

20. Treating or Transporting Psychiatric Patients

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Changed:

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20.1 PURPOSE AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The Squad strives to provide excellent patient care. The Squad members will provide appropriate care to a psychiatric patient.

20.2 CIRCUMSTANCES OF APPLICABILITY

Anytime the Squad is presented with a psychiatric patient.

20.3 REQUISITES

None.

20.4 PROCEDURE DESCRIPTION

Often the Squad will be confronted with a psychiatric patient. Remember that scene safety is a primary concern of the ambulance crew. If the scene is not safe, the ambulance crew shall remove themselves from the scene until the scene is safe. Law enforcement assistance will be requested.

Should the EMS crew come in contact with a psychiatric patient who needs but refuses care, Law Enforcement assistance should be requested. Law Enforcement will be apprised of situation and why the patient needs transport. A law enforcement officer will determine if he has the authority to order transport of subject in conjunction with various sections of the Mental Health Law (MHL). Should transport be ordered as per MHL, the officer will either follow the ambulance or ride in the patient compartment. Should patient restraint be needed, Law Enforcement will ride with the patient in the ambulance. Law Enforcement may utilize handcuffs, straps, cravats, or other suitable restraining material and may enlist help of EMS crew in restraining patients.

There will be times when a psychiatric patient with an emergent medical condition is encountered and is not presenting a hazard to himself or others and is a willing candidate for treatment and transport. In these instances Law Enforcement need not be utilized. However, during transport, should the patient become abusive or violent, Law Enforcement should be requested and Medical Command contacted. Medical command may order the physical or chemical restraint of the patient by the EMS crew.

The Squad should not transport psychiatric patients that have no emergent medical condition. Law Enforcement should transport abusive or violent patients with no emergent medical condition.