

A Heavy Subject for EMS:
Evolving Considerations for Bariatric
Transport

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Bariatric Transport

- What is the bariatric patient
- What was our need
- What was our process
- What was our cost
- What are the benefits
- How this has changed our practice
- Why you should consider implementing a bariatric transport unit

Bariatric Transport

■ The need:

- 2 skilled NH in our PSA opened bariatric units over the last seven years
- Increase in bariatric (> 500 pounds) transports from 1 every 6 months to 3-5 every week
- Older stretchers rated to only 350 pounds
- No other services in county had specialized equipment for transport
- Local fire departments would no longer respond for “lifting help”

Bariatric Transport

- The process and our requirements:
 - Variable crew configurations
 - Use existing equipment if possible
 - Use “off the shelf” technology
 - Integrate our process with nursing homes and the receiving facilities
 - Maximize patient comfort and care





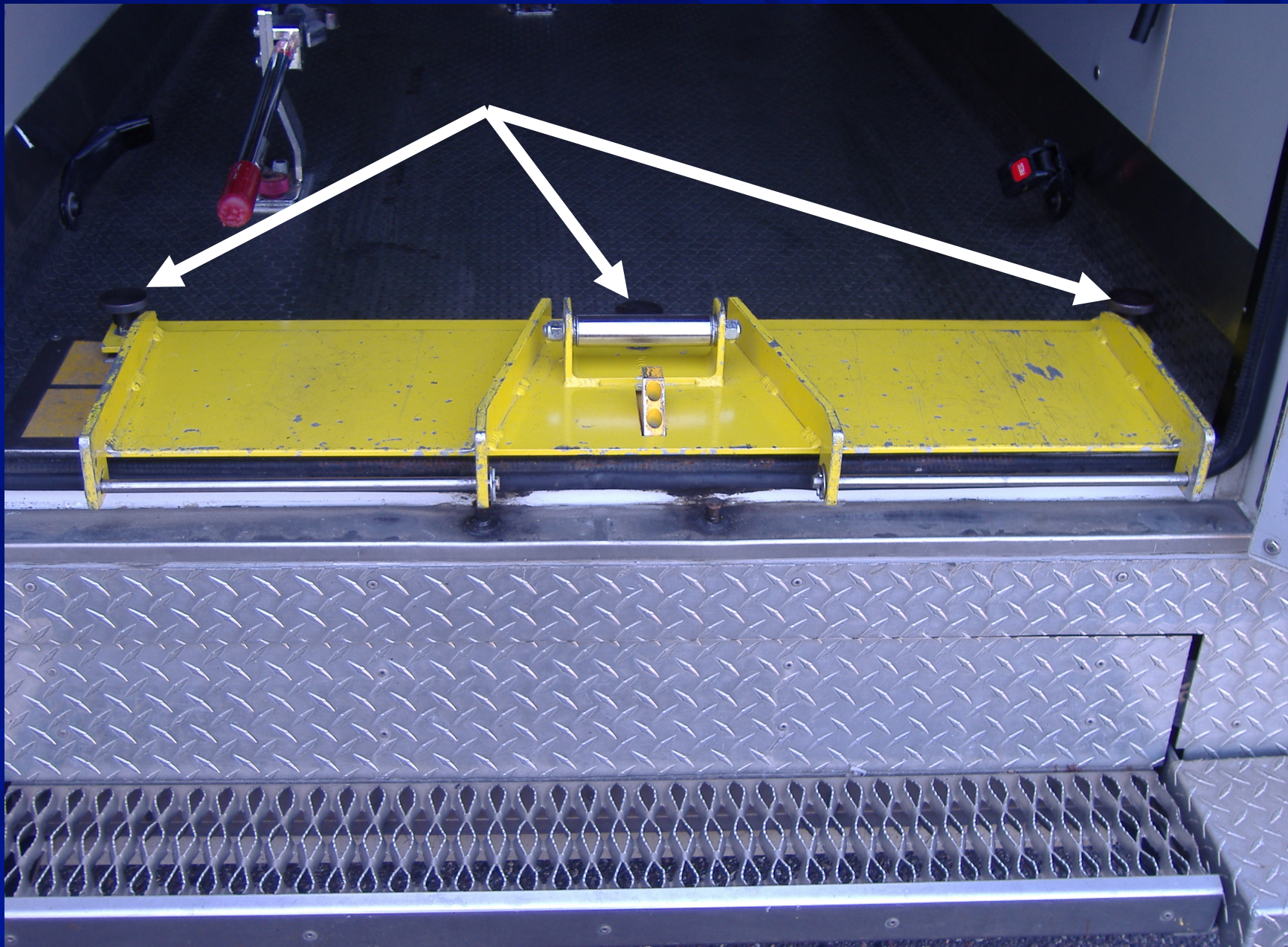


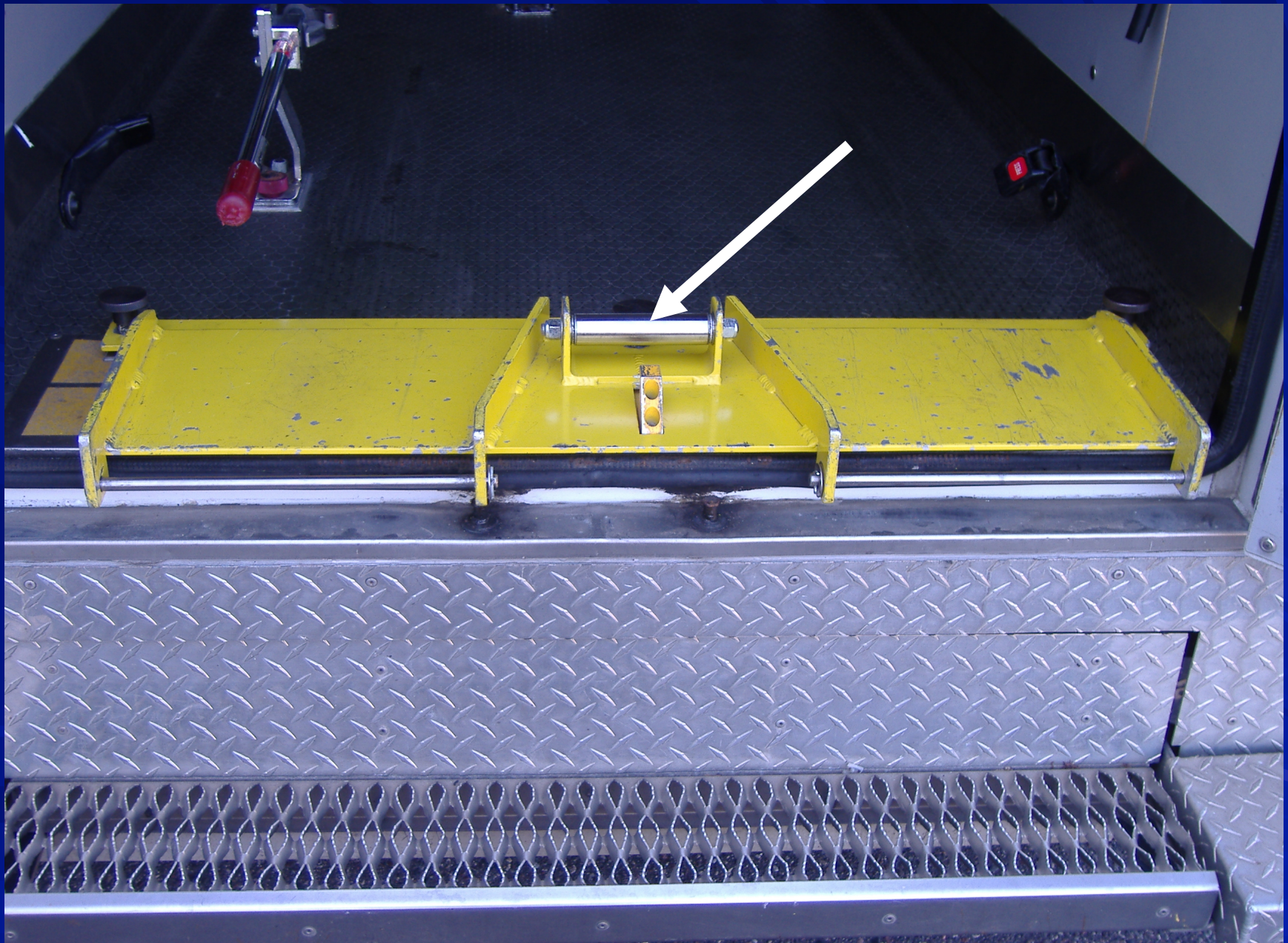


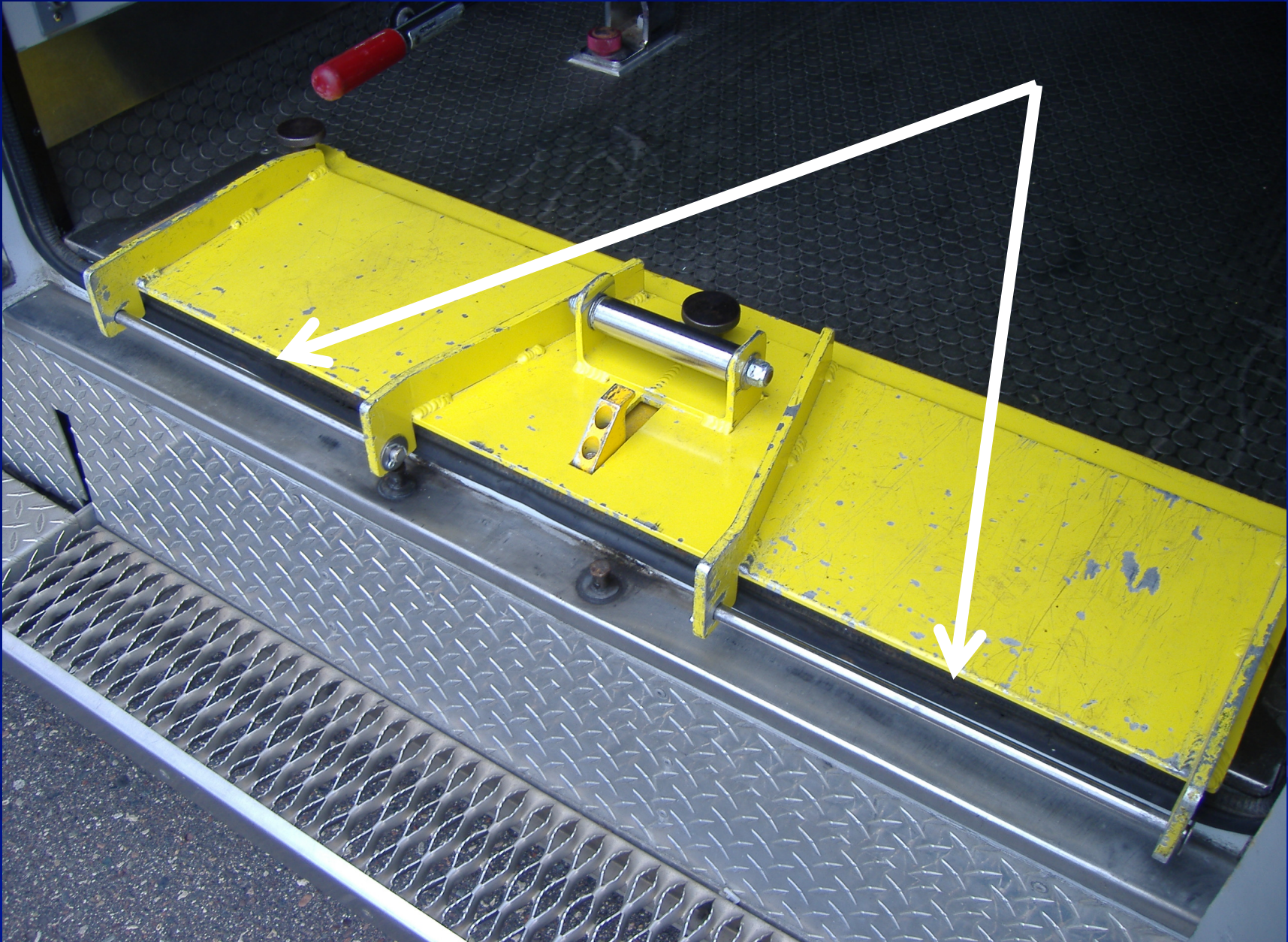
















NO

YES




















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Nursing home and hospital considerations



Nursing home and hospital considerations



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Bariatric Transport

- The time and cost:
 - Three days work by shop mechanics
 - Bariatric stretcher @ \$6300
 - Floor mounting hardware @ \$800
 - Loading ramps @ \$1700
 - Stretcher winch @ \$800
 - Transfer flat @ \$350
 - TOTAL COST @ \$10,000 excluding labor

Bariatric Transport

■ The benefits:

- Better care and comfort for patient
- No need for extra personnel or agencies
- Better resource utilization
- Significant decrease in workman's compensation and injury rates
- Increase revenues due to specialized transport (only service in area with this capacity)

Bariatric Transport

- Change in our practice:
 - All new regular stretchers rated to 700 pounds
 - All regular stretchers in front-line ALS units being converted to powered cots
 - All floor mounts upgraded to accommodate increased stretcher capacities

Bariatric Transport

- Why add dedicated bariatric transport
 - CDC shows steady increase in national obesity rate over past 24 years
 - In 1994, no state with obesity rate > 20%
 - In 2008, 32 states with obesity rate > 25%, and 6 states with obesity rate > 30%
 - JEMS article (2007) projected sales of bariatric stretchers to go from \$29.6M in 2004 to @ \$50M by 2012

Special thanks

- Michael J. Murphy, NREMT-P
Operations Supervisor
North Memorial Ambulance Service

QUESTIONS

