



Ideas to Raise Awareness of Distracted Driving Problem

This TETAF injury prevention campaign is intended to involve Regional Advisory Councils, EMS and hospital trauma professionals to influence individuals in their communities to drive safely. RACs may play an important role in coordinating local/regional activities. Each RAC should convene a meeting with representatives of all the EMS providers and designated trauma centers in its service area. The goal of the meeting is to share information and obtain commitments to participate in coordinated local activities within the RAC to raise awareness of distracted driving. In addition to commitments to participate in the campaign, the meeting should result in a workgroup (involving representatives of all stakeholders) that will coordinate and implement local campaign activities.

Some of these activities will be implemented jointly by all the participants. Other activities may be implemented individually by hospitals, EMS or RACs. However, it is important that all stakeholders are informed and aware of all the various activities to avoid scheduling conflicts and to ensure a consistent, coordinated message.

Joint Activities

Join TETAF in announcing the campaign as soon as possible. RACs may want to have a planning meeting prior to distributing a news release that outlines plans/upcoming activities. The comprehensive campaign should involve designated trauma facilities (trauma program managers and medical directors) and EMS leaders, as appropriate. *(Sample media materials – such as talking points, fact sheets, sample releases, etc., will be available on the TETAF website.)*

Participate in TETAF's statewide "take the pledge" day in May. *(Specific details and sample materials will be available on TETAF's website.)*

Submit news releases quoting each stakeholder group to promote driving safety during holidays and special seasonal activities (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's, Super Bowl game day, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Memorial Day, summer vacations, swimming/boating, July 4, Labor Day, back-to-school). Use these opportunities to reinforce messages about the dangers of distracted driving. Try to generate some media coverage every month. *(See sample media materials, fact sheets, key messages.)*

Make a presentation to high school students about the dangers of distracted driving. Each health care provider stakeholder should present information unique to his/her role in accident response. *(See speaker's bureau sample materials.)*

Create a speaker's bureau for the campaign. The RAC could serve as the central contact point, and schedule events. *(See speaker's bureau sample materials.)*

During Trauma Awareness Month in May, implement community activities (such as a "safety" fair) and generate news media articles about driving safety. The "safety" fair could address driving issues at various ages, from infant safety seat information to considerations for senior citizens.

Contact your local chamber of commerce and ask for its support of the safe driving initiative. Work with the chamber to present programs at chamber meetings and provide statistics and other materials to chamber members.

Contact major employers and offer to provide programs on safe driving and the dangers of distracted driving. Provide articles for their employee newsletters. [\(See sample media materials.\)](#)

Host a meeting of your local ministers to inform them about the campaign and ask for their support and participation. Offer to provide speakers, written materials and copy for church bulletins regarding safe driving. If a church member is involved in a motor vehicle accident in which distracted driving was a contributing factor, ask the minister to use this as an opportunity to reinforce the safe driving message.

Contact the leaders of local defensive driving instructional programs and offer to provide handouts for class participants. Be sure to provide local statistics about driving accidents and their causes.

Work with your local high school principal to provide in-service education for teachers and school bus drivers about safe driving and the consequences of distracted driving. Use local statistics, as available. Encourage teachers and school bus drivers to be good role models for their students.

Contact groups organized for young people – such as Explorer Scout troops, church youth groups, school organizations like Future Farmers of America or University Interscholastic League, etc. Offer programs and materials to promote safe driving, including taking the pledge to not text and drive.

Host a meeting of local insurance agencies to discuss ways to promote safe driving by those whose motor vehicles they insure. Offer to provide posters for offices, website content/graphics and/or direct mail pieces.

Contact your local cable television provider(s) to determine if they would support the campaign with public service announcements or special local programming.

Individual stakeholders should use social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, to generate a dialogue about safe driving and why it is so important. Also, use social media to promote specific activities/events.

Activities for EMS Providers

Prior to major seasonal events, participate in radio or TV talk shows and discuss the dangers of driving distracted (alcohol, fatigue, medications, eating, disciplining children, loading CDs and DVDs, etc.)

In May, during EMS Week, host an open house and invite the public to stop by. Give ambulance tours, offer first aid tips, promote safe driving and provide tips on a safe summer on the roads, in boats and in the water.

Offer your local high school a program on safety behind the wheel. While many high schools already emphasize the hazard of drunk or impaired driving, put the focus on texting as well as distractions such as adjusting the radio, talking to friends, eating, rushing to get somewhere. [\(See speaker's bureau resources.\)](#)

If a major accident occurs, use the situation to submit an opinion-editorial to highlight safe driving. As a first responder, relate some of what you've witnessed at accident scenes that may indicate distracted driving, such as food strewn around the vehicle, alcohol or drugs, cell phones or iPads, etc. If you have

been the one to contact victims' loved ones, describe how you felt delivering such news. Encourage responsible driving behavior.

Place posters and information about distracted driving in public areas and encourage all employees to be good community role models, especially when they are not on the job.

Activities for Hospitals

Submit a monthly column to your local newspaper or community shopper about some aspect of safe driving, linking to any relevant upcoming events or activities.

Include safe driving messages with discharge materials provided to new parents. In addition to promoting car seat safety, discuss safe driving habits with parents. Encourage them to be good role models for their children, from newborns to teenagers.

The hospital staff member or volunteer transporting all discharged patients to the area for private vehicle pickup, should ensure that the patient's seat belt is secured and encourage the driver to concentrate solely on driving to get the patient home safely.

Display safe driving messages and materials in hospital waiting rooms. If the hospital has a closed circuit television station, include video messages about safe driving.

Include articles on safe driving in both internal and external newsletters throughout the year to remind employees, staff, patients and supporters to drive safely.

Create an injury prevention section on the hospital's website, and provide information about safe driving (hazards of texting and other distractions, statistics about motor vehicle accidents, links to AT&T's app for voice mail/text reply when driving, etc.)

Prior to each holiday or important event, remind employees about safe driving. Use intranet, paycheck stuffers, email and social media to deliver messages.

A trauma center physician or nurse could submit an opinion-editorial to the local newspaper describing the impact of a tragic motor vehicle accident on loved ones, and how it makes his/her feel as a caregiver trying to save a life.

Use the hospital's Facebook page to disseminate messages about safe driving and to promote upcoming driver safety awareness events.

Try to send Tweets weekly to promote safe driving. Tie messages to upcoming events and activities.

During Hospital Week in May, include safe driving promotion in messages and activities.

If feasible, count the number of days hospital employees go without someone being involved in a motor vehicle accident. Use this as a way to promote driving safety among employees.