



The Monitor

The monthly electronic newsletter for the Southern Illinois Regional EMS System.

February 2020

COMMAND: Dr. Haake wants to thank everyone that participated in the most recent Town Hall meeting on January 30th at John A. Logan College. A wide range of topics were discussed and many questions asked. If there are any additional questions from the meeting or comments on improving the remote option, please share them with the EMS Office.

FINANCE: Our EMS Office is currently working with three different agencies on possible EMS grant opportunities. In the future, your services may be asked questions or asked to complete surveys to gather information for grants. If there are any questions about surveys or queries distributed, please contact the EMS Office.

LOGISTICS: Tranexamic Acid (TXA) is approved for SIREMS ALS services and the training is ongoing. Please encourage and assist your ambulance services with scheduling and participation in TXA training. Contact the EMS Office with any questions.

IDPH pushed out information from the US Food and Drug Administration on the approval of AED devices. The list of approved devices was posted in the news feed on www.sirems.com. If there are any questions on the approved AED list, contact the EMS Office. Along with the AED list, there were also end of life statements posted from Lifepak-Stryker, Philips, and Zoll. For the ILS and ALS agencies, please check your devices to the end of service/end of life documents for your brand of monitors. The links for the lists were not functioning properly last month, but since have been fixed on the website. However, don't use the "read more" link, click on the title of the newsfeed post and all of the letters/notice links will be visible, individually listed, and all work properly. Contact the EMS Office with any questions.

The ability to sign up for SIREMS emails has been added to the new website. If you are interested in receiving emails from the EMS Office on all things EMS or emergency management, please sign up at www.sirems.com.

Non-Transport Providers: All SIREMS non-transport vehicles are due for inspection and IDPH license renewal this spring. The EMR level vehicles can be self-inspected by your department staff but the BLS, ILS, or ALS vehicles must be inspected by EMS Office staff. All inspections are due by April 24, 2020 and the form can be found on www.sirems.com.

OPERATIONS: Okay, let's talk about Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV). Keep in mind, there are already four strains of Coronavirus that are tested on the standard viral panel in the hospital. 2019-nCoV should be treated in the same fashion as we had previously handled SARS and MERS...all viral respiratory infections. Here are a few highlights from the recent IDPH guidance document.

- Ask about recent travel from China or contact with someone exposed/suspected.
- Family or others that have been in contact with the 2019-nCoV patient shouldn't ride in the ambulance to the hospital, especially in the cab of the ambulance.
- Close the door or window between the cab and patient compartment.
- If possible, place a surgical mask on the patient to contain droplets expelled during coughing.
- EMS personnel treating the patient should wear appropriate PPE
 - Disposable isolation gown
 - Disposable exam gloves
 - Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
 - Respiratory protection (N-95 or higher level respirator)
- Preferably, the driver should not be part of the patient care team. If the driver must participate in the initial care, they should remove the PPE and perform hand hygiene before entering the cab.
- Avoid contacting yourself or any unnecessary equipment with gloved hands during treatment and transport.
- Clean and disinfect the vehicle and equipment according to agency and equipment standards. All PPE required for treatment will also be required for disinfection, minus the N-95 respirator.
 - Remember cleaners and disinfectants have standards for use. Most require being left wet on surfaces for periods of time to successfully disinfect a surface. Please familiarize yourself with the products used by your agency.
- Please refer to the full IDPH document at the top of the newsfeed on our website.

Transport services: There have been many refusal and bypass cases handled inappropriately. Our office is reviewing refusals and bypass cases and the findings are frightening. Here are a few reminders...

- Refusals:
 - The patient must have medical decisional capacity to refuse treatment and/or transport. Conscious, alert, and oriented just doesn't cut it.
 - If the patient is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to make a refusal situation, only a durable medical power of attorney, parent/guardian of a minor child, or Medical Control can make that call.
 - Contact Medical Control on any refusal request that needs medical attention, not medically competent, or if you believe a refusal could further harm the patient.
 - When contacting Medical Control on a competent patient's request for refusal, you are not asking for the physician's permission, you are running the case by the physician to get your story and the physician's opinion documented on a recorded line.
 - An assessment and vital signs, along with the Patient Refusal Checklist MUST be completed for all refusal patients.

- Bypass:
 - A medically competent patient can choose the hospital in which they want to be transported (within the operational boundaries of your ambulance service).
 - When contacting Medical Control on a mentally competent patient wanting to bypass the closest or most appropriate hospital, the physician is hearing our case and presenting his/her opinion on the medical safety of the decision on a recorded line. The physician does not have the legal authority to deny a competent patient the right to go to the hospital of their choice, unless it is a disaster or mass casualty incident.
 - When dealing with an unconscious or mentally incompetent patient, only a medical power of attorney or parent/guardian of a minor child can decide the hospital destination. A spouse, family member, or friend cannot make a decision for a more distant hospital on a mentally incompetent patient. Med Control must be called and the physician determine transport destination.
 - When a mentally competent patient decides on a more distant hospital, they must be made aware of the risks and sign an "Against Medical Advice" form.

When in doubt, play it safe and contact Medical Control

PLANNING: Don't forget about our EMS Calendar at www.sirems.com

Feb 02: Groundhog Day

Feb 13: SIREMS Triage Tag Day

Feb 14: Valentine's Day

Feb 17: Presidents Day

TIP OF THE MONTH: Remember when changing an oxygen cylinder, either use a multiple use brass and rubber gasket/o-ring or new plastic gasket/o-ring. The plastic gaskets provided with the refilled cylinders are single use devices. If you use the plastic gaskets multiple times, they will leak oxygen and heat will be generated because the oxygen is under great pressure and is being forced through a small hole or space in the worn gasket.

If you have any questions or information for "The Monitor", please contact me at Brad.Robinson@sih.net or SouthernIllinoisRegionalEMS@gmail.com (02-08-2020).