



June 29, 2022

All Participating SIREMS Personnel
SIREMS Transport Services

SIREMS Personnel:

I am writing to bring awareness to a system wide issue the EMS Office has been struggling with for years, the handling and documentation on refusal of treatment and transport cases. This issue has been addressed numerous times in system town hall meetings, emails, memos, and in the system newsletter. However, we are experiencing more problems in the last twelve months than in any other times during my tenure as EMS Medical Director.

There are a few issues that keep happening, despite the best efforts of myself and the staff of the EMS Office to remediate and correct. The SIREMS protocol A-6.1 through A-6.4 on refusals requires:

- All patients requesting to refuse treatment or transport be assessed and vital signs obtained.
 - If the patient refuses to be assessed, this must be documented.
- Medical Control must be contacted on cases when any of the following apply.
 - The condition indicates medical care is needed.
 - The patient is incompetent, including admitted or suspected alcohol or drug use.
 - Refusal of treatment or transport could further harm the patient.

Refusal cases present a significant legal risk for EMS Medical Directors, EMS Agencies, and EMS Personnel. Because of the gravity of the situation, I am implementing two strategies to promote compliance with the protocols. First, any EMS Personnel found in violation of the SIREMS refusal policies will be subject to formal disciplinary action up to and including suspension. Secondly, SIREMS transport service management will be required to submit a weekly list of refusals every Monday to the EMS Office. The list must include run numbers, crew members and review from management. The first report will be due on Monday, July 11, 2022.

Our goal is to provide the highest quality pre-hospital care to the communities we serve. I am hopeful these actions will collectively strengthen our commitment to care and improve the documentation that proves that level of commitment. Please reach out to your EMS Coordinator or myself with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Haake MD".

Joseph R. Haake, MD, FACEP
EMS Medical Director
Southern Illinois Regional EMS System