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## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 15, 2018

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## **Kenneth A. Scheppke, MD Appointed as Florida's State EMS Medical Director**

**(ORLANDO, Fla.)** – The Florida Department of Health (DOH) has appointed Kenneth A. Scheppke, MD as the new State EMS Medical Director. The position was recently vacated by Dr. Joe Nelson, DO, MS, FACOEP, FACEP, who retired after 14 years of service.

Dr. Scheppke is board-certified in both emergency medicine and the subspecialty of EMS and has an extensive background in EMS

management. He currently serves as the EMS Medical Director for six fire-rescue agencies in Palm Beach County, including his role as Chief Medical Officer for Palm Beach County Fire-Rescue. He also serves as Medical Director for Training and Protocol Development at the Broward Sheriff's Office, Director of Emergency Services for Lakeside Medical Center in Palm Beach County, and Medical Director for the Palm Beach State College EMS Training Academy.

Academically, Dr. Scheppke specializes in stroke care, cardiac arrest, pre-hospital use of ketamine and the use of medicated assistant treatment (MAT) for opiate abuse. His expertise, leadership and commitment to best practices in patient care have led to several life-saving innovations in Palm Beach County, including the implementation of "Head-Up CPR" and a suboxone referral program.

"The EMS system exists for the good of humanity. Each of us will at some point need to use this system for ourselves or our loved ones," Dr. Scheppke said. "It is our responsibility to make the system as great as it can be for all of us. With each decision we make, we must ask, 'what would I want if I were the patient?' And that is the choice we must go with."

Dr. Scheppke's other positions include Chairman of the Palm Beach County EMS Medical Directors Association and EMS Advisory Council, co-founder and past president of the Florida Academy of Emergency Medicine, and member of the Metropolitan EMS Medical Directors Coalition (the "Eagles"). In 2017, the Journal of Emergency Medical Services (JEMS) awarded him the EMS10: National Top 10 EMS Innovators Award.

In his spare time, Dr. Scheppke volunteers his skills as an instrument rated private pilot to help with relief efforts during natural disasters. He also flies animals at-risk for euthanasia to foster homes through the nonprofit organization Pilots-n-Paws.

The State EMS Medical Director sits on the DOH's Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council (EMSAC), which exists to facilitate and promote the best emergency medical care in Florida. EMSAC's next quarterly meeting, originally scheduled for Oct. 16-18, 2018, has been cancelled due to Hurricane Michael.

The Emergency Medicine Learning & Resource Center (EMLRC) hosts the Florida Association of EMS Medical Directors (FAEMSMD), which serves as a resource for local EMS medical directors and advocates on behalf of their interests. FAEMSMD advises the State EMS Medical Director on statewide issues through EMSAC and the Medical Director Advisory Panel.

The EMLRC extends a warm welcome to Dr. Scheppke and looks forward to what he will accomplish during his tenure.

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*About: Established in 1990 by the Florida College of Emergency Physicians (FCEP), the Emergency Medicine Learning & Resource Center (EMLRC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing emergency care through advocacy and education. The EMLRC provides continuing education to more than 5,000 emergency care providers every year through its Florida Emergency Medicine Foundation (FEMF) and advocates on behalf of pro-emergency medicine interests at the state level through FCEP. Learn more at [emlrc.org](http://emlrc.org).*

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