

EMS SPONSOR HOSPITAL POLICY **PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT AND DISCIPLINE**

Purpose:

To provide a fair and just process for addressing concerns regarding behavior, actions or performance of EMS providers authorized and sponsored by Hartford Hospital.

Scope:

All Hartford Hospital Sponsored EMS Organizations and Authorized Providers

Discussion:

Pre-hospital patient care is very dynamic and many variables exist within each EMS response. The “perfect” EMS call does not exist and improvement opportunities may occur despite good intent by the EMS provider. These may be the result of system issues, lack of training/education/experience or other external factors. When external factors or mitigating circumstances are identified, clinical care concerns will most often be addressed through system/process improvements/redesign, discussion, coaching, mentoring and education.

The focus of the Hartford Hospital Quality Plan is assuring patient safety and improving care delivery. Coaching, mentoring and education is intended to assist the EMS provider with improving cognitive knowledge, psychomotor skills, and/or affective behavior as related to his or her interactions with patients, family members and other caregivers.

Disciplinary action is generally reserved for situations when it is deemed necessary to assure patient safety or to address issues not amenable to coaching/mentoring/education (Examples below under “Disciplinary Action”)

Policy

Cases of concern related to sponsored EMS provider’s performance/behavior are to be reviewed by the Hartford Hospital EMS Coordinator in conjunction with the Medical Director of Ground EMS. If the concern appears substantiated, the Medical Director of Ground EMS or his/her designee will notify the EMS provider and his or her Sponsored EMS Organization. The EMS provider will be given the opportunity to discuss his or her actions, intent, rationale, mitigating circumstances or other issues dealing with the provider’s behavior with the Hartford Hospital Medical Director of Ground EMS or his/her designee.

The “Performance Management Decision Guide” (Appendix A) will be used in evaluating incidents/actions of concern and structuring an appropriate response based on all available information. The Hartford Hospital Medical Director of Ground EMS will make the final decision regarding what, if any, performance improvement actions or discipline to implement.

Remedial education, coaching or mentoring shall not, in and of itself, be construed as disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action may be utilized in certain circumstances which include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Action which evidences incompetence, negligence, or otherwise poses a threat to public health or safety or which is contrary to medical direction
- 2) A pattern of poor performance or poor medical decision-making.
- 3) Engaging in dishonorable, unethical or unprofessional conduct of a character likely to deceive, defraud or harm the public. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Intentional actions intended to cause physical/mental harm or other damage
 - Patient abandonment or neglect.
 - Intentional falsification of documentation.
 - Conscious efforts to “cover up” serious errors.
 - Release of confidential information to unauthorized persons.
 - Discrimination in rendering emergency care based on race, gender, creed, religion, national origin, or ability to pay.
 - Use of intoxicating agents, controlled substances, or other drugs in such a manner to adversely affect the individual provider’s duties.
 - Unauthorized removal of controlled substances, non-controlled substance drugs or equipment from the ambulance, health care facility or other work place location.
- 4) Intentional or continued disregard for Hartford Hospital approved EMS protocols, procedures, policies or directives.
- 5) Indifference on the part of the individual provider regarding remedial activities aimed at quality improvement.
- 6) Failure to maintain required licensing/certification or attend required continuing education
- 7) Failure to submit required renewal forms within established deadlines.
- 8) Physical or mental impairment to the extent that the individual provider cannot physically perform emergency care or cannot exercise appropriate judgment, skill and safety in performing emergency care.
- 9) The Hartford Hospital Medical Director of Ground EMS has sufficient reason to believe the EMS provider poses an imminent hazard to the public, EMS agency or the EMS System in general.

The level of disciplinary action taken is at the discretion of the Hartford Hospital Medical Director of Ground EMS. This may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- ❖ **Verbal Warning** – The Medical Director of Ground EMS or designee shall inform the individual of reported misconduct, discuss means of correction and inform the individual of the consequences that will ensue if the misconduct is not corrected. Documentation of this conference will be placed in the individual’s file.
- ❖ **Written Warning** – The Medical Director of Ground EMS or designee shall inform the individual in writing of the misconduct. The individual shall be requested to complete a Performance Improvement Plan in conjunction with the EMS Agency Quality Assurance Coordinator and/or EMS Coordinator and Medical Director of Ground EMS. This Performance Improvement Plan will be signed by all involved parties and will serve as a written warning in the individual’s file.

- ❖ **Suspension/Withdrawal** –Suspension or withdrawal of medical authorization may follow the written warning in instances where the individual has failed to improve performance in the allotted time, not adhered to conditions defined within the Performance Improvement Plan and/or failed to maintain performance following completion of the Plan.

In cases of serious misconduct or negligence, the Medical Director of Ground EMS may bypass the verbal and/or written warning process and suspend the individual's authorization. This may be done prior to completion of the investigation dependent on the seriousness of the complaint.

Failure to maintain required certification/license or to submit required renewal forms prior to the established deadline may result in suspension of authorization without prior warning.

