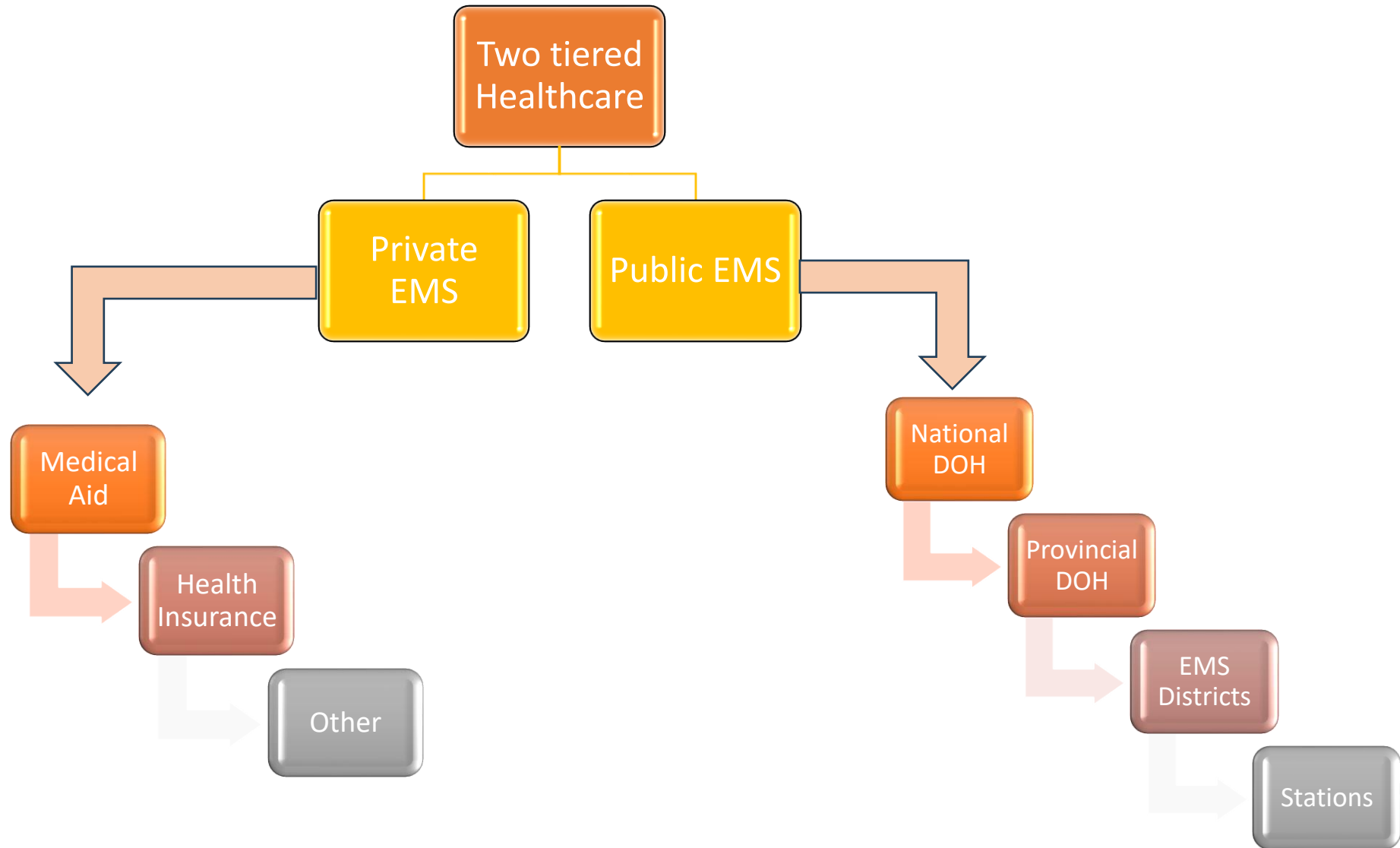
HCert ECT (CPUT), Dip EMC (CPUT), PG Dip EMC (UCT), MBA (Candidate)

EMS Clinical Governance Lead & Sub District Manager
Eastern Cape Department of Health



- Current challenges in Rural EMS
- Strategic goals for EMS improvement
- Strategic management for Rural EMS
- Enhancing Response Time Efficiency
- Expanding EMS coverage in underserved areas
- Strengthening workforce capacity and training
- Community engagement & Prehospital care awareness
- Conclusion

- Access to healthcare services remains unequal (R Rensburg, 2021), including access to EMS.
- **Historic factors** – colonial system & apartheid
- **Current factors** – socioeconomic disparities & shortage of workforce
- **Access** to timely, high quality prehospital care **distribution**
- Geographic barriers and resource constraints: rural, remote & underserved areas
- The presentation:
 - **Identifies systemic EMS inequities**
 - **Strategies to improve coverage & care**
 - **& Promote health equity**



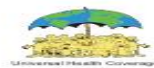
Healthcare in South Africa: how inequity is contributing to inefficiency

