



Northwest Community EMS System

Date: March 3, 2011

To: All EMS & Command Personnel
(Hospital & Provider Agencies)

From: John M. Ortinau, M.D., FACEP
EMS Medical Director

System Memo: # 325

Please post for EMS personnel

RE: **Number of pts that can be transported per vehicle**

We last addressed this issue with System memo #259 in August of 2001. Based on discussions at this month's CE classes, it is important that we remind everyone of our joint obligations to ensure patient safety combined with the need to use EMS resources wisely.

The **Federal Specification for the Star-of-Life Ambulance KKK-A-1822F** issued August 1, 2007, which IDPH uses as its standard, states that an "ambulance is defined as a vehicle used for emergency medical care that provides a patient compartment to accommodate an emergency medical services provider (EMSP) and one patient located on the primary cot so positioned that the primary patient can be given intensive life support during transit."

There may be times when compelling extraordinary circumstances require that the one pt per ambulance requirement be waived to ensure patient safety, timely transport, and expeditious clearing of a scene.

Transporting more than one patient in a multiple patient incident

Two patients may be transported per vehicle providing the following conditions are met:

- Scene paramedics believe that both pts can be adequately assessed and cared for simultaneously in one vehicle; and
- There is no more than 1 ALS patient transported per vehicle.

If these conditions are met, PMs can transport 1 ALS and 1 BLS pt or 2 BLS pts without prior approval from OLMC as long as one is secured to the primary patient litter and the other is able to be seated and safely secured to the bench seat. Both patients must be transported in the pt compartment with an EMSP. If scene command wishes to transport more than two pts per ambulance in a multiple patient incident, contact OLMC for consultation and authorization.

Transporting more than one patient in a mass casualty event

The maximum # of pts that can be transported in one vehicle under any circumstances is as follows:

- 1 stretcher pt and up to 3 seated pts who can all be safely secured with seat belts on the squad bench in the patient compartment; or
- 2 stretcher pts (both could be reds); one on the cot and one secured to a folding stretcher, stretcher chair or long spineboard on the squad bench (KKK-A-1822F specs).

There must be at least 1 EMT-P/PHRN riding in the pt compartment with room for them to be seated and belted in. If additional EMT-Ps/PHRNs are needed for safe patient care, there must be room for them to be seated and belted. The number of EMTs attending the patients will depend on the nature of their complaints/injuries and the interventions/monitoring that are medically indicated enroute.

This clarification to the SOPs will allow you to clear scenes with multiple patients in a timely manner while taking all precautions for their health and safety.