



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY, INC.

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PREHOSPITAL POLICY

Policy Reference No: 201

Effective Date: 11/15/07

Supersedes: 03/01/97

Updated: 01/15/08

SUBJECT: GROUND AMBULANCE DESTINATION POLICY

I. PURPOSE

To define the ground ambulance destination criteria for emergency patients in the San Luis Obispo County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system. [**Air transport destination is addressed in Prehospital Policy #119, EMS Aircraft \(Helicopter\) Operations. \[Updated 1/15/08\]**](#)

II. AUTHORITY

A. California Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.204, 1797.206, 1797.220, 1797.222, 1798.(a), 1798.100, 1798.102, 1798.2, and 1798.3.

B. California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Sections 1000167 (a) 3 and 100168.

County Health Officer

Date

Executive Director, Emergency Medical Services Agency

Date

Medical Director, Emergency Medical Services Agency

Date

III. POLICY:

- A. This policy determines the hospital destination of all emergency patients served by paramedics accredited by the San Luis Obispo County EMS Agency and transported by Advanced Life Support (ALS) ground ambulances, both public and private. It is operative at all times during the usual operations of the EMS system, except for an MCI [updated 1/15/08].
- B. The objective of this policy is to assure that emergency patients will be taken to the closest hospital unless a choice is expressed, for their immediate needs, regardless of ability to pay.
- C. The primary responsibility for implementation of this policy lies with the paramedic providers and the designated Base Hospital. However, this policy also defines the responsibilities of the EMS Agency and the Receiving Hospitals for the establishment, revision, monitoring and education regarding its provisions.
- D. Paramedics are responsible for:
 - 1. obtaining pertinent patient clinical assessment data.
 - 2. determining closest Receiving Hospital.
 - 3. considering and determining appropriateness of the patient's stated hospital preference.
- E. The designated or requested Base Hospital is responsible for confirming/clarifying patient assessment data to determine the most appropriate hospital destination. In the event of unusual circumstances or uncertainty about patient assessment, or designation, paramedics will call the designated or requested Base Hospital. Destination or diversion to a closer hospital then is determined by the designated Base Hospital emergency physician.
- F. The EMS Agency is responsible for designating Receiving Hospitals, Base Hospitals, and Specialty Care Facilities and notifying system participants of any revisions.
- G. The provider agencies, the Base Hospitals and all other Receiving Hospitals are responsible for educating and training their staffs in compliance with this policy and its revisions.
- H. The EMS Agency is responsible for evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of this policy. The EMS Agency will gather statistical reports regarding hospital destinations of all patients and conduct pertinent quality assurance (QA) outcome studies on a routine and periodic basis.
- I. Hospitals without specialized care capability shall facilitate rapid stabilization and transfer of appropriate patients.