

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SUBJECT: **DRUG AUTHORIZING PHYSICIAN FOR  
PROVIDER AGENCIES**

REFERENCE NO. 410

PURPOSE: To provide an orientation for physicians who agree to authorize the purchase of drugs, medical devices and controlled substances for a paramedic provider agency.

AUTHORITY: Health & Safety Code 1797, et seq.  
Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Section 100169(a)(1), 100145(c)

DEFINITION:

**Drug Authorizing Physician:** A physician who utilizes their medical license and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) number to purchase drugs, medical devices and controlled substances for an approved EMS provider agency in Los Angeles County. This role is primarily limited to drug purchases and they are not required to meet the criteria for Provider Agency Medical Director.

**Provider Agency Medical Director:** A physician designated by an approved EMS Provider Agency to provide medical oversight of field care and who meets the criteria outlined in Reference No. 411. A Provider Agency Medical Director may also agree to act as a Drug Authorizing Physician.

**Controlled Drugs:** A controlled substance is any drug defined in the categories of the Controlled Substances Act of 1970 including opium and its derivatives, hallucinogens, depressants, and stimulants. In Los Angeles County, the provider agency controlled drugs are outlined in Reference No. 702, Controlled Drugs Carried on ALS Units.

PRINCIPLES:

1. Provider agencies may obtain controlled substances from a physician who agrees to authorize the procurement of controlled substances under their DEA registration.
2. Drug Authorizing Physicians understand shall sign Reference 410.1 to acknowledge in writing that they are responsible for purchasing, storing, and distributing controlled drugs for the provider agency in accordance with Reference No. 702, Controlled Drugs Carried on ALS Units.
3. The controlled drugs purchased by the Drug Authorizing Physician are restricted to those listed in Ref. No. 703 ALS Unit Inventory.

POLICY:

- I. Procedure to Become a Drug Authorizing Physician for Provider Agencies

EFFECTIVE: 12-1-09

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REVISED: 12-15-14

SUPERSEDES: 12-1-09

APPROVED:

  
Director, EMS Agency

  
Medical Director, EMS Agency

- A. The provider agency shall submit a letter, on departmental letterhead, of intent to purchase drugs, medical devices, and controlled drugs under a Drug Authorizing Physician to include:
  - 1. The name of the physician who will assume this responsibility.
  - 2. The proposed date of the changeover from the EMS Agency Medical Director to the Drug Authorizing Physician.
  - 3. A signed Confirmation of Agreement to Purchase Drugs and Medical Supplies (Ref. No. 410.1).
  - 4. A narcotic policy revised to indicate how controlled drugs will be purchased and stored under the Drug Authorizing Physician in accordance with Federal and State regulations.
  - 5. The name, address, and telephone number of the key contact for the controlled substance supplier.
  
- B. The following must take place prior to the change from the EMS Agency Medical Director to the Drug Authorizing Physician:
  - 1. The Drug Authorizing Physician shall meet with the EMS Agency Medical Director.
  - 2. The provider agency shall return any drugs previously obtained at a County Hospital pharmacy to the issuing pharmacy.
  - 3. EMS Agency staff will conduct a site visit to assess controlled drug storage and security.
  
- II. Procedure for Returning Controlled Substances Previously Issued by a County Hospital Pharmacy:
  - A. The provider agency shall fax the controlled drug logs showing the current inventory levels to the Prehospital Care Section of the EMS Agency at (562) 946-6594.
  - B. EMS Agency staff will review the logs and contact the issuing pharmacy to arrange a mutually agreed-upon date and time for the provider agency to return the drugs.
  - C. Once the logs are reviewed and validated, EMS Agency staff will give the provider agency the documentation needed to return the controlled substances. This authorization will also serve as notification to the County pharmacy to delete the provider agency from the list of those approved to obtain controlled substances.

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- D. The provider agency will return the drugs to the issuing pharmacy along with any blue copies of the EMS Report Form needed to account for drugs not in inventory due to administration in the field.

CROSS REFERENCES:

Prehospital Care Manual:

Ref. No. 410.1, **Drug Authorizing Physician Confirmation of Agreement Form**

Ref. No. 411, **Provider Agency Medical Director**

Ref. No. 702, **Controlled Drugs Carried on ALS Units**

Ref. No. 703, **ALS Unit Inventory**