

HEMS
System Protocols
PRE-HOSPITAL/EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT COORDINATION AND
MANAGEMENT OF PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS

Date: 4/2013, 3/8/2018, 12/14/2023

Section 1-8S

Pre-Hospital/Emergency Department (ED) Management of Psychiatric Patients

Purpose:

This policy is intended for ambulance personnel, public safety officers, physicians and nursing staffing at receiving hospitals expected to manage psychiatric patients. Its purpose is to:

- Define the need for medical screening exam and clearance of psychiatric patients and its occurrence at a medical facility.
- Ensure the proper preparation of paperwork necessary for involuntary psychiatric commitment, allowing the smooth transfer to psychiatric screening centers.

Pre-Hospital Procedure:

All patients that are assumed to be having an acute psychiatric episode are to be taken to an ED for a medical screening exam and clearance before being transported to a Psychiatric Screening Center (PSC). Medical emergencies should be treated and stabilized at medical facilities since psychiatric facilities do not have the resources to provide care for acute medical illness.

If an ambulance is called by the police for transport of a violent patient to the ED, it is recommended that the patient be accompanied in the ambulance patient compartment by a police officer and EMS personnel with the patient under restraints, if necessary. Local rules must apply when public safety officers are involved.

Upon arrival to the ED the police officer, public safety officer and/or EMS personnel must assist in the safe transfer of the patient to hospital staff. This will include:

1. The patient being searched by the police and any dangerous objects ie, knives, guns, bullets or other weapons and illegal drugs are removed.
2. Restraining or detaining the patient as ordered by the physicians.
3. Providing a verbal report and a completed run sheet.
4. Providing a valid, completed petition if family members or another responsible adult is not present and/or willing to complete the petition. The adult that observed the behavior should always be encouraged to go the hospital to complete a petition. If a petition does not accompany the patient or is not completed by a responsible adult that observed the abnormal behavior the police officer or EMS will need to complete the petition.

Petition for Admission must be completed by a person who observed the abnormal behavior requiring the patient to be brought to the ED (may be any of

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the following: a family member, friend, police, EMS personnel, or any other adult person). The original form must accompany the patient upon transfer. **Petitions are to be completed in black ink and no holes are to be punched in the petition or Clinical Certificate. Petition and Clinical Certification forms must be the most current version.**

ED Admission Procedure:

ED staff and physicians will determine if a patient meets 401 criteria (is eligible for involuntary commitment) after reviewing the completed petition and interviewing the patient.

In Wayne County, the ED will work with COPE to find appropriate psychiatric placement for patients with Medicaid or the uninsured. For Medicare patients, the ED works directly with the desired inpatient facility for placement. Patients that have private insurance will require authorization from the insurance company prior to placement. The destination facility will be determined based on the apparent medical and psychological condition of the patient and/or insurance requirements

COPE or the ED staff will fax patient information to the admitting/screening department at the desired PSC. PSC staff will review the patient information and discuss the case with the psychiatrist to determine if this would be an appropriate placement. If the patient is accepted the PSC staff will then contact COPE or the hospital to arrange the transfer. ED staff must give a verbal report to the accepting facility prior to transfer.

Petition for Admission must be completed by an adult, over 18 years old (may be any of the following: a family member, friend, police, EMS personnel, or any other adult person that observed the petitionable behaviors). The original form must accompany the patient upon transfer. **Petitions are to be completed in black ink and no holes are to be punched in the petition or Clinical Certificate. If a minor error is made while writing the petition draw a single line through the word and initial it. Gross errors will require the petition to be rewritten. Petition and Clinical Certification forms must be the most current version.**

Adults may not be petitioned if alcohol or drug abuse is the only issue. If the patient is impaired by drugs or alcohol on arrival to the ED, they may not have a psychological assessment completed until they return to their normal orientation.

Children and adolescents (anyone under 18 years of age) may not be

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petitioned. Children exhibiting abnormal psychiatric behavior are to be medically cleared at an ED prior to being referred to a psychiatric screening center for evaluation.

In Wayne County, for anyone under 18 years of age, the ED will work with Carelink to find appropriate psychiatric placement for patients with Medicaid or the uninsured. The ED will work with individual insurance companies for treatment of those with private insurance. The destination facility will be determined based on the apparent medical and psychological condition of the patient and/or insurance company requirements.

A Clinical Certificate is required if the patient is being transferred to any inpatient psychiatric facility. A Clinical Certificate is not necessary on patients medically cleared in an ED and transferred to Crisis Residential or Transitional Housing.

Note: A physician cannot complete a petition and sign the Clinical Certificate.

A Transfer Sheet must be completed by the attending physician, including:

- The reason for transfer.
- Verification of the patient's stability for transfer.
- The name of the accepting physician/psychiatrist.

As part of the Health Care Team, EMS personnel are responsible for working with the transferring facility to assure that the following papers are included in the Transfer packet:

1. Petition for Admission – original – petitions are good for 10 days.
2. Clinical Certificate – original, completed/dated on the day of transfer.
3. Transfer Sheet – original
4. Completed copy of the patient's medical record including lab work, x-ray findings, treatment given, and recommendation for follow-up treatment.

Make sure all information is complete, including dotting the i's and crossing the t's. When Transporting Petitioned Psychiatric Patients to an Inpatient psychiatric facility.

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- ____ Original Petition (completed in black ink with no holes or other defacing)
- ____ Original Clinical Certificate completed/dated on the day of transfer
- ____ Physician dictation or medical report
- ____ Nurses Notes documenting course of treatment, medications, tests, etc.
- ____ Copies of all lab work
- ____ Copies of EKG(s), if applicable
- ____ X-ray, CT, MRI reports, if applicable
- ____ Hospital Transfer Form
- ____ Face Sheet
- ____ Prescription Authorizing Transfer (if required)
- ____ For Patient Safety-Transport patient by stretch