Should I Stay or Should I Go???
The Down Low on Ambulance “No Loads”

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Objectives

✓ To understand what data exists regarding non-transport decision-making.
✓ To define the risks that exists to providers, EMS services, administrators and medical directors.
✓ To offer a thoughtful approach transport decision-making and transport policy development.
Dallas Fire-Rescue
What is the impact upon Emergency Medical Services?

- EMS is overburdened by the evaluation, treatment and transport patients who have “minor” medical conditions and who feel they have nowhere else to turn.

- Given the current economic conditions, things are likely to get worse.
“Our New Medical Director Wants Us to Take EVERYONE to the Hospital!!!”

NOT TRUE!!!

Medical Directors want the right patients taken to the right hospitals in the right amount of time.

Nothing more, nothing less…
What is Currently Known About Non-transport Decision-Making?

NOT MUCH!!!

Prehospital Emergency Care
2002 Oct-Dec 6(4) 383-6
Can Paramedics Safely Decide Which Patients Need Ambulance Transport?
The University of New Mexico
236 patients
Paramedics would have recommend alternative transport or alternative destinations for 25% of sick patients.
Other Studies:

Narcan for Opiate OD

Glucose for Hypoglycemia and AMS

Beta Agonist for asthma/COPD
Does Your System Have a WRITTEN Standardized Definition of a Patient?

If NOT, you probably do not have a truly accurate picture of what is going on in your system....

Do you know your EMS CLINICAL “claim” (lawsuit) rate?
We All Believe We Know What a “Patient” Is....
“Any Person that calls 911 requesting emergency medical evaluation or care, 

OR

Any person for whom 911 is activated with the reasonable expectation that he/she is in need of emergency medical assistance.”
Is THIS a “Patient”

Shouldn’t the police transport him because he is potentially dangerous?
Is THIS a Patient???

How do you balance a individual’s right of self-determination while serving as penultimate patient advocates, and how good are we at determining medical decision-making capacity in the uncontrolled out-of-hospital setting?

Remember the safety net!!!
Limit Your EMS “Dispositions”

- Cancelled en route (by whom)
- UTL/GOA
- “NASIP”: Not a Sick or Injured Person
- Transported to the hospital
- Patient Declines Transport (PDT)
- Against Medical Advice (AMA)
- Resus attempted, pronounced dead
- Pronounced dead.
The Challenge: Maintaining EMS Operational Capabilities, Providing SERVICE and Managing Risk

To do this:

① Develop policy based upon available data.
② Train your providers on how to utilize the policy.
③ Give your providers simple tools to document their interactions that will protect them in the event of an adverse outcome.
④ Evaluate the program and “tweak” where necessary.
Big City EMS

- 30 “EAGLES” surveyed YESTERDAY!!!
- 22/30 had a written standardized definition of a patient.
- Only one large US City allowed paramedics to refuse to transport patients without on-line medical consultation.
The ‘trade-off” for having our medics offer transport to EVERY patient, is that “minor” patients shall be offered transport to the CLOSEST OPEN HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT ONLY!!!
No one is going to solve our challenges for us.

We must advocate for new policies that support BOTH our patients and our providers.
What is the “Right” Non-Transport Rate???

YOU DON’T REALLY THINK I’M GOING To Try to answer this, DO YOU???
We believe that we must offer transport to every patient as a service to the community and to protect our providers.

But by doing this we can collect data that will allow us to develop alternative transport methods and alternative destinations in the future....
My New Position!

Any change in evaluation and transport policy must be made as:

① An improvement in service.
② A necessity in maintaining the operational capabilities of the EMS system.
③ Protecting your providers certifications and licenses.
Become involved in EMS!!!

The EAGLES Faculty REMAIN PASSIONATE IN Their BELIEF OF THE GREAT POTENTIAL BENEFIT OF EMS TO THE COMMUNITY.

Paramedics, FF/PM’s, EMT’s, EMS Officers, Chiefs and EMS Administrators are the unsung heroes of modern society.

The EAGLES here to say “well done” and “thank you” for your service to the community and to humankind.
“Not everyone can be a hero but everyone can be great, because greatness is determined by service.”

-Martin Luther King, Jr.
Thank You for Your Attention !!!

FDNY