

18 Hospital Destination

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18.1 Purpose and Expected Results

The Squad strives to provide excellent patient care. Emergency care includes transfer of patient to an appropriate facility and medical personnel for definitive care. The Squad will make every effort to transport patients to an appropriate hospital.

18.2 Circumstances of Applicability

Anytime a patient is transported.

18.3 Requisites

- Patient requiring transfer of care
- Available ambulance

18.4 Procedure Description

On a normal basis, the Squad transports patients to hospitals in the Binghamton NY area and to Guthrie Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre PA. Exception to this may occur when an ambulance has responded to a mutual aid request and uses the usual receiving hospital(s) of the agency requesting mutual aid such as Guthrie Cortland Medical Center and Cayuga Medical Center.

The hospital destination, within the areas of the ambulance's normal operating territory, will be based on the competent patient's choice. Advice given to the patient will depend on a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, patient medical condition, road and weather conditions, location of the patient's regular physician, and location of the incident. Any patient deemed not competent to decide will be taken to the nearest appropriate hospital.

Should a competent patient not heed this advice, medical control at the patient's requested hospital will be contacted immediately, advised of the situation, and orders sought.

18.4.1 Patient Seeks Transportation to a Hospital Other Than the Usual Receiving Hospitals

In an emergent situation, if a patient seeks transportation to a hospital outside the area to which the Owego Emergency Squad ordinarily transports patients, the patient will be informed of the normal receiving hospitals, the distances involved, and that rare exceptions are made. If the patient refuses transportation,

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the “Refusal of Care” policy will be followed. This shall be coordinated with Medical Command for permission and advice to bypass a closer hospital.

If the situation is non-emergent (e.g. the need to transport a non-ambulatory stable patient), if a patient seeks transportation to a hospital outside the area to which the Owego Emergency Squad ordinarily transports patients, the patient will be informed of the normal receiving hospitals, the distances involved, and that rare exceptions are made. This shall be coordinated with Medical Command for permission and advice to bypass a closer hospital..

18.4.2 Receiving Hospital Requests a Patient Be Transported To Another Facility Before Arrival

18.1.1.1 Change of Destination

If the ambulance crew gives a certain hospital as patient destination and the medical control physician at the receiving hospital feels that patient condition warrants transport to the nearest facility, the crew will inform the patient and any accompanying relative, and comply immediately with the medical control order.

If once the patient is en route to a certain hospital and that hospital medical control orders the ambulance to reroute to another hospital, the crew will inform the patient and will reasonably do everything in their power to explain the reasons for the change of destination. If the patient is alert, oriented, and understands the reason for change of destination, but still refuses to change from the hospital of choice, the patient will be asked to sign a refusal and will be taken to the original hospital destination. In all cases of destination changes from the patient’s original hospital choice, the EMT will record the patient’s request on the PCR and the reasons for transporting to another hospital.

18.1.1.2 Diversion

If a patient requested hospital, or closest appropriate hospital requests, the ambulance to divert to another hospital because of emergency room conditions, or closure of the ER, the ambulance will divert. Make certain that the original receiving hospital medical command contacts the new receiving hospital and advises of the diversion and orders given. Both diversion and transport delays shall be noted in the PCR.

18.1.1.3 Hospital Near Capacity

If a patient requested hospital, or closest appropriate hospital, notifies the crew of being near capacity and to expect delay in patient care and the patient is not critical, the crew shall advise the patient of the circumstances and request permission to use transport to an alternative appropriate hospital. If:

- there is no appropriate alternative, or
- the patient insists on the destination, or

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- in the judgment of the crewmember with the highest level of training, in consultation with medical control, they feel that the patient condition is not stable enough to transport to an alternative appropriate hospital, the original destination hospital shall be the receiving hospital. Turn around delays shall be noted in the PCR.