

impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items”

- a. Services animals are not classified as a pet and should, by law, always be permitted to accompany the patient with the following exceptions:
  - i. A public entity may ask an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from the premises if:
    1. The animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it; or
    2. The animal is not housebroken
- b. Service animals are not required to wear a vest or a leash. It is illegal to make a request for special identification or documentation from the service animal’s partner. EMS clinicians may only ask the patient if the service animal is required because of a disability and the form of assistance the animal has been trained to perform.
- c. EMS clinicians are not responsible for the care of the service animal. If the patient is incapacitated and cannot personally care for the service animal, a decision can be made whether to transport the animal in this situation.
- d. Animals that solely provide emotional support, comfort, or companionship do not qualify as service animals

### Quality Improvement

#### **Associated NEMSIS Protocol(s) (eProtocol.01)** (*for additional information, go to [www.nemsis.org](http://www.nemsis.org)*)

- 9914063 – General - Individualized Patient Protocol
- 9914165 – Other

### **Key Documentation Elements**

- Document all barriers in the NEMSIS element “eHistory.01 – Barriers to Patient Care” (NEMSIS Required National Element)
- Document specific physical barriers in the appropriate exam elements (e.g., “blind” under Eye Assessment; or paralysis, weakness, or speech problems under [Neurological Assessment](#))
- Document any of the following, as appropriate in the narrative:
  - Language barriers:
    - The patient’s primary language of fluency
    - The identification of the person assisting with the communication
    - The methods through which the patient augments his/her communication skills
  - Sensory barriers:
    - The methods through which the patient augments his/her communication skills
    - Written communication between the patient and the EMS professional is part of the medical record, even if it is on a scrap sheet of paper, and it should be retained with the same collation, storage, and confidentiality policies and procedures that are applicable to the written or electronic patient care report
  - Assistance adjuncts (devices that facilitate the activities of life for the patient)

### **Performance Measure**

- Accuracy of key data elements (chief complaint, past medical history, medication, allergies)
- Utilization of the appropriate adjuncts to overcome communication barriers