

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY
PREHOSPITAL POLICY

Policy Reference No: 201.1
Updated: 05/15/2010
Effective Date: 11/15/07
Supersedes: 03/01/97
Review Date: 06/01/2012

SUBJECT: GROUND AMBULANCE DESTINATION POLICY

PURPOSE

To define the ground ambulance destination criteria for patients in the San Luis Obispo County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system. Air transport destination is addressed in the *San Luis Obispo County Emergency Medical Services Agency Prehospital Policy 119: EMS Aircraft (Helicopter) Operations*.

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 100167 (b) 3 and 100168.

DEFINITIONS

- A. Base Hospital: A hospital approved by the San Luis Obispo County EMS Agency to provide medical direction and supervision to prehospital personnel in accordance with policies and procedures established by the EMS Agency.
- B. Receiving Hospital: A hospital authorized pursuant to San Luis Obispo County EMS Agency policy to receive emergency patients treated or transported by an emergency ambulance service provider.
- C. Specialty Care Center: A hospital designated by the San Luis Obispo County EMS Agency for the care of specific patients as defined by policy, i.e. STEMI and trauma.

POLICY

- A. This policy determines the hospital destination of all 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.

- B. The objective of this policy is to assure that patients will be taken to the closest hospital or [Specialty Care Center \[Updated 05/15/2010\]](#) 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 [Specialty Care Center \[Updated 05/15/2010\]](#) or 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.
 - 1. Paramedics are responsible for:
 - a. Obtaining pertinent patient clinical assessment data.
 - b. Determining closest Receiving Hospital or [Specialty Care Center \[Updated 05/15/2010\]](#).
 - c. Considering and determining appropriateness of the patient's stated hospital preference for the patient's immediate medical needs.
 - 2. The Base Hospital or [Specialty Care Center \[Updated 05/15/2010\]](#) 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 or [Specialty Care Center \[Updated 05/15/2010\]](#). Destination or diversion to a closer hospital then is determined by the designated Base Hospital or [Specialty Care Center \[Updated 05/15/2010\]](#) emergency physician.
 - 3. The EMS Agency is responsible for designating Receiving Hospitals, Base Hospitals, and [Specialty Care Centers \[Updated 05/15/2010\]](#) and notifying system participants of any revisions.
 - 4. The provider agencies, the Base Hospitals, [Specialty Care Facilities \[Updated 05/15/2010\]](#) and all other Receiving Hospitals are responsible for educating and training their staffs in compliance with this policy and its revisions.
 - 5. 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.
- D. Hospitals without specialized care capability shall facilitate rapid stabilization and transfer of appropriate patients.