

 <b>COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO</b> EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES	SYSTEMS		<b>S-012</b>
	<b>EMS SYSTEM QUALITY MANAGEMENT</b>		
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## I. PURPOSE

- A. To identify primary responsibilities of all participants in the County of San Diego, Emergency Medical Services (CoSD EMS) system for the achievement of optimal quality of prehospital care for patients who access the system.
- B. To improve the quality and effectiveness of the EMS system through ongoing review and evaluation.

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- II. **AUTHORITY:** Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.204, 1797.220, 1798, 1798.100, and 1798.102.
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## III. DEFINITION(S)

**Quality Management (QM):** A systematic, continuous process for evaluating and improving the quality of prehospital care. It encompasses both quality assurance and quality improvement activities, focusing on the structure, processes, and outcomes of care delivery. Quality Management aims to ensure high-quality, equitable, and evidence-based patient care by identifying deficiencies, analyzing root causes, implementing corrective actions, and supporting data-driven system improvements.

**Emergency Medical Services System Quality Management Program (EMS QM Program):** Methods of evaluation that are composed of structure, process, and outcome evaluations which focus on improvement efforts to identify root causes of problems, intervene to reduce or eliminate these causes, and take steps to correct the process and recognize excellence in performance and delivery of care.

**Emergency Receiving Center:** A general acute care hospital that receives patients from EMS service providers through the 9-1-1 system or interfacility transfers.

**Quality Assurance (QA):** A systematic process for reviewing individual patient care encounters to identify, analyze, and address potential or actual deviations from expected clinical standards, with the goal of ensuring safe, effective, and consistent prehospital care.

**Quality Improvement (QI):** A continuous, data-driven process that monitors, evaluates, and enhances clinical performance through the analysis of key performance indicators and implementation of evidence-based system improvements.

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#### **IV. POLICY**

- A.** CoSD EMS is responsible for the oversight and supervision of EMS system quality management.
- B.** CoSD EMS serves as the administrator of the CoSD EMS Quality Management Plan, which objectives include but are not limited to:
  - 1. Providing high-quality, equitable care to residents and visitors of San Diego County through continuous quality improvement processes.
  - 2. Fostering a non-punitive, collaborative culture amongst all EMS system participants.
  - 3. Developing a culture of life-long learners amongst EMS clinicians.
  - 4. Maintaining a data-driven approach to clinical education, policies, and protocols.
  - 5. Collaborating with all stakeholders to ensure quality inputs.
- C. Responsibilities**
  - 1. CoSD EMS shall:
    - a. Comply with California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 10: Data and Quality Assurance.
    - b. Develop and implement, in cooperation with other EMS system participants, a system-wide written EMS QM program.
    - c. Coordinate the Quality Care Consortium (see CoSD EMS Policy S-013 Quality Care Consortium).
  - 2. An EMS service provider shall:
    - a. Comply with California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 10: Data and Quality Assurance.
    - b. Participate in the CoSD EMS QM Program, as defined in the CoSD EMS Quality Management Plan.
    - c. Participate in the Quality Care Consortium.
    - d. Report prehospital clinical care issues, or unexpected or adverse outcomes to the CoSD EMS Medical Director through the process outlined in the CoSD EMS Quality Management Plan.
  - 3. An emergency receiving center shall:
    - a. Participate in the CoSD EMS QM Program, as defined in the CoSD EMS Quality Management Plan.

**San Diego County Emergency Medical Services Office**  
**Policy / Procedure / Protocol**

- b. Participate in the Quality Care Consortium (see CoSD EMS Policy S-013 Quality Care Consortium).
  - c. If designated as a specialty care facility, participate in the CoSD EMS advisory committee(s) specific to its specialty designation(s).
  - d. Report prehospital clinical care issues, or unexpected or adverse outcomes to the CoSD EMS Medical Director through the process outlined in the CoSD EMS Quality Management Plan.
  - e. Submit patient outcome information for all patients received through the 9-1-1 system from an EMS service provider.
4. An EMS dispatch center shall:
- a. Participate in the CoSD EMS QM Program, as defined in the CoSD EMS Quality Management Plan.
  - b. Participate in the Quality Care Consortium.
  - c. Report prehospital clinical care issues, or unexpected or adverse outcomes to the CoSD EMS Medical Director through the process outlined in the CoSD EMS Quality Management Plan.

**D. Agreements**

- 1. CoSD EMS shall maintain agreements with EMS service providers and emergency receiving centers requiring, but not limited to:
  - a. Compliance with all the provisions listed in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9.
  - b. Compliance with all CoSD EMS system policies, procedures, and protocols.
- 2. These agreements provide the authority for CoSD EMS to:
  - a. Perform announced and unannounced site surveys of EMS provider agencies and emergency receiving centers.
  - b. Review patient care records necessary to investigate medical QI issues.