



**PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY
HEALTH SERVICES COUNCIL**
Your Voice In EMS

RECOMMENDATION FOR CONSIDERATION

Board Meeting Date: June 13, 2018

Subject: Medical Command Education - Patient Refusals Following Naloxone Administration

VTR#: 0618-02

Committee/Task Force: Medical Advisory

Recommended Goal

Recommended Policy Change

Other:

Recommendation:

The Department of Health, working through the regional EMS councils, should provide refresher education for medical command physicians related to ordering the transport of a patient who is refusing EMS care/transport following naloxone administration.

Rationale [Background]:

The opioid crisis in Pennsylvania has produced an increased incidence of patient refusals following reversal with naloxone administered by police officers, firefighters and EMS personnel. Most often, these patients are returning to a normal level of consciousness where they are oriented to person, place, time and understand the potential consequences of refusing transport to a hospital.

When a medical command physician orders a patient transported against their will, this sets up a scenario that can result in injury to the patient and emergency personnel. Medical command physicians have asked the EMS crew to enlist the assistance of law enforcement to compel cooperation from the patient; law enforcement is understandably reluctant to provide such assistance due to the liability exposure.

The Department of Health, working through the regional EMS councils, should educate medical command physicians that absent a compelling reason for the patient to be transported, they should not instruct an EMS crew to force the patient to go to the hospital against their will. The education should include a review of applicable laws and regulations, and statewide BLS protocol #111 (Refusal of Treatment/Transport).

Medical Review [Concerns]:

This proposal is authored by the medical advisory committee. Although the committee does not believe this is a wide spread problem, still, there have been anecdotal reports of physicians attempting to compel transport by force. It is therefore prudent for the Department of Health to provide education in this area in an effort to avoid patient and provider injury.

Fiscal Concerns:

None.

Educational Concerns:

The content of this education should be determined by the Department of Health in consultation with the Office of Legal Counsel.

Plan of Implementation:

Following development of the educational content, the Department of Health should work with its regional councils to determine an appropriate dissemination strategy.

The PEHSC Committee/Task Force offers consultation to the Department in regard to the content of this Vote to Recommend (VTR) and its attached documents. The PEHSC Committee/Task Force specifically offers staff or member support to participate in Department deliberations regarding this recommendation in an effort to convey committee/task force discussions.

Board Meeting Comments/Concerns:

None.

Signed: 
President

Date 6-13-18

For PEHSC Use Only – PA Department of Health Response

Accept: _____ Table: _____ Modify: _____ Reject: _____

Comments:

Date of Department Response: _____