



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Office of Emergency Medical Services
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MEMORANDUM

To: Massachusetts Licensed Ambulance Services
Affiliate Hospital Medical Directors, EMCAB Members

From: Mark J. Miller, MS, NRP, Director, Office of Emergency Medical Services
Jon Burstein, MD, Medical Director, Office of Emergency Medical Services

Date: September 12, 2017

Re: Requirements for Programmable IV Pumps

Purpose:

This notification is intended to inform ambulance services and their affiliate hospital medical directors that the effective date of the Administrative Requirement (AR) 5-402 requirement that all ALS ambulances be equipped with programmable IV pumps, with the primary purpose of administering norepinephrine, is delayed pending further review.

Background:

Norepinephrine was added to the Statewide Treatment Protocols (STP) as the preferred treatment for hypotension following significant review and a June 13, 2014 finding by the Medical Services Committee (MSC) that norepinephrine is the most clinically appropriate medication, and IV pumps are needed to safely administer the drug. AR 5-402 was updated December 15, 2016, after a licensee public comment period, to reflect a number of STP updates, one of which was to require the addition of programmable IV pumps on ALS ambulances effective December 31, 2017.

Upon further review, some safety concerns were noted and the Department has decided to remove the effective date of this requirement while the Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) continues to review implementation options. OEMS will provide further guidance on this requirement as soon as possible following further review and discussion by the MSC and OEMS of alternative pump types, low volume high risk training concerns, and transport and delivery issues.

Action Required:

Norepinephrine will continue to be the recommended drug for hypotension and can be used safely only with a pump. Agencies that have purchased a pump should continue to use them to administer norepinephrine. Agencies that have not yet obtained a pump may still purchase and deploy them, and continue to follow the STP while this is being reviewed.

The Department will provide further guidance regarding an updated implementation timeline of this requirement after further investigation.

Contact Information: For questions about this issue, please contact Mark Miller, at mark.j.miller@state.ma.us.