In cases of suspension or withdrawal of medical authorization other than for administrative reasons (e.g. certification lapse, renewal form submission, etc.), the Medical Director of Ground EMS or his/her designee will notify the Connecticut Department of Public Health and recommend suspension from the system.

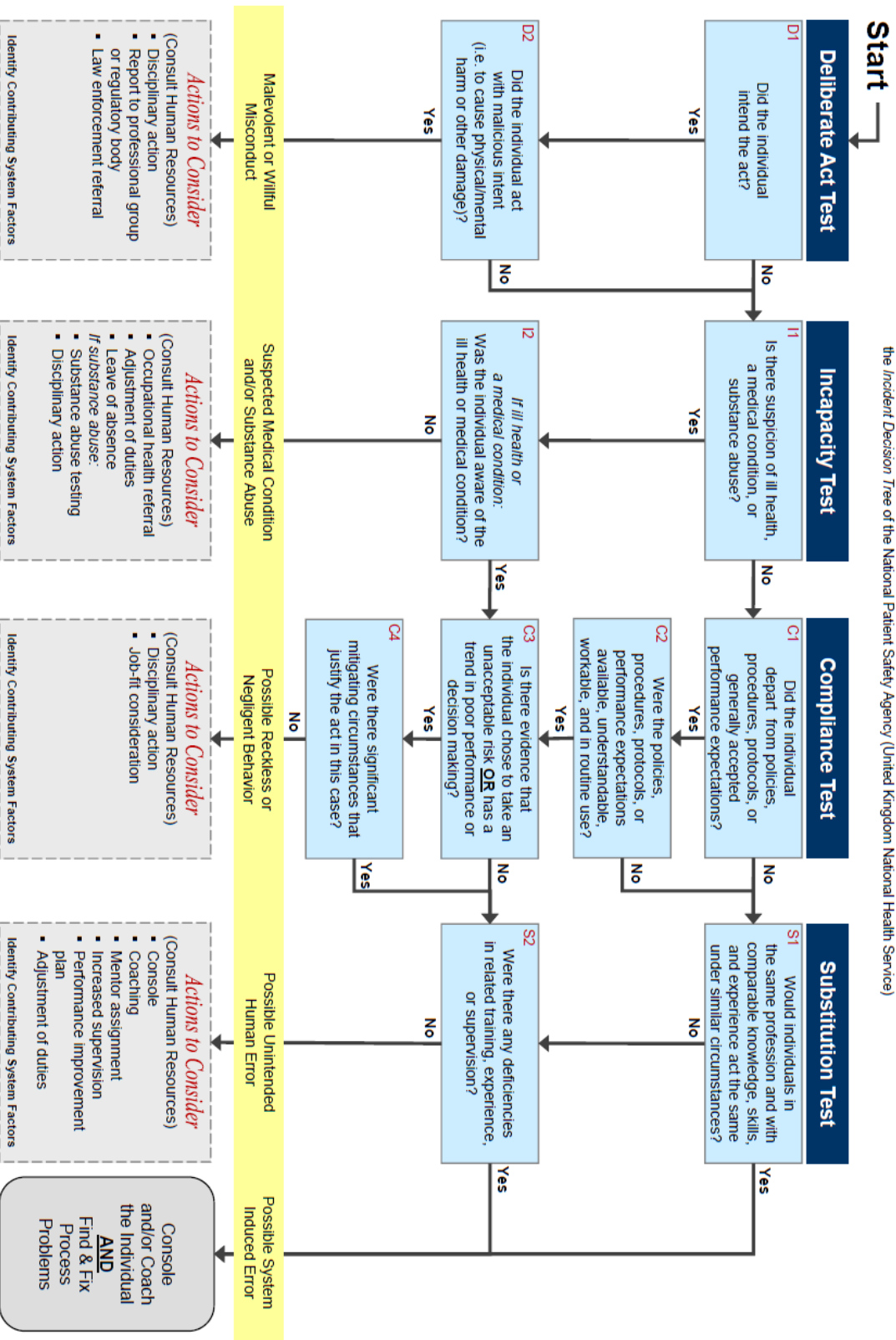
Due Process / Appeal

- 1.** The Medical Director of Ground EMS shall provide the individual and his or her Sponsored EMS Organization with a written explanation of the reason for any suspension/withdrawal of medical authorization; the terms, length and condition of the suspension/withdrawal; and the date the suspension/withdrawal will commence.
- 2.** The suspended provider shall have **5 business days** from the date of receipt of the written notice to request in writing a review of the suspension by the Hartford Hospital Chief of Emergency Medicine. Failure to request a review of the suspension within five (5) business days shall constitute a waiver of the right to a review.

For the purposes of this policy, electronic media and email communications shall be considered the same as written notice and/or explanation.

Performance Management Decision Guide

Adapted from James Reason's *Decision Tree for Determining the Culpability of Unsafe Acts* and the *Incident Decision Tree* of the National Patient Safety Agency (United Kingdom National Health Service)



Appendix A

