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**EMERGENCY PROTOCOL UPDATE**

**TO:** All MA Licensed Ambulance Services and MA Accredited EMT Training Institutions  
**CC:** EMCAB Members

**FROM:** Deborah Allwes, BS, BSN, MPH, Director D&A  
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality  
Dr. Jonathan Burstein, State Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Medical Director

**DATE:** June 20, 2014

**RE:** Emergency Update to Selective Spinal Assessment Procedure Protocol

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In accordance with the authority vested in the State EMS Medical Director under Appendix K of the Statewide Treatment Protocols, to make emergency changes to the Statewide Treatment Protocols, and based on the recommendation of Emergency Medical Care Advisory Board's Medical Services Committee, the Department of Public Health's Office of Emergency Medical Services has reviewed and agreed to implement an important change to the Selective Spinal Assessment Procedure Protocol.

This Protocol appears in Appendix I in the current v. 11.01 of the Statewide Treatment Protocols, and in 6.2, Medical Director's Options, in the recently released v. 12.02 of the Protocols, which become effective September 6, 2014.

**Effective immediately, EMS personnel must not use this procedure to rule out the need for immobilization precautions in any patient age 65 or older.**

This change is based on a review of clinical data, including the Canadian cervical-spinal injury assessment criteria and the results of the initial year of experience with this protocol's implementation in Massachusetts.

As a result of this change, and other technical errors that have been caught in v. 12.02 of the new Protocols, the Department is issuing a v. 12.03 update to the Statewide Treatment Protocols that will take effect in September.

If you have any questions, please contact Patricia Reilly, RN, OEMS Clinical Coordinator, at [patricia.reilly@state.ma.us](mailto:patricia.reilly@state.ma.us).