

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SUBJECT: **PROVIDER AGENCY MEDICAL DIRECTOR**

REFERENCE NO. 411

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PURPOSE: To describe the role and responsibilities of Medical Directors of approved Los Angeles County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Provider Agencies.

DEFINITION:

**Provider Agency Medical Director:** A physician designated by an approved EMS Provider Agency to provide advice and coordinate the medical aspects of field care, to provide oversight of all medications utilized by EMTs and paramedics including controlled medications, and to oversee the provider's quality improvement process, as defined by the Los Angeles County EMS Agency

Requirements for the Provider Agency Medical Director include but are not limited to the following:

1. Provider Agency Medical Director appointments will be approved by the Los Angeles County EMS Medical Director.
2. Board eligible or certified by the American Board of Emergency Medicine or the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine in Emergency Medical Services or in Emergency Medicine with proof of significant experience and practice in EMS.
3. Engaged in the practice, supervision, or teaching of emergency medicine and/or EMS.
4. Knowledgeable on the current policies, procedures, and protocols of the Los Angeles County EMS Agency.
5. Attend an EMS system orientation provided by the EMS Agency and participate in a field care observation (ride-along) with the sponsoring agency.
6. Attend the annual program review or participate in the exit summary

PRINCIPLE: Medical Directors enhance the quality of prehospital care by providing medical expertise in EMS and serve as a liaison between the EMS Agency Medical Director, hospitals, and other Provider Agency Medical Directors to ensure the delivery of safe and effective medical care.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROVIDER AGENCY MEDICAL DIRECTOR


- I. Medical Direction and Supervision of Patient Care
  - A. Advises the provider agency in planning and evaluating the delivery of prehospital medical care by EMTs and paramedics.

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APPROVED:   
Director, EMS Agency

  
Medical Director, EMS Agency

- B. Reviews and approves the medical content of all EMS training performed by the provider agency and ensures compliance with continuing education requirements of the State and local EMS Agency.
  - C. Reviews and approves the medical components of the provider agency's dispatch system.
  - D. Assists in the development of procedures to optimize patient care.
  - E. Reviews and recommends to the EMS Agency Medical Director any new medical monitoring devices under consideration and ensures compliance with State and local regulation.
  - F. Evaluates compliance with the legal documentation requirements of patient care.
  - G. Participates in direct observation of field responses as needed. Medical direction during a direct field observation may be provided by the Provider Agency Medical Director in lieu of the base hospital under the following conditions:
    - 1. The EMTs, paramedics, and Provider Agency Medical Director on scene must be currently employed by, or contracted with, the same provider agency.
    - 2. If base contact has already been established, the Provider Agency Medical Director may assume medical direction of patient care. The base hospital shall be informed that the Provider Agency Medical Director is on scene. They are not required to accompany the patient to the hospital.
    - 3. EMS personnel shall document the involvement of the Provider Agency Medical Director on the EMS Report Form when orders are given.
    - 4. The receiving hospital shall be notified of all patients whose field care is directed by a Provider Agency Medical Director.
  - H. Participates as needed with appropriate EMS committees and the local medical community.
  - I. Attends at least 50% of the Medical Advisory Council meetings. For meetings in which the medical director is unable to be present, designates a representative to attend for the purpose of receiving information.
  - J. Ensures provider agency compliance with Los Angeles County EMS Agency controlled substance policies and procedures.
- II. Audit and Evaluation of Patient Care
- A. Assist the provider agency in the development and implementation of a continuous quality improvement program to ensure the provision of quality medical care. Provides recommendations for training and operational changes based on quality improvement results.

- B. Evaluates the adherence of provider agency medical personnel to medical policies, procedures and protocols of the Los Angeles County EMS Agency.
- C. Coordinates delivery and evaluation of patient care with base and receiving hospitals.

III. Investigation of Medical Care Issues

- A. Reviews incidents with unusual or adverse patient outcomes, inadequate performance of EMS personnel, and complaints related to the delivery of medical care.
- B. Evaluates medical performance, gathers appropriate facts and, as needed, forwards those facts in writing to the Los Angeles County EMS Agency Medical Director.
- C. Ensures that appropriate actions are taken on cases with patient care issues with adverse outcomes, e.g., training, counseling, etc.

IV. Role and Responsibilities of the EMS Provider Agency

- A. Designates and maintains a Medical Director at all times.
- B. Ensures Medical Director is involved in the development of all medically related policies, procedures, quality improvement and medical dispatch programs, as applicable.
- C. Provides the EMS Agency with notification of any changes in the designated Medical Director as specified in Reference No. 621, Notification of Personnel Change.
- D. Immediately notify the EMS Agency in the event the Medical Director abruptly resigns or is otherwise unable to fulfill his/her duties and no immediate replacement is available.

CROSS REFERENCE:

Prehospital Care Manual:

Ref. No. 214, **Base Hospital and Provider Agency Reporting Responsibilities**

Ref. No. 414, **Registered Nurse/Respiratory Specialty Care Transport Provider**

Ref. No. 422, **Authorization for Paramedic Provider Status of a Los Angeles County Based Law Enforcement Agency**

Ref. No. 816, **Physician at the Scene**

Ref. No. 701, **Supply and Resupply of Designated EMS Provider Units/Vehicles**

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