

EMS SPONSOR HOSPITAL POLICY QUALITY ASSURANCE / QUALITY IMPROVEMENT: PROGRAM DESIGN

Purpose:

Improve the quality and safety of prehospital clinical care and the EMS patient experience through a process of EMS care evaluation and improvement.

Scope:

All Hartford Hospital Sponsored EMS Agencies.

Discussion:

Quality assurance and improvement activities are essential to the goal of optimizing EMS patient care delivery and patient satisfaction in a fiscally responsible manner.

The overall process should adhere to a model in which the “measure, plan, act” cycle is repeated to evaluate and address opportunities for improvement. The steps in this process are as follows¹:

1. Select a subject for study, which includes an operational definition of the condition or procedure under study and a definition of patients to be included.
2. Develop criteria and standards, defining acceptable levels of quality
3. Collect data
 - a. This may be through such methods as individual chart review, field observation, testing or performance metrics
4. Compare data to criteria and standards in order to identify areas of excellence and deficiencies
5. Determine causes of deficiencies and taking corrective action, including:
 - a. determining who or what is expected to change
 - b. determining who is responsible for implementing action to bring about change
 - c. determining what action is appropriate to bring about change
 - d. determine when change is expected to occur
6. Identify areas of excellence and provide positive reinforcement/recognition
7. Make system/policy modifications and/or educate providers. Evaluate the change to ensure desired outcome
8. Re-evaluate to ensure consistent performance

Policy:

Each Hartford Hospital sponsored EMS agency will designate a Quality Assurance (QA) Coordinator. This individual will be responsible for the following at his or her agency:

- Reviewing and/or overseeing the internal review of patient care reports
- Monitoring EMS performance measures and submitting a report to the Sponsor Hospital EMS Coordinator at least quarterly
- Communicating identified protocol/policy violations to the Hartford Hospital EMS Coordinator
- Communicating clinical care issues believed to pose a moderate or severe risk of patient harm to the Hartford Hospital EMS Coordinator
- Providing and/or overseeing the provision of constructive feedback to providers
- Coordinating quality improvement activities such as education programs, training or process re-engineering
- Assuring implementation of corrective action plans
- Regularly communicating to the Hartford Hospital EMS Coordinator regarding QA/QI activities and observed trends

Each agency will implement a quality assurance and improvement program meeting minimum guidelines established by the Sponsor Hospital. The components of the program will include:

- Continuous monitoring of performance measures collaboratively agreed to by the EMS agency and Sponsor Hospital
- Review of EMS call records selected based on the following:
 - Patient encounters with specific high risk procedures or patient clinical presentations
 - Random review
 - Focused review categories
- Evaluation of provider performance through field observation (by supervisors and/or training officers)
- Ongoing skill competency evaluation
 - For BLS providers, this shall include, at a minimum: CPR, AED and any additional authorized BLS skills (naloxone, CPAP, AED, ASA, glucometer, etc.)
 - For paramedic providers, this shall include, at a minimum:
 - Intraosseous Access
 - Endotracheal Intubation (pediatric and adult)
 - Back-up/Rescue airway
 - Cricothyrotomy
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- Process for providing and tracking positive feedback regarding clinical care which adheres to guidelines and special praise and recognition for exceptional performance
- Process for providing and tracking constructive feedback to providers regarding opportunities for improvement
- Investigation of patient care complaints in collaboration with the Sponsor Hospital EMS Coordinator/Medical Director

- Remediation of serious clinical care issues in collaboration with the Sponsor Hospital EMS Coordinator/Medical Director
- Ongoing system improvement activities

ⁱ NEW YORK STATE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES COUNCIL, *Quality Improvement for Prehospital Provider*, V1 March 2007, p37