

# Solano County Health & Social Services Department

Mental Health Services  
Public Health Services  
Substance Abuse Services  
Older & Disabled Adult Services



Eligibility Services  
Employment Services  
Children's Services  
Administrative Services

Patrick O. Duterte, Director

Public Health Division  
Thomas L. Charron, M.D., M.P.H.  
Health Officer\EMS Medical Director  
Deputy Director, Health & Social Services

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## POLICY MEMORANDUM #1790

May 2003

### EMS PHYSICIANS' FORUM

APPROVED BY:

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### SOLANO COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) EMS PHYSICIANS' FORUM

- I. Authority – The Medical Director of the EMS Agency is mandated to assure medical control and quality assurance by State regulation (Health & Safety Code 1797.220). The EMS Medical Director may appoint one or more physicians to assist in this function (Health & Safety Code 1797.202(b)). The EMS Physician Forum Committee is formally designed by the EMS Medical Director to perform this task.
- II. Mission – The mission of the EMS Physician Forum is to review and evaluate the safety, adequacy, appropriateness, and effectiveness of the emergency medical care provided to citizens of Solano County in order to maintain or improve the quality of care. The findings of the forum shall be reported directly to the EMS Medical Director and Solano County Health Officer.
- III. Objectives – the Medical Quality Assurance Plan. Objectives are to preserve and enhance the high quality of patient care in Solano County by ensuring among other things that:
  - A. Patient care services are appropriately organized with clear channels of supervision, responsibility and accountability;
  - B. Patient care appropriate to the needs of the patients is delivered in a timely manner, is optimal within the range of available resources, is consistent with achievable goals and is properly documented;
  - C. Patient care is delivered in as cost-effective a manner as possible;

- D. All elements entering into the care of emergency patients will be subject to periodic review, either retrospective or concurrent, with the use of pre-established objective criteria and documentation of findings; and
- E. The findings of patient care review are utilized by the EMS Medical Director in concrete ways to assure that citizens in Solano County receive optimal emergency medical care.

IV. Scope and Coverage of the Medical Quality Assurance Plan

- A. Services Covered: Services that have a bearing on the care of patients entering the EMS system will be included in the Quality Assurance Program. Such services and groups include but are not limited to the following:
  - 1. Prehospital EMS system;
  - 2. Patients who died either in the Prehospital system and/or upon arrival at a hospital emergency department.
  - 3. Emergency interfacility transfers originating in Solano County hospitals using the EMS system as the transport medium;
  - 4. Any patient complications resulting from EMS patient care.
  - 5. Performance review of Solano authorized EMS Providers.
- B. Responsibility – It is the responsibility of the Physician Forum to establish, maintain and support through representatives of each participating hospital and/or ALS field provider, an ongoing Quality Assurance Review that includes effective mechanisms for reviewing and evaluation of prehospital emergency care and that provides for effective responses to the findings of such evaluation. The following activities will be incorporated in the Medical Quality Assurance Plan:
  - 1. Identification of potential problems or concerns in the delivery of health care services;
  - 2. Objective assessment of the cause and scope of each problem;
  - 3. Implementation of decisions and plans designed to resolve observed problems;
  - 4. Monitoring activities designed to ensure that the desired results have been achieved;
  - 5. Documentation substantiating the effectiveness of the program in improving patient care and ensuring sound clinical performance.
- C. Principal Activities:

1. System Review

A Medical Quality Assurance Program can be implemented through the performing of a variety of analytical studies of the nature and quality of care services and the manner of their delivery. Patient care evaluation studies may be either retrospective or concurrent. Where possible, such studies will be focused upon potential enhancement of care or established problems in the delivery of services.

- a. Data sources may include:
  - i. Patient Care Report Forms
  - ii. Death Audits
  - iii. Medical Control Audits
  - iv. ALS without Base Contact forms
  - v. EMS Office Unusual Occurrence Reports
  - vi. Coroner's Findings
  - vii. Individual Emergency Department Patient Medical Records

2. Policy Development

- a. All policies dealing with patient care shall be reviewed by Physician's Forum for a recommendation to the EMS Agency Medical Director.
- b. Physician's Forum shall review all policies dealing with operations and administration for the purpose of providing comments.

