

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SUBJECT: **PSYCHIATRIC URGENT CARE CENTER (PUCC)
STANDARDS**

REFERENCE NO. 326

PURPOSE: To establish minimum standards for the designation of Psychiatric Urgent Care Centers (PUCC).

AUTHORITY: Health & Safety Code, Division 5, Sections 1797.220, 1798
California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 5

DEFINITIONS:

Behavioral/Psychiatric Crisis: A provider impression for patients who are having a mental health crisis or a mental health emergency. This is not for anxiety or agitation secondary to medical etiology.

Emergency Medical Condition: A condition or situation in which an individual has an immediate need for medical attention. The presence of abnormal vital signs (heart rate and rhythm, respiratory rate, blood pressure – except isolated asymptomatic hypertension, oxygen saturation) are also indications of an emergency medical condition. Patients who meet any criteria for Base Contact or Receiving Hospital Notification (Ref. No. 1200.2) are also considered to have an emergency medical condition.

Psychiatric Urgent Care Center (PUCC): A mental health facility authorized by the Department of Mental Health and approved by the EMS Agency by meeting the requirements in this Standards.

PUCC EMS Liaison Officer: A qualified administrative personnel appointed by the PUCC to coordinate all activities related to receiving patients triaged by paramedics whose primary provider impression is Behavioral/Psychiatric Crisis.

POLICY:

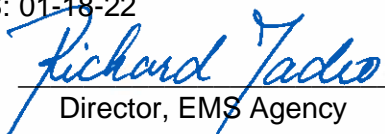
I. General Requirements

- A. Licensed or certified by the California Department of Public Health as a mental health treatment facility
- B. Authorized by the Department of Mental Health to provide mental health services
- C. Have a fully executed Psychiatric Urgent Care Designation Agreement with the EMS Agency
- D. Operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year
- E. Provide up to 23 hours of immediate care focusing on intensive crisis services
- F. Provide and maintain adequate parking for ambulance vehicles to ensure access of PUCC

EFFECTIVE: 10-01-20
REVISED: 04-01-23
SUPERSEDES: 01-18-22

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APPROVED:


Director, EMS Agency


Medical Director, EMS Agency

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- G. Appoint a PUCCEMS Liaison Officer to act as a liaison between the EMS Agency and the authorized EMS provider agency
 - H. Accept all patients who have been triaged by paramedics regardless of the patient's ability to pay (see Inclusion Criteria in Ref. No. 526, Behavioral/Psychiatric Crisis Patient Destination)
 - I. Notify the EMS Agency within 24 hours when there is a change in status with respect to protocols and/or the ability to care for patients
 - J. Maintain General Liability Insurance as follows:
 - 1. General aggregate \$2 million
 - 2. Products/completed operations aggregate \$1 million
 - 3. Personal and advertising injury \$1 million
 - 4. Each occurrence \$1 million
 - 5. Sexual Misconduct \$2 million per claim and \$2 million aggregate
 - 6. Worker's Compensation and Employers Liability \$1 million per accident
- II. PUCCE Leadership and Staffing Requirements
- A. PUCCEMS Liaison Officer
 - 1. Responsibilities:
 - a. Implement and ensure compliance with the PUCCE Standards
 - b. Maintain direct involvement in the development, implementation, and review of PUCCE policies and procedures related to receiving patients triaged by paramedics to the PUCCE
 - c. Serve as the key personnel responsible for addressing variances in the care and sentinel events as it relates to patients triaged by paramedics to the PUCCE
 - d. Liaison with EMS Provider Agencies and law enforcement agencies
 - e. Serve as the contact person for the EMS Agency and be available upon request to respond to County business
 - B. A physician licensed in the State of California shall be on-call at all times.
 - C. A registered nurse licensed in the State of California shall be on-site at all times.
 - D. Staffing may be augmented by licensed psychiatric nurse practitioners, licensed vocational nurses, social workers, and other mental health professionals.

- E. All medical and nursing staff shall have current certification on Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) through the American Heart Association or Red Cross.

III. Policies and Procedures

Develop, maintain and implement policies and procedures that address the following:

- A. Receipt, immediate evaluation, short term management and monitoring of patients who meet PUCC triage inclusion criteria
- B. Timely transfer of patients who require a higher level of care to an acute care hospital utilizing non-911 ambulance provider(s)
- C. Immediate transfer of patients with emergency medical condition to the most accessible 9-1-1 receiving facility/emergency department
- D. Record keeping of EMS Report Forms
- E. Submit monthly data to the EMS Agency for the following:
 - 1. Total number of EMS transported patients who were evaluated
 - 2. Total number of EMS transported patients who were treated and released
 - 3. Total number of EMS transported patients who were transferred to an acute care emergency department within two (2) hours or less of arrival to the PUCC
 - 4. Total number of EMS transported patients transferred to an acute care emergency department after two (2) hours of arrival to the PUCC
 - 5. Total number of EMS transported patients admitted to another care facility
 - 6. Total number of EMS transported patients who experienced an adverse event resulting from the services provided
- F. Procedure for notifying the EMS Agency of patient transfers from PUCC requiring 9-1-1 transport for an emergency medical condition within six hours of admission to the PUCC; notification shall be provided as soon as possible, but not to exceed 72 hours after such transport(s)

IV. Equipment and Supplies

- A. Dedicated telephone line to facilitate direct communication with EMS personnel
- B. ReddiNet® capability to communicate PUCC's real-time capacity status
- C. Public Access Device/Layperson Automated External Defibrillator on site with staff trained on its proper use

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- D. An up-to-date community referral list of services and facilities available to patients
 - V. Procedure for Approval to be a designated PUCC
 - A. Submit a written request to the Director of the EMS Agency to include:
 - 1. The rationale for the request to be a designated PUCC
 - 2. A document verifying that the facility has been approved by the Department of Mental Health to provide mental health services (i.e., written service agreement)
 - 3. The proposed date the PUCC will open to accept patients triaged by paramedics to the PUCC
 - 4. Copies of the policies and procedures required in Section III
 - 5. Proposed Staffing
 - 6. Hours of operation
 - B. Site Visit
 - 1. Once all General Requirements are met, the EMS Agency will coordinate a site visit to verify compliance with all the requirements.
 - 2. Administrative and field personnel from local EMS provider agencies will be invited to exchange contact information, and become familiar with the physical layout of the facility.
 - C. PUCC Designation/Re-Designation
 - 1. PUCC initial designation and re-designation is granted for a period of one year after a satisfactory review by the EMS Agency.
 - VI. Other Requirements
 - A. The EMS Agency reserves the right to perform scheduled site visits or request additional data from the PUCC at any time.
 - B. The PUCC shall immediately (within 72 hours) provide written notice to the Director of the EMS Agency if unable to adhere to any of the provisions set forth in the PUCC Standards including structural changes or relocation of the PUCC.
 - C. The PUCC shall provide a 90-day, written notice to the EMS Agency Director of intent to withdraw as a designated PUCC.
 - D. The PUCC shall notify the EMS Agency within 15 days, in writing of any change in status of the PUCC EMS Liaison by submitting Ref. no. 621.2, Notification of Personnel Change Form.

CROSS REFERENCES:

Prehospital Care Manual:

Ref. No. 326.1, Designated Psychiatric Urgent Care Center (PUCC) Roster

Ref. No. 526, Behavioral/Psychiatric Crisis Patient Destination

Ref. No. 621.2, Notification of Personnel Change Form