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Un programme d'apprentissage en ligne permet d'améliorer le respect des directives relatives aux lésions cérébrales traumatiques dans un service médical d'urgence par hélicoptère sud-africain

Willem Stassen^{*}, Craig Wylie, Robyn Holgate

Aeromedical Division, ER24., PO Box 242, Paulshof 2056, Gauteng, South Africa

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The future of South African paramedicine: Adapting to evolving challenges and shaping a patient-centred future

Paramedicine

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Naqeeb Majiet^{1,2} , **Louis van Rensburg^{2,3} **, **Craig Wylie^{1,2} **,
Willem Stassen²  and **Naseef Abdullah^{1,4} **

NEWS

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- Geographic Barriers
- Infrastructure deficits
- Resource Limitations
- Retention strategy
- Delayed response times
- Health system disparities
- Financial & Budget Constraints
- Limited private-sector penetration
- Public Awareness & Cultural Factors

Overburdened public EMS

NDOH (2020), Rensburg (2021), Tiwari et al. (2021), Govender (2024)

- Ensure universal EMS coverage aligned with NHI principles.
- Reduce response time disparities across provinces.
- Improve EMS workforce distribution and training.
- Increase community trust and awareness of EMS services.
- Integrate EMS into broader public health and primary care strategies.
- Continuous strategic planning & monitoring

- Strengthening national coordination & policy development
- Provincial EMS strengthening
- Public-private partnerships
- Data systems
- Workforce planning

- Use of CAD systems to optimize dispatching.
- Dynamic Deployment Strategy
- Reduce turnaround time in hospitals
- Implement rapid response teams
- Have performance measures and continuous improvement
- Community-based first responders.
- Decentralized EMS stations in high-need rural zones.
- Improved aeromedical services in remote areas.
- Change management – ADKAR Model/Kotter's 8 step

- WHO recommendation on coverage
- Task-shifting models: Training community health workers in basic EMS roles.
- EMS outreach programs in remote areas and rural villages.
- Addressing language and cultural barriers in prehospital care.

- Training & Development, Stassen (2015) & Majiet (2025)
- Improve **quality** of prehospital health services, Kobusingye et al. (2005)
- Retention strategies
 - Push vs Pull factors, Govender (2024) & Mthombeni (2025)
 - Competitive benefits, Fried & Fottler (2015)
 - Management & supervisory teams, Fried & Fottler (2015)
 - Career growth
- Wellness and resilience programs for EMS personnel.

- Promote EMS hotline awareness in rural languages.
- Community & school responder programme .
- Local Health Advisory Forums
- Use of local radio and social media to share EMS knowledge.

- WHO, recommends a two-tier system for LMIC

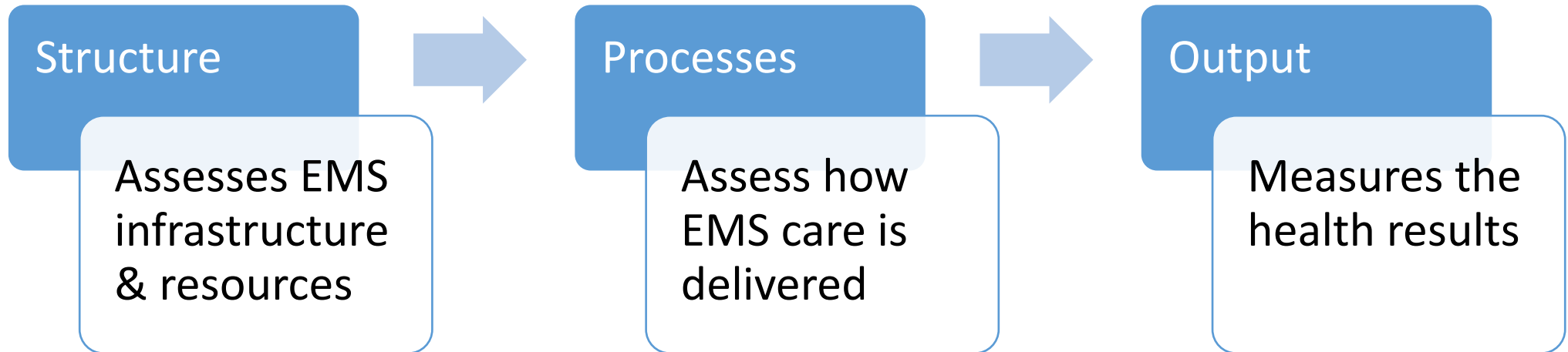
Tier 1

- Community response
- EMS provides support
- Public engagement
- Access information & education
- Collaboration

Tier 2

- Formal EMS
- Community provides support
- Participation in LHAF

Implication: Positive responsive, locally embedded emergency care system—strengthening the entire chain of survival.



- South Africa's EMS system faces structural inequities.
- Strategic ways to improve rural access
- Investment in remote and rural prehospital care is needed
- Expanding EMS access is not only a health issue, but a matter of equity and justice.
- There is a need to establish tier 1