



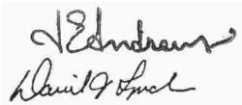
Central California Emergency Medical Services Agency

A Division of Fresno County
Department of Public Health

SPECIAL MEMORANDUM

FILE #: F/K/M/T # 01-2022

TO: All Fresno/Kings/Madera/Tulare EMS Providers, Hospitals, First Responder Agencies, and Interested Parties

FROM: Jim Andrews, M.D., EMS Medical Director
Daniel J. Lynch, Director 

DATE: January 12, 2022

SUBJECT: EMS Policy 571 – Assess and Refer – No transport of patients meeting criteria for hospitals in Fresno, Kings, and Tulare Counties.

Effective immediately, and until further notice, ambulance providers in the CCEMSA region shall implement EMS Policy 571 – Assess and Refer with the requirement that patients meeting the criteria for assess and refer shall no longer be transported to a hospital emergency department. Due to the continued deteriorating conditions at our hospitals and impact to ambulance resources in the EMS region, this policy must be re-implemented to reduce the impact of patients with non-emergent medical conditions on emergency departments and the EMS system. Some specific areas of the region will have delayed implementation and the EMS agency will be in contact with the providers in those areas.

THE POLICY HAS BEEN MODIFIED:

The changes to policy include:

1. Age criteria – Patients can be assessed and referred if they are older than 5 years and less than 70 years old.
2. Vital signs – Two complete sets of vital signs will be taken on every patient considered for assess and refer.
3. Added: If the paramedic/EMT has any doubt or concern, transport the patient.

The conditions regarding staffing and capacity within our local hospitals and ambulance providers remain extremely critical. Hospitals are operating at disaster levels and there is no patient bed capacity. Most of our hospital emergency departments are holding both ICU patients and medical/surgical admitted patients. These patients require significant emergency department space and resources that are no longer available for emergency department use.

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The hospital capacity and staffing issue has a domino effect on the EMS system and causes more frequent and increased wait times for ambulances to turn over patients. We are frequently seeing ambulances waiting 2-4 hours to turn over a patient.

For the reasons described above, the EMS Agency is taking the step of directing ambulance providers to no longer transport individuals with non-emergency medical complaints that meet the criteria listed in EMS Policy 571. The intent of this policy implementation is to reduce the impact of patients on local emergency departments and increase availability of ambulance to our communities.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Dale Dotson, EMS Coordinator at (559) 600- 3387.