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EMS Medical Director

Chief, Emergency Medical Services

I. INTENT:


To allow a patient an alternative to transport by ambulance to an acute care hospital that is medically appropriate and respects the rights of a competent adult to make prudent decisions.

II. AUTHORITY:

- A. Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Ch. 4, Art. 1, §1797.220; Ch. 5, §1798(a,b) and §1798.2.
- B. California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Ch. 4, Art. 2, §100145 and §100147.

III. POLICY:

- A. Patients who are released at the scene by a Paramedic must meet **ALL** of the following:
 - 1. The patient or medical power of attorney must have a clearly articulated plan for medical evaluation and/or follow-up that relies on previously established medical providers or the use of recognized acute care/urgent care providers and facilities.
 - 2. This plan must have a reasonable and prudent transportation plan to reach follow-up medical care in a timely manner.
 - 3. After complete assessment the Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic (EMT-P) must concur with the appropriateness of scene release and the medical appropriateness of the follow-up plan.
 - 4. The Company Officer / Scene Supervisor must concur with the non-medical aspects of the follow-up plan as well as the overall appropriateness of scene release.

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5. Patients with minor traumatic injuries shall NOT meet critical trauma criteria.
 6. Medical complaints must NOT be of new onset (first time symptoms).
 7. The patient must sign an appropriate release form developed by the provider stating that emergency evaluation has been rendered, transportation offered, and that the patient chooses an alternative evaluation plan.
 8. The Provider will audit 100% of scene releases under this policy, based on available data, for medical appropriateness, compliance with department/company policy, and compliance with county policies.
- B. An EMT-P under this policy will **NOT** release the following classes of patients at scene. Refer to the Patient Initiated Refusal of Service (PD#2101) for alternatives if appropriate.
1. Patients requesting ambulance transport shall not be denied transport under this policy.
 2. Patients with **ANY** new onset medical complaints such as seizures, headache, hypoglycemia, respiratory distress, chest pain, etc. regardless of the duration of the complaint.
 3. EMT-Ps may not knowingly release a patient under this policy more than once in a 24-hour period.
 4. Children under 1 year of age.
 5. Elderly patients who are difficult to assess OR whose baseline mental status is chronically altered due to a pre-existing condition such as Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or previous stroke.
 6. Minors under eighteen (18) years of age shall not be released under this policy except at the request of parent or guardian.