



## Charles County Department of Emergency Services STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

### Section 400 - Emergency Operations

Emergency Medical Response - 403.00		
S.O.P. # 403.04	<b>Local Hospital Diversion Policy</b>	PAGE: 1 OF 4
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REVISED: 09/2015	Authorized: William Stephens, Director	

#### 403.04.01 Purpose

This policy provides guidelines for both emergency medical services (EMS) and emergency medical dispatch (EMD) personnel when a basic or advanced life support unit is being held at a hospital emergency department because a bed is unavailable.

#### 403.04.02 Policy

Patients should be accepted by the emergency department staff and transferred from the ambulance stretcher to a hospital gurney in a reasonable time frame. A reasonable time frame is defined as twenty (20) minutes from the arrival of the patient at triage, to the placement of the patient either in a wheelchair or on a hospital stretcher.

This policy does not replace Yellow Alert, nor does it cancel or override it. If a hospital is on Yellow Alert prior to a hospital Re-Route being declared, it will remain on Yellow Alert after the cancellation of the Re-Route or until the Yellow Alert is cancelled by the hospital.

The Charles County EMS *Hospital Re-Route Policy* is based upon the MIEMSS Region V Re-Route Policy and is meant to identify county-specific agencies, organizations and personnel. It is not meant to override the Region V policy in any substantive way. If the local policy is found to conflict with MIEMSS Region V policy in any way then the state's regional policy should be followed in that instance.

#### 403.04.03 Definitions

***EMS Duty Officer*** - this shall include the DES Medical Duty Officer as well as the Charles County Association of EMS (CCAEMS) Chief.

***Local EMS Official*** - this shall include the CCAEMS Chief and the Department of Emergency Services, Chief of EMS.

***Re-Route*** - refers to instances when hospitals are placed on diversion due to the lack of availability of EMS beds. It does not cover any of the other causes of diversion as defined in the Region V Yellow Alert Policy.



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### 403.04.04 Transport Unit Responsibilities

If a patient has not been placed in a wheelchair or on a hospital gurney within the twenty (20) minute time frame, and it does not appear that such placement will happen within the next ten (10) minutes, EMS Personnel shall...

1. Contact the ED Charge Nurse to discuss if they will be able to place the patient within another ten (10) minutes.
2. If the patient will not be placed within the next ten (10) minutes, then EMS Personnel shall...
  - a. Notify an available EMS Duty Officer of the situation.
  - b. Remain with patient at all times and continue patient care as necessary until the patient has been transferred to a hospital wheelchair or gurney. Report must be given to the person assuming responsibility for the patient.
  - c. Assist the hospital staff in any way that will assist in clearing a bed for the patient. This will expedite the patient's transfer from a stretcher.
  - d. Maintain a professional demeanor and avoid direct conflicts with hospital staff, patients, or patients' family regarding the delay.

### 403.04.05 EMS Duty Officer Responsibilities

The EMS Duty Officer should contact the ED Charge Nurse to discuss when they will be able to place the patient on a hospital gurney or wheelchair.

The EMS Duty Officer will also assess county and region-wide activity to determine if the overload exists at the single hospital or if it is a county or system-wide problem. It is recommended that the EMS Duty Officer consult with EMRC to review system status.

If other hospitals are open, the EMS Duty Officer shall place the hospital in question on Re-Route status and notify the ED Charge Nurse, the local EMS Officials and the Charles County Dispatch Center of this status change.

The EMS Duty Officer will monitor the hospital on Re-Route to determine when the re-route status should be removed. Once removed, the EMS Duty Officer will notify the Charles County Dispatch Center of this status change.

### 403.04.06 Re-Route Procedure for Other Transporting Units

Re-route all priority 2 and 3 patients to the next closest hospital.

Transport priority 1 patients to the closest appropriate hospital unless otherwise directed by a consulting physician.

1. Advise the consulting physician of the closest hospital re-route status due to a lack of available beds in the emergency department.



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2. Follow the consulting physician's direction.

If the two closest hospitals are on re-route, the pre-hospital provider shall take direction from the Charles County Dispatch Center as to the appropriate destination.

Patients requiring transport to a specialty referral service located at a hospital on Re-Route should be taken to a hospital as directed by a consulting physician.

1. Contact EMRC to have both the intended Specialty Center and the receiving Emergency Department on line.
2. Advise the consulting physician of the closest hospital's Re-Route status due to a lack of beds in the emergency department.
3. Follow the consulting physician's direction.

Advise the patient of the reason for their re-route only if they ask, or specifically request transport to the hospital in question.

1. If the patient refuses transport to the next closest hospital, contact the hospital in question via ERMC. Inquire as to the length of the wait before a bed or wheelchair will be available and advise the patient.
2. If the patient still refuses the transport to the next closest hospital, transport the patient to the hospital on Re-Route. Advise the hospital of your ETA and the patient's chief complaint or injury.

### **403.04.07 Charles County Dispatch Center Responsibilities**

Notify the local EMS Officials of the status change to include the DES Medical Duty Officer and the CCAEMS Chief.

Change the hospital's status to Re-Route.

Advise all their EMS Personnel of the hospital's status in the same manner as any other hospital status change.

Notify the Emergency Medical Resource Center (EMRC) of the hospital's Re-Route status change.

### **403.04.08 EMRC Responsibilities**

Notify all appropriate local dispatch centers that a hospital's Re-Route status change was requested by the posting jurisdiction.

If time allows, confirm that the hospital is aware of their Re-Route status change.



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### 403.04.09 Documentation

All basic and advanced life support units being held at a hospital for thirty (30) minutes or more will forward a Re-Route Report to the local EMS Officials. This report shall include:

- Hospital
- Date
- eMEDS Patient Care Report Number
- Times from arrival to release

EMRC will enter changes in status to the County and Hospital Alert Tracking System (CHATS)

All concerns or complaints regarding this policy will be directed in writing to the local EMS Officials.

### 403.04.10 Related Issues

Local EMS Officials may cancel the Re-Route designation for any cause regardless if units are still delayed.