

SUBJECT: RESUSCITATION

Date: 7/1/2012

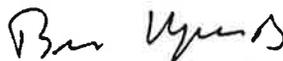
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- I. **Authority:** Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.220 and 1798. Probate Code, Sections 4000-4026, 4600-4643 and 4780-4786.
- II. **Purpose:** To establish guidelines for Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) (all levels) in San Diego County to determine appropriateness of either:
  - A. Discontinuing or withholding resuscitative measures, or;
  - B. Obtaining a Base Hospital Physician Order for pronouncement of patients in cardiac arrest while in the prehospital setting.
- III. **Definitions:**
  - A. "Attorney-in-fact" or health care agent means a person granted authority to act for the patient as governed by the Health Care Decisions Law pursuant to section 4670 of the Probate Code.
  - B. Do not Resuscitate (DNR) means for a patient in cardiopulmonary arrest, no chest compressions, no defibrillation, no assisted ventilation, no endotracheal intubation, and no cardiotoxic drugs. The patient is to receive full treatment other than resuscitative measures (e.g., for airway obstruction, pain, dyspnea, major hemorrhage, etc.).
  - C. Absent vital signs: absence of respirations and absence of a carotid pulse.
  - D. DNR Medallion: metal or permanently imprinted insignia, belonging to the patient that is imprinted with the words "Do Not Resuscitate, EMS."
  - E. DNR Form: Any completed "Do Not Resuscitate Form."
  - F. Advance Health Care Directive: An individual health care instruction or a power of attorney for health care executed pursuant to the Health Care Decisions Law.

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- G. POLST form: Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment, pursuant to Probate Code sections 4780-4786.

**IV. Procedure:**

- A. All patients with absent vital signs who are not "obviously dead" or are adults suffering from a blunt traumatic arrest (refer to Policy S-402), shall be treated with resuscitative measures, unless the following circumstances apply:

An EMT may withhold or discontinue CPR if presented with one of the following:

1. DNR Medallion.
2. A completed DNR Form stating, "Do not resuscitate," "No code," or "No CPR."
3. A written, signed order in the patient's medical record, including the electronic medical record.
4. An Advance Health Care Directive specifying "Do not resuscitate."
5. Upon receipt of a Base Hospital Physician Order.
6. DNR request communicated by a patient's attorney-in-fact or healthcare agent.
7. A completed POLST form specifying "Do not attempt resuscitation/DNR" in Section A, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation.

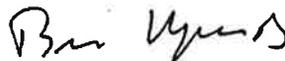
- B. Documentation

Reason for withholding or terminating CPR shall be documented in the patient care record. DNR orders shall include the name of the physician or designee (e.g. Physician Assistant, Nurse Practitioner), and the date of the order. If patient transport is initiated, the DNR Form (original or copy), DNR Medallion, or

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a copy of the valid DNR Order from the patient's medical record shall accompany the patient. If no printed copy available, note physician's name and presence of signature.

C. Considerations

1. In the event any patient expires in an ambulance either before or during transport, the following should be considered:
    - a. Unless specifically requested, the patient should not be returned to a private residence or skilled nursing facility, continue to the destination hospital or hospice.
    - b. If between hospitals, return to the originating hospital if time is not excessive. If transport time would be excessive, divert to the closest hospital with a basic emergency facility (BEF).
    - c. In rural areas in cases where the Medical Examiner has not waived the case, the transporting agency and the Medical Examiner shall arrange for a mutually acceptable rendezvous location where the patient may be taken and left in the custody of law enforcement, so that the transporting unit may return to service.
  2. Patient may appear quite ill, but that should not affect destination.
- D. For any concerns regarding resuscitation, prehospital staff should contact their assigned Base Hospital.