



**GOVERNMENT OF
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
Board Services**

POLICY: Transportation of Emergency Patients to Closest Facility	POLICY NUMBER: EHS 2003-09-42
ORIGINAL DATE: October 5, 1994	LAST REVISED DATE: November 1, 2005

I. PURPOSE:

- A. To identify where an ambulance shall transport an emergency patient.

II. POLICY:

- A. Patients transported as a result of an emergency shall be transported to the closest medical facility unless otherwise directed by a physician, that has direct contact with the paramedic treating the patient. This direction shall only be valid if the closer facility cannot meet the patient’s medical needs. In addition the physician shall have the paramedic perform a complete assessment to ensure the patient is stable enough for the longer transport of the patient prior to authorizing the transport. It must be documented on the PCR Form why the physician felt the closest facility is not appropriate.
- B. If treatment for the emergency can be rendered appropriately at a closer medical facility than the physician requested, the ambulance shall transport to the closest facility.
- C. If the patient is unstable, the ambulance shall transport the patient to the closest medical facility, to allow higher trained personnel to stabilize the patient prior to continuing on to another facility, unless the requesting physician assumes full responsibility of the patient and provides continuous patient care in the ambulance for the entire transport.
- D. In certain areas of the province standing orders may be established by the Institutional Health Boards allowing transport to a facility other than the closest for certain type of patients. These standing orders shall only be allowed after review and approval of the Department.
- E. The Department shall reject for payment all invoices in violation of this policy.

III. PROCEDURE:

- A. When transporting an emergency patient the ambulance personnel shall proceed to the closest medical facility from the pickup location.

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- B. If an attending physician directs otherwise, first verbally then follows up in writing, the patient may be transported to the facility that the physician deems appropriate only if the ambulance personnel are comfortable treating the patient during the longer transport.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY:

- A. It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure their personnel comply with this policy.
- B. It is the responsibility of the ambulance personnel to transport patients to the appropriate facility.
- C. It is the responsibility of the Department to monitor compliance to this policy.
- D. It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure the reason for deviating from this policy is clearly documented on the PCR Form, to include the physicians name requesting deviation and the their reasoning for the orders..
- E. It is the responsibility of the operator to attach copies of the written statements from the patient or physician to the Department with the invoice for the transport when requesting payment.