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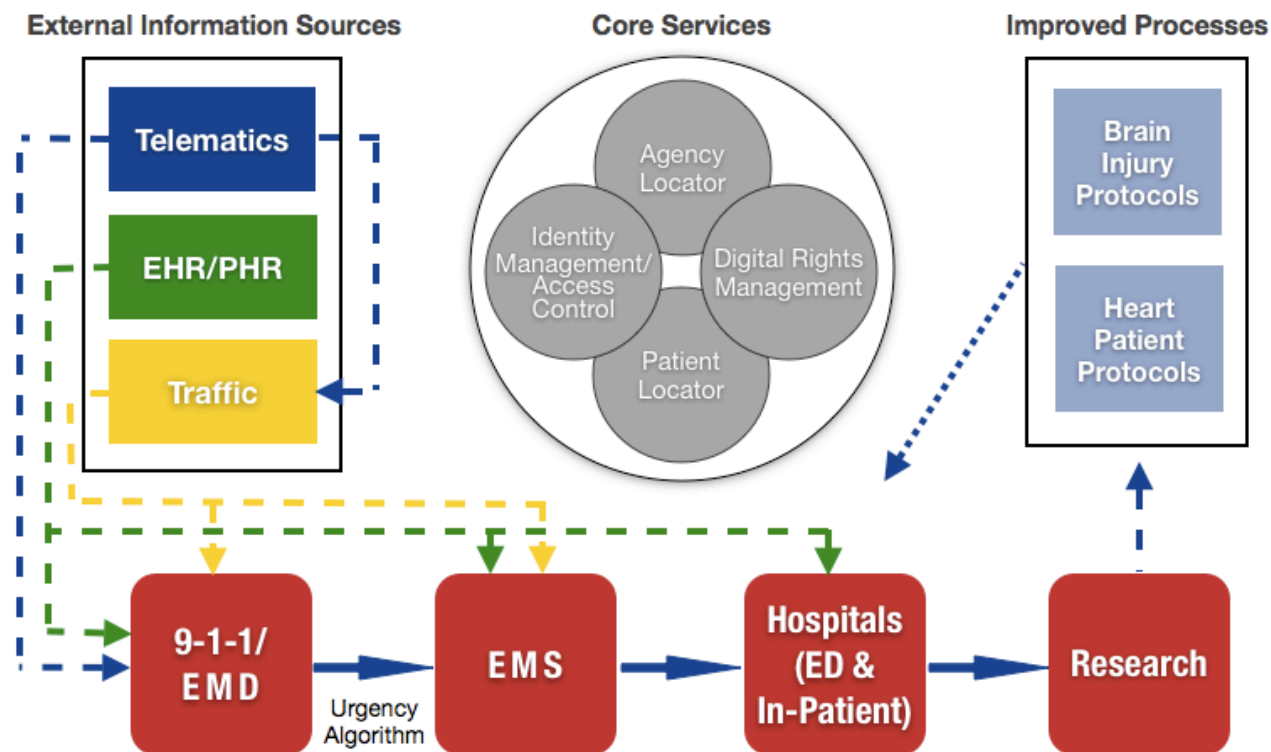
Core services are common shared tools, services, and resources offered through a collective effort of the emergency response community. They enable interoperability and are available for use by authorized emergency entities. These services include, but are not limited to security, diagnostics, routing directory, identity management, access control, digital rights management, discovery services, transformation services and authentication. By using these shared core services, agencies do not have to spend their limited funds creating and maintaining these functions on their own (and convincing corresponding agencies to trust their functions).

How do they work?

Through open standards and a services-based architecture, Core Services enable geographic targeting and cooperative exchange of emergency incident information. When a user logs into the agency's application his/her roles and permissions within the network are identified, determining if the user is authorized to send a message. When a message is sent, the Agency Locator Service returns a list of agencies – based on geographic area and incident type – that can be used for simultaneous message distribution to all authorized agencies registered to receive such a message.

Core Services in Action...

The illustration below shows some of the many emergency response agencies, private service providers, data providers and consumers, both public and private, that may utilize Core Services to connect to the chain of emergency response. With Core Services enabling data exchange during an emergency event across disparate, but involved agencies, processes will improve and patient care will be enhanced.



Why use shared Core Services?

Shared Core Services help eliminate barriers to data exchange among emergency response agencies, paving the way for full interoperability between all responders. Currently when data is available, in addition to not being able to share the data, responders may have no way to know where the data can be found, how to access it, or who needs to receive it. In contrast to the current isolated environment, Core Services enable the exchange of data across disparate response domains and geographic jurisdictions, expanding the information sharing beyond the traditional disciplines. Core Services avoid the “rip and replace” scenario, allowing each agency to leverage their legacy systems and in the future purchase the tools they want, rather than what their counterparts are purchasing. Through Core Services, each agency’s chosen application can be tied to other agencies and private information sources, creating a more efficient and effective communication network.

What is the Agency Locator Service...

The Agency Locator Service, also known as the Emergency Provider Access Directory (EPAD), is a national directory of agencies, not individuals. It is a secure, shared community utility operated as a non-profit public/private partnership. This geospatially-enabled, web-based locator service enables the accurate routing of emergency and warning messages according to information profiles established and maintained by the agencies themselves. Agencies choose to register:

- *What* information they want to receive
- *When* and *how* they receive it, and
- *Who* has access to its information

EPAD does not house incident information nor does it move information around. It facilitates the distribution of information either by

application systems with messaging capabilities or by independent message brokers that provide messaging capabilities.

What is the Identity Management Service...

Information sharing across domains requires assurance that only authorized parties may send, receive, or modify information related to an emergency event. The Identity Management and Access Control Service provides that assurance. It authenticates entities and their individual users and enables the assignment of roles and permissions to levels of government, entities and entity users. Acting as the network “on-ramp,” it performs four basic functions:

- Identification, authentication and authorization
- Role-based access control
- Policy enforcement and administration
- Usage auditing

This service complements the Agency Locator service. Before information is disseminated, messaging systems query the Identity Management and Access Control Service to identify, authenticate and authorize entities and users to perform certain actions. The service returns information as to:

- Who is authorized to send a message
- Who is authorized to see sensitive information
- When should information be shared

Leading the way...

COMCARE has joined with the American Red Cross and NENA to lead an effort to make significant change in emergency response. Through Core Services and modern emergency communications systems, we are working to give all agencies the ability to message all other agencies, for all types of hazards.

For more information visit www.comcare.org
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