TO:        Base Hospital Coordinators
           Base Hospital Physician Directors
           Fire EMS Coordinators
           Trauma Service Coordinators
           Trauma Service Directors
           Ambulance Providers
           Paramedic Training Program
           Paramedic Receiving Center ED Managers
           Paramedic Receiving Center Physician Directors

FROM:     Samuel J. Stratton, MD, MPH
          Orange County EMS Medical Director

SUBJECT:  ANNUAL EMS SYSTEM UPDATE

On April 2 at 8:00 am, updates of the Orange County EMS System will go into effect. The 2012 update of the system includes:

  o Expansion of ALS non-base-contacted calls resulting in more patients taken directly to Paramedic Receiving Centers without prior base hospital notification of the run.

  o Avoidance by ambulance and paramedic units of transports to hospital Emergency Departments that are on formal diversion status.

  o Reinforcement of the authority of an Orange County Base Hospital, when on-line with EMS field units, to make final destination decisions for transport of EMS patients from the field.

ALS non-base-contacted calls are being expanded to a comprehensive set of standing orders that paramedics will use without making base hospital contact. When on standing orders, paramedic teams will directly notify Paramedic Receiving Centers of runs that are being transported. It is expected that the number of paramedic runs transported to receiving centers without base hospital notification will increase.
Field 911 units and ambulance companies are being instructed to avoid transports to an Emergency Department that is on diversion status. Two exceptions are Trauma Centers which will continue to receive patients when open and continued interfacility transport of Stroke-Neurology patients from spoke hospitals to Stroke-Neurology Receiving Centers. Transport of direct-admit patients to hospital wards will not be affected by Emergency Department diversion. When a Base Hospital is on-line with an EMS field unit, that Base Hospital has final authority to determine the destination for the patient. This authority supersedes diversion status.

To view the 2012 Update ALS Standing Orders and Guideline changes please visit the Orange County EMS web page at http://www.ochealthinfo.com/ems and click “Treatment Guidelines” in the left column.

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