



County of El Dorado

Emergency Medical Services Agency

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*****PARAMEDIC ALERT*****

No. 2023-06

September 12, 2023

TO: EMS Personnel
FROM: El Dorado County EMS Agency
SUBJECT: Signatures and Dispositions
PURPOSE: Stakeholder information

Background:

1. The El Dorado County EMS Agency (EDCEMSA) is the Local Emergency Medical Services Authority (LEMSA) for the County of El Dorado.
2. Pursuant to CCR Title 22 § 100148, EDCEMSA shall establish policies and procedures governing the delivery of EMS services within its jurisdiction, including field procedures, policies and protocols.
3. Pursuant to the 2022 documentation policy, EDCEMSA may alter documentation processes at its discretion. (Section F, para.3)

ALERT:

In the interest of ensuring complete documentation of EMS service provision and patient care, EDCEMSA communicates the following:

- I. All patient contact documentation will include a valid patient signature, or responsible party signature.**
 - This includes transport, treat-no-transport, AMA, patient left in custody of law, etc.
 - Where anyone other than the patient is signing, the ePCR will include a complete explanation for why the patient was not able to

sign.

- Where multiple units attend to a patient, a single patient signature obtained by the medically responsible crew will suffice.

II. All on-scene transfers of care will be validated with a signature.

- Transfer of care will be unambiguous and mutually agreed on scene.
- The paramedic relinquishing care will obtain the signature of the paramedic assuming care in the same manner as a transfer of care at the destination.
- Where patient acuity or other scene conditions preclude a signed transfer in situ, the signature may be obtained later, but prior to the end of the working shift.

III. All Medic unit documentation will include signatures of both crew members.

- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) stipulate that patient transport by ambulance is performed with a minimum of two personnel – at least one attendant and one driver. Industry best practice is for both crew members to sign the ePCR as confirmation that this condition was met.
- There is no legal risk to either crew member, as signatures do not indicate shared agreement on every decision, nor shared participation in every action. A provider's signature validates what is attributed to that provider in that ePCR. *If all you did was drive, that's all your signature confirms.*

IV. All paramedics are individually responsible for documenting their actions in service of a patient, at all times.

- In line with CCR Title 22 § 100171, the 2022 Documentation Policy and the previous paragraph, actions attributable to a provider must be validated by their signature.
- At no point should a PCR author propose that their actions on scene may be found in another ePCR that they did not sign (i.e. *"On scene assist only, see Medic XX tag for further"*).

- The simplicity of a paramedic's 'assistance' on scene, in no way diminishes their record keeping responsibilities under State law; nor does their vehicle assignment, employing agency, or seniority.

V. All ePCRs will be concluded with the proper disposition.

- Transportation of a patient should never have an 'Assist' disposition (Public, Agency, or Unit) regardless of who attended the patient or who drove.
- *Per the 2022 documentation policy*, transport ePCRs will have the disposition: **"Patient Treated, Transported by This EMS Unit"** or in the case of critical care transfer, **"CCT (with RN) Transport"**.
- *Per the 2022 documentation policy*, documentation of clinical care performed whilst aboard another unit shall have the disposition **"Patient treated, Transported with this EMS Crew in Another Vehicle"**.

SUMMARY:

The above items are a combination of incremental change, clarification, and re-emphasis of existing policy. Each extends toward the best interest of our patients, system stakeholders and the general public.

ImageTrend validation rules supporting these have been composed and are presently live. EDCEMSA is assigning no point value at the outset to allow crews the opportunity to familiarize, however, values will be added soon.

Please also be reminded that in cases where the ePCR configuration does not allow for a precisely aligned validation rule, providers are expected to adhere to the directives to the best of their ability, without prompting.
