

## Abstract

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# Enhancing Patient Transport Systems in the U.S. Department of Defense's National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) Pilot Program

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## Abstract

**Objective:** Congress directed the Secretary of Defense (DoD) to conduct a Pilot program to increase the National Disaster Medical System's (NDMS) surge capacity, capabilities, and interoperability to support patient movement during a large-scale overseas contingency operation.

**Methods:** The Pilot conducted a mixed methods exploratory study, the Military-Civilian NDMS Interoperability Study (MCNIS), identifying 55 areas of solutions for NDMS innovation that align with interagency stakeholder interests. Priorities were determined via facilitated discussions, refined and validated by all five Pilot sites.

**Results:** As the DoD provides essential support for the patient movement component within NDMS, the results highlighted areas for improvement between receiving patients at an airfield and moving them to NDMS definitive care partners during a large medical surge event. This includes patient tracking capabilities, transportation processes and patient placement.

**Conclusions:** In collaboration with the Departments of Health & Human Services, Homeland Security, Transportation, and Veterans Health Administration, the Pilot is addressing these areas for improvement, by executing site-specific projects that will be validated and identified for export across the system. Leaders across the Pilot site healthcare networks are working to enhance patient movement and tracking. Ultimately, the Pilot will deliver dozens of proven solutions to enhance the NDMS's patient movement capabilities.

**Supplementary material.** The supplementary material for this article can be found at <http://doi.org/10.1017/dmp.2024.228>.