

Monterey County EMS System Policy



Policy Number: 6180
Effective Date: 7/1/2021
Review Date: 6/30/2024

ELECTRONIC PATIENT CARE RECORDS

I. PURPOSE

To establish standards for the completion, distribution, and retention of the EMS electronic Prehospital Care Report (ePCR).

II. POLICY

- A. The primary caregiver from each responding paramedic or BLS unit shall complete an ePCR for each EMS response. This includes every patient response, patient contact, including non- transports, medical transfers, and emergency transports. An EMS response with more than one patient shall require an ePCR for each patient.
- B. The ePCR shall be filled out completely according to the standards outlined in Monterey County EMS policy and generally accepted standards for EMS ePCR completion.
- C. Each crew member, who has provided or assisted with patient care activities, shall sign the ePCR.
- D. For any patient transported to the hospital code three (3), the ePCR must be completed by the transport provider's primary caregiver before the ambulance clears from the hospital. For patients transported code two (2), a completed ePCR shall be provided by the transporting provider's primary caregiver to the receiving hospital within one hour from the time of patient arrival if not completed prior to the ambulance clearing from the hospital. Every effort should be made to complete the ePCR before clearing the hospital for patients transported code two (2). ALS or BLS first responders who do not transport the patient to the hospital shall complete their ePCR and provide it to the Monterey County EMS ePCR/Data System within one hour from the time their unit goes available. Should the ePCR not be provided within one hour, an Unusual Occurrence Report must be submitted to the EMS Agency within 48 hours explaining the reason for the delay.
- E. All ePCRs shall be provided to the Monterey County EMS Agency ePCR/Data system as required by this policy and/or by contract or agreement(s).
- F. The base hospital shall receive a copy of the ePCR within 24 hours should the base and receiving hospitals be different.
- G. The ePCR shall be considered a confidential medical record. The ePCR shall be provided only to those individuals and organizations with a valid reason to receive the ePCR.
- H. Only Monterey County EMS Medical Director approved abbreviations shall be used on the ePCR. A list of those abbreviations can be found in EMS Agency policy # 6130.
- I. Only Monterey County EMS approved electronic Patient Care Report forms may be used.
- J. When there are multiple people involved in the incident, the Monterey County EMS Non-Transport Record shall be used to document those people involved in the incident, have no medical need and refuse assessment, care, and transport.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Initiation of the ePCR

1. An ePCR shall be initiated and completed for every person with medical symptoms, signs, complaints or mechanism who the BLS or ALS provider contacts to determine whether that person requires medical treatment or transport, regardless of whether such treatment or transport is provided.
2. An abbreviated ePCR may be completed when there is no patient contact. Examples include being cancelled enroute, cancelled by another agency upon arrival at the scene, or patient has left the scene. The following information shall be documented on the PCR:
 - a. Times for dispatch, enroute, on scene, and cancelled.
 - b. Date.
 - c. Unit identifier.
 - d. Reason for cancellation such as cancelled by another agency, patient gone on arrival, or public lift assist.
3. Personnel/agencies that provided direct patient care at scene shall be documented on the ePCR along with the care provided. Patient care provided prior to arrival of the person completing the ePCR may be given as a note in the narrative section of the ePCR. Patient care provided while the person completing the ePCR is with the patient should be included in the treatment section of the ePCR.

B. Completion of the ePCR.

1. The Monterey County EMS ePCR is a legal medical record and shall be completed clearly, concisely and accurately. Falsification of and/or tampering with data on the ePCR may subject the offender to licensure or certification action.
2. When there is a refusal of care, all required items in the Prehospital Consent – AMA policy shall be documented on the ePCR.
3. When the patient is transported out of county the ePCR will be left with or sent to the receiving hospital (and Base Hospital, if used) within two hours.

C. Confidentiality and ePCR Release and Retention

1. Each base hospital and provider agency shall have policies:
 - a. That ensures confidentiality of electronic patient care records.
 - b. Regarding release of the ePCR as a medical record.
2. Retain ePCRs as mandated by state and federal laws. All ePCRs shall be retained in the system for a minimum of seven years.

IV. NOTES

- A. The triage tag may take the place of the ePCR in a Level 2 or Level 3 MCI as allowed under the Monterey County MCI Plan.
- B. Paramedic preceptors are responsible for ePCRs completed by their students.

- C. Do not document unusual occurrences on the ePCR. An Unusual Occurrence Report shall be filed to document unusual occurrences. The ePCR shall not include reference to an Unusual Occurrence Report.
- D. If the Medical Liability Release section of the ePCR form is signed, document on the ePCR that the patient was advised of and understood the possible problems which could arise as a result of not being transported for a more complete medical evaluation.

END OF POLICY



John Beuerle, M.D.
EMS Medical Director



Teresa Rios
EMS Bureau Chief