

17 REFUSAL OF CARE

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17.1 Purpose and Expected Results

The Squad strives to provide excellent patient care. The Squad members should make every effort to transport patients that are in need of emergent care or transport to an emergency department.

17.2 Circumstances of Applicability

Anytime a patient refuses treatment or transport.

17.3 Requisites

None.

17.4 Procedure Description

17.4.1 Competent Patient

If a patient judged to be in need of medical assistance, and that patient refuses medical attention (RMA) or transport to an appropriate medical facility, the ambulance crew will:

- Ascertain that the patient is legally permitted to refuse care, i.e. is not suicidal and is a mentally competent without altered mental status:
 - Adult
 - Emancipated minor
 - Member of the armed services
 - Parent
- Make multiple sincere attempts and (as appropriate) enlist the aid of family members and friends, to convince the patient
- Fully inform the patient as to implications and risks of the patient's decision
- As appropriate, consult with medical control and perhaps request medical control talk with the patient

Should these efforts fail, then follow the Susquehanna EMS Region's approved protocols for the release of the patient, including:

- The patient signing the informed refusal of care form
- A competent (and, if possible, disinterested witness, such as a police officer), signing the Informed Refusal of Care or Transport form.

Before leaving the patient:

- Advise the patient and those in attendance that Squad may be called again

17 Patient Refusal

- As appropriate, attempt to get family, friends, or another caregiver to stay with the patient

Document the above steps taken on the PCR. As a reminder, a copy of the PCR or worksheet does not get left with the patient under any circumstances.

17.4.2 Not Competent Patient

If the patient is in need of medical care and is not deemed competent to make an informed decision, the ambulance crew will enlist the appropriate law enforcement agency to assist in the transport of the patient. Request law enforcement to complete pertinent paperwork per the appropriate Mental Health Law and as appropriate accompany or meet the ambulance crew at the emergency department to meet with the nurse or doctor. The ambulance crew will document the reasons for involving law enforcement on the patient's PCR.