After completing this section, the medical director will be able to:

1. Understand that medical directors provide a unique and critical role in the leadership of EMS agencies

2. Understand the degree of variability in the EMS industry and wide range of activities the medical director will be potentially involved in
Objective 1.1
Understand that medical directors provide a unique and critical role in the leadership of EMS agencies
• A medical director is an integral leader in an EMS agency
  – Serves as the interface between the agency and the medical community
• EMS medical direction is a unique role for physicians
  – Requires specialized knowledge, skills and abilities
• The medical director position in an emergency medical service (EMS) agency is a unique opportunity to become involved in an evolving clinical practice
  – Distinct challenges
  – Rewarding impacts
  – Assists in improving a community's emergency medical care abilities
• The scope of practice for EMS physicians is beyond the typical curriculum of emergency medicine or primary care medical practice
  – EMS has been recently recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties as a formal physician subspecialty
To be successful, an EMS medical director must develop a collaborative and cooperative approach with the many constituents of an EMS system.

- Work in concert with the EMS agency to ensure the agency is functioning optimally.

- Examples of cooperative activities include:
  - Assures quality management of care given through interaction with providers
  - Assists with the initial and continuing education of providers
Objective 1.2
Understand the degree of variability in the EMS industry and wide range of activities the medical director will be potentially involved in.
• It is a challenge to describe the EMS industry in generalities due to the tremendous amount of diversity among agencies and systems across the nation
  – The medical director will need to explore and become familiar with the specific characteristics of their local agency
EMS medical direction is a multidimensional activity with responsibility for oversight of functions related to patient care:

- Administrative
- Operational
- Educational
- Clinical
• The medical director must focus on how to improve their agency and the service that it delivers on a continual basis
• The EMS workforce is diverse, creative, committed, and possesses experience and skills that are often novel to physicians
• Achieving success as a medical director depends on many things
  – Motivation and commitment to be involved in EMS
  – Willingness to learn while simultaneously teaching
  – Developing strong leadership skills
  – Being a patient advocate while simultaneously being an advocate, mentor, and coach for EMS providers
• To be most effective, the medical director will need to mesh the physician’s passion for patient care based on scientific evidence and continual professional development with the skills, enthusiasm, and dedication within the EMS culture.