



TRANSFER OF PATIENT RESPONSIBILITY

I. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the guidelines for transfer of patient care responsibility in the prehospital setting.

II. POLICY

- A. EMS personnel shall seek to ensure continuity of patient care through effective communication of patient history, physical exam and patient assessment findings, diagnostic signs, treatment provided, patient response, and any other relevant information to the healthcare providers taking over patient care responsibilities.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. When a patient is being treated by BLS level personnel, ALS level personnel arriving at the scene are responsible for contacting the BLS personnel, obtaining patient information, and ensuring coordination of care with BLS personnel. During this transfer of information, ALS personnel shall assume responsibility for patient care. ALS personnel may directly approach the patient to initiate ALS level patient assessment and care as needed based on patient need.
- B. When first responder paramedics arrive on scene first, they may either transfer patient care authority to the transport paramedic or maintain primary patient care responsibility until care is transferred to a flight crew or at the hospital. This decision shall be made immediately upon arrival of the transport paramedic. The decision shall be communicated verbally by the first response paramedic and shall be verbally acknowledged by the transport paramedic. If the first response paramedic does not communicate the decision, the transport paramedic should confirm which paramedic will have primary patient care responsibility.
- C. The transport paramedic is to assist with patient care should the first response paramedic maintain primary patient care responsibilities.
- D. If a conflict regarding patient care occurs that cannot be resolved amongst the personnel, contact the base hospital physician for direction.
- E. EMS System first responders shall locate, assess, and treat patients prior to the arrival of EMS transport providers. To maximize patient safety and to ensure adequate assistance for EMS transport providers, first responders shall remain on scene to assist EMS transport providers until verbally cleared by EMS transport providers to return to service. When responding to healthcare facilities such as physician offices and skilled nursing facilities, first responders shall remain at the scene to provide assistance until cleared by EMS transport providers, even if facility staff advise first responders that their services are not required.

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- F. Whenever one paramedic assumes care from another, both individuals must complete and file a Patient Care Report (PCR). The time of transfer of care should be documented on the PCR.
- G. Any paramedic unit taking over patient care from another paramedic unit should, whenever possible, resupply the first paramedic unit according to the ambulance provider resupply offer.

END OF POLICY


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