EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCH PROGRAM APPROVAL

PURPOSE

To establish standardized criteria for approval of Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Programs in the YEMSA.

It is the goal of YEMSA that all callers requesting emergency medical assistance from any area or jurisdiction within the YEMSA have direct access to qualified emergency medical dispatch personnel for the provision of emergency dispatch services, pre-arrival instructions and post dispatch instructions. National certification of the dispatch center's program is encouraged, but not required. It is the goal that simultaneous dispatch of first responders and ambulance provider agencies will occur on every call.

AUTHORITY

California Health & Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797 et seq.

California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9.

California Supreme Court Decision, County of San Bernardino v. City of San Bernardino (1997) 15 Cal 4th 909 California Health and Safety Code sections 1443 and 1444; Welfare and Institutions Code section 17000.

State of California – Health and Human Services Agency, Emergency Medical Services Authority, Dispatch Program Guidelines, March 2003, EMSA #132.

Office of the Attorney General, State of California, Bill Lockyer, Attorney General, Opinion of Bill Lockyer – Attorney General, Thomas Lazar – Deputy Attorney General, No. 03-316, September 5, 2003.

MEDICAL CONTROL

Subject to any State EMS Authority minimum guidelines and in accordance with this policy, the YEMSA Medical Director is authorized to exercise medical control of all EMS dispatch programs operating within the YEMSA, including the overall EMD program, EMD providers, training policies, procedures and protocols.

UTILIZATION OF EMD

It is recognized that EMD may be applied utilizing pre-arrival instructions only or may, through the use of key medical questions, determine whether the call is emergent or non emergent, and what resources will be utilized. A PSAP electing to provide EMD may determine the extent to which they wish to utilize EMD. If an EMD provider utilizes YEMSA approved priority dispatch system, the dispatcher shall follow the resource and response protocols associated with that system.

POLICY

A. All EMD providers in the YEMSA shall be approved by the YEMSA.

B. All EMD providers must have a continuous quality improvement (CQI) program approved by the EMS Agency that includes, at a minimum, all of the following:

1. EMD Center and personnel performance will be evaluated through case review of dispatch records, audio recordings, and applicable provider field records. All written CQI records shall be maintained for a minimum of 2 years. EMD programs shall maintain telecommunication records for a minimum of 100 days, and are hereby authorized to destroy EMD center audio recordings after 100 days, unless required for evidence or pending litigation.

2. Each EMD PSAP will have an EMD CQI coordinator who is:

a. A currently licensed physician, registered nurse, physician assistant, paramedic or a currently certified Advanced EMT or EMT, who has at least two years of practical experience within the last five years in prehospital emergency medical services with a basic knowledge of emergency medical dispatch, and who has received specialized training in the CQI/case review process, or

b. An emergency medical dispatcher with at least two years of practical experience within the last five years, and who has received specialized training in the CQI/case review process.

c. The EMD CQI coordinator will work collaboratively with YEMSA in providing data used for EMS system analysis.

C. All YEMSA approved EMD providers shall meet the minimum requirements, as stated in the California EMS Authority Guidelines EMD Program and YEMSA policies.

D. All dispatch program materials are subject to periodic review and copying by YEMSA as deemed necessary by the YEMSA.

E. All EMD provider programs are subject to on-site audit and evaluation by the YEMSA.

F. EMD providers requesting approval of their EMD program must submit a request to the Agency, which shall include:

1. A plan for how EMD will be provided. For those PSAP's that choose to utilize another PSAP or EMD dispatch center, a copy of that agreement;

2. The name of the recognized and established EMD program to be utilized;

3. A CQI program;

4. The name and qualifications of the program administrator; and

5. The name(s) and qualifications of the CQI coordinator.