3. Protocol Development

- a. Physicians' Forum shall review all field treatment protocols and shall make recommendation to the EMS Agency Medical Director prior to their implementation.

4. Medical Quality Improvement Standards

- a. Physicians' Forum shall set the standard for Medical Quality Improvement processes in Solano County.
- b. Physicians' Forum shall provide direction to, and receive information from the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Committee. This may include:
  - i. Directing focused audits.
  - ii. Development of CQI standards
  - iii. Development of CQI Coordinator performance standards
  - iv. Development of CQI policies and procedures

5. Studies

Studies may be addressed to problems arising in connection with a diagnosis, a procedure, a treatment modality or the operation of a

department or service. Identification of suitable topics may be based upon evidence of problems revealed through previous studies or information received from the CQI Committee, as well as upon the observations and insights of members of the various professional staffs and services.

V. Organization, Duties, and Meeting of the Physician Forum

A. Membership

1. Chair – EMS Medical Director
2. Base Hospital Physician Liaison from each Base Hospital
  - a. Sutter-Solano Medical Center
  - b. North Bay Medical Center
3. Emergency Department Medical Director (or Designee) from the following receiving hospitals:
  - a. Kaiser
  - b. David Grant Medical Center
4. ALS Provider Medical Directors
  - a. Medic Ambulance Service, Inc.
  - b. Vacaville Fire Department
  - c. Benicia Fire Department
  - d. Cordelia Fire Protection District
  - e. Dixon Fire Department
  - f. Fairfield Fire Department
  - g. Rio Vista Fire Department
  - h. Vallejo Fire Department
  - i. Physicians serving multiple organizations (i.e., hospitals and/or ALS Providers) shall have only one vote).
5. EMS Staff as follows (ex-officio)
  - a. Assistant EMS Medical Director
  - b. EMS Administrator
  - c. Prehospital Coordinator
  - d. Base Hospital Liaison Nurses

B. Lines of Authority

The Chair shall report to the EMS Medical Director/Solano County Health Officer, if applicable. The Health Officer shall report to the Board and EMCC when appropriate.

C. Confidentiality of Committee Proceedings

The meetings and proceedings of Physician Forum and any subcommittees shall be confidential and in accord with Section 1157.7 of the Evidence Code, State of California. All Physician Forum records will be stored in a locked administrative

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file at the EMS Office; each physician member shall maintain a similar system at their respective hospital.

D. Meetings of the Physicians' Forum

- a. Meetings of the Physicians' Forum will be held in accordance with the schedule published by the EMS Agency. The Agency will publish the schedule, as approved by Physician's Forum, no later than December 15 for each following calendar year.
- b. Physicians' Forum is not an elected body and is therefore not governed by the meeting requirements of the Brown Act.
- c. At each meeting, MD Forum shall review a report from the CQI Committee, plus any Unusual Occurrence, or any other relevant issue as identified by the EMS Agency staff or any member of Physicians' Forum. If at the end of a case review it is determined that a problem exists and follow-up is deemed necessary, the committee chair may elect to perform any of the following:
  1. If the problem is an EMS system issue, the chair may request the Assistant EMS Medical Director or EMS staff to resolve the issue and report back to the committee.
  2. If the problem is associated with a hospital, the chair may request a committee member associated with the hospital to resolve the issue and report back to the committee.
  3. The Chair may directly elect to follow and resolve the issue.
  4. ALS provider specific issues will be referred to the ALS Provider Medical Director for review and follow-up. The Provider Medical Director will report findings and/or action back to Physicians' Forum as deemed necessary by the committee.
  5. If applicable, an identified issue may be referred or submitted to the Board, EMCC, PCC or other appropriate agency or organization for further action.

E. Selection Of Member To The SEMSC Board

MD Forum shall, at a time of vacancy, select a physician member to serve as the Physician Representative on the Solano EMS Cooperative (SEMC) Board of Directors. This appointment shall be made in accordance with the terms and conditions of the SEMSC by-laws.

VI. Annual Review of Physician Forum Activities

The Physician Forum will review its medical retrospective review process at least once per fiscal year to assess its effectiveness and to consider possible changes. When the Physicians' Forum decides that changes are needed, they will submit the recommended

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changes to the EMS Medical Director/Health Officer. When consensus is reached with the Health Officer and Forum members agree, the changes will be made.

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