



McLean County Area EMS System

TITLE: EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED PATIENT

POLICY STATEMENT:

When the EMS personnel or family reasonably suspects that an emotionally disturbed patient “at the time the determination is being made or within a reasonable time thereafter, would intentionally or unintentionally physically injure himself or other persons, or is unable to care for his own physical needs” and is in need of mental health treatment, against his or her will, shall receive emergency medical care and transportation to the hospital for definitive care. This does not include a person whose mental processes have merely been weakened or impaired by reason of advanced years.

GOAL/PURPOSE:

To insure patients who are emotionally disturbed receive appropriate emergency medical care and mental health services.

POLICY:

DEFINITIONS:

EXPRESSED CONSENT: The consent given by adults who are of legal age and mentally competent to make a rational decision in regards to their medical well-being.

IMPLIED CONSENT: Situation involving an unconscious patient where care is initiated under the premise that the patient would desire such care if they were conscious and able to make the decision. In the case of an adult individual where he/she is unable to understand Expressed Consent, who may have a legal guardian who is not present, emergency care and transportation is given on the basis of Implied Consent.

- A. Attempt to orient the patient to reality and to persuade this person to be transported to the hospital so that he/she can get emergency medical care and mental health services.
- B. If persuasion is unsuccessful, contact Medical Control and relay with history and/or have the Medical Control Physician talk with patient. The EMS crew will then follow the direction of the Medical Control Physician.
- C. NOTIFY THE APPROPRIATE LAW ENFORMENT AGENCY TO RESPOND.
- D. If the Medical Control Physician determines the patient cannot understand EXPRESSED CONSENT for patient care and transportation to the hospital and emergency treatment is required to preserve life or prevent serious impairment to health, the Physician shall order, against patient will, and based upon IMPLIED CONSENT the emergency care and transportation to the hospital.
- E. IN NO WAY does this mean that the EMS crew are committing the patient to a hospital admission. It simply enables the EMS personnel to transport a person in need of mental health treatment to a hospital against his/her will so that a physician may further evaluate said patient.
- F. If patient requires restraints, EMS personnel shall use all the force reasonably required to restrain the patient. “Reasonable force” depends on the degree of resistance on part of the patient.
- G. If patient runs from EMS, this matter should be left to law enforcement personnel.