



Memphis Fire Department

**Delayed Off-Loading of Stable
Non-Emergent Patients**

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Memphis Fire Department

- ✱ **Approximately 1,900 personnel**
 - ✱ **300+ Medics**
 - ✱ **1500+ EMTs**
- ✱ **59 Stations**
- ✱ **60 Engines**
- ✱ **27 Truck Companies**
- ✱ **36 ALS Ambulances**
- ✱ **3 Heavy Squads**
- ✱ **Sponsoring Agency for USAR Tennessee Task Force 1**



The problem.....

**ED overcrowding resulting in delays in
EMS Offload of patients**

**Biggest delays for the Non-Emergent
Patient**

Rarely needed Emergent treatment

Often use ED as primary care source

EMS often used as transport



The result.....

- ✱ **Poor unit utilization...**
- ✱ **Long return to service delays**
- ✱ **Frustration for EMS**
- ✱ **Passive aggressive behavior from ED Staff**
- ✱ **Upset patients**
- ✱ **Ripple effect resulting in lack of adequate ambulance resources**



The Plan..

- ✱ **We focused on lowest acuity patients**
 - ✱ **Includes our previous ongoing efforts to keep them out of the system**

Why?

Lowest need for EMS Services

Longest delay impact to the system

Easiest to Disposition



Which Patients?

✱ **Eligible patients (patient must meet ALL of the following criteria):**



✱ **Greater than 16 years old and less than 65 years old**

✱ **Stable vital signs**

✱ **Non-Emergent complaint**

✱ **Patient can walk and talk**

✱ **Patient has had no medications nor interventions by EMS**



The Methodology

- ❖ **If the ED Nursing Staff has not accepted report and made efforts to offload the patient from the EMS stretcher within 20 minutes of arrival, request EMS Lieutenant presence in ED.**



If no progress is made within 15 minutes of the Lieutenants engagement, and the patient meets all the criteria above, EMS Lieutenant may perform the following:

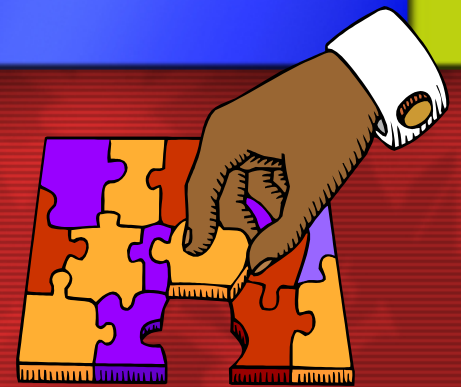
- * Ensure the patient's condition is unchanged**
- * Take the patient to the triage waiting area**
- * Document all contacts with ED personnel, and record names of Charge and triage nurse**



- ❖ **Ensure unit paramedic completes of an abbreviated, hand written EMS run report and ensures its delivery to triage or admissions.**
- ❖ **EMS is responsible to ensure hospital is aware of patient's presence in the waiting room.**
- ❖ **Return EMS Unit to service**



What's the Big Deal?





- ❖ **Discovered that while Hospital Administration understand EMTALA, and support the need to expedite offload and assume responsibility, that was rarely occurring in the ED.**
- ❖ **Made Nursing responsible, by recording their name and leaving the patient in the care of Triage**



Issues Encountered

- ❖ **Changed the mindset of ED Nursing regarding the acceptance of patients**
- ❖ **Patients were informed that delivery by EMS did not “move them to the front of the line”**
- ❖ **Decreased Frustrations of EMS crews**



Where we're headed.....

- ✿ **Expand the Criteria for eligible Patients**
- ✿ **Allow the EMS Crew to make the call to deliver to Triage/Waiting room**





Questions?

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