

**Chapter: COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**  
**Key Words: Policy/Procedure/Protocol**

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**SUBJECT:** Medical Audit Committee on Trauma

**POLICY NO:** S-015  
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**AUTHORITY:** Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.204 and 1798; and Evidence Code, Sections 1040 and 1157.7.

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**I. PURPOSE**

- A.** To establish an advisory committee to the local Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency to monitor, evaluate, and report on the quality of trauma medical care.
- B.** To promote Countywide standardization of the quality improvement process with emphasis on the educational aspect.
- C.** To review issues and matters of a system-wide nature. It shall not be the function of this committee to become directly involved in the disciplinary action of any specific individual. Authority for disciplinary action rests with the County of San Diego EMS (CoSD EMS) Medical Director and/or the State EMS Authority in accordance with Section 1797.204 of Division 2.5 of the Health and Safety Code.

**II. POLICY**

- A.** The scope of the committee shall include, but not be limited to:
  - 1. Review of trauma deaths in the County
  - 2. Evaluation of trauma care
  - 3. Provision of input to the local EMS agency in the development, implementation, and evaluation of medical audit criteria for trauma patients
  - 4. Designing and monitoring of corrective action plans for trauma medical care
  - 5. Assistance with and participation in research projects
  - 6. Recommendation of process improvement strategies related to trauma care

**B. Membership**

The committee shall be comprised of the following:

- 1. Members:
  - a. County staff (ex officio)
  - b. County Medical Examiner or designee

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- c. Trauma Center Medical Directors from all designated Trauma Centers
  - d. Trauma Program Managers from all designated Trauma Centers
  - e. Base Hospital Physician representing the Prehospital Audit Committee (PAC)
  - f. Neurosurgeon appointed by the Academy of Neurosurgeons
  - g. Anesthesiologist appointed by the Anesthesia Association
  - h. Orthopedic Surgeon
  - i. Emergency Physician not affiliated with a trauma center, appointed by San Diego Emergency Physicians Society
2. Ad Hoc Members (non-voting) that may participate:
- a. Physicians enrolled in trauma and EMS/Disaster fellowships
  - b. Assistant Trauma Medical Directors

**C. Attendance**

1. Members should notify CoSD EMS staff in advance of any scheduled meeting they would be unable to attend. Attendance at these meetings for the Trauma Medical Directors and Trauma Nurse Coordinators, or their designees, is mandatory. If an absence is necessary, a designee may be appointed to attend.
2. Resignations from the committee shall be submitted in writing to CoSD EMS.
3. Invitees may participate in the medical review of specified cases where their expertise is requested. All requests for invitees must be approved by CoSD EMS in advance of the scheduled meeting.
4. Invitees not participating in the medical review of specified cases must be approved by CoSD EMS and the committee chair and co-chair.

**D. Election of Officers**

Committee officers shall consist of one chair and one co-chair; the chair shall be a Trauma Medical Director and co-chair shall be a Trauma Program Manager. Elections will take place during the last meeting every

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other calendar year (odd years) and appointees shall assume office at the first meeting of the new calendar year. Officers elected shall serve a two year term and may be re-elected.

**E. Voting**

Due to the “advisory” nature of the committee, many issues require consensus rather than a vote process. Vote process issues will be identified as such by the Chairperson. When voting is required, a simple majority of the voting members of the committee need to be present. Members may not participate in voting when a conflict of interest exists.

**F. Meetings**

The committee shall meet on a monthly basis or at a frequency as determined appropriate by the committee, but always at least 10 times a year.

**G. Committee Documentation**

Minutes will be kept by CoSD EMS staff and distributed to the members at each meeting. Due to the confidentiality of the committee, confidential committee documents will be collected by CoSD EMS staff at the close of each meeting, and no copies may be made or possessed by members of the committee. All official correspondence and communication generated by the MAC will be approved by CoSD EMS staff and sent on San Diego County letterhead.

**H. Confidentiality**

1. All proceedings, documents, and discussions of this committee are confidential and pursuant to Sections 1040, 1157.5, and 1157.7 of the California Evidence Code. The prohibition relating to the discovery of testimony provided to the committee shall be applicable to all proceedings and records this committee which is one established by a local government agency as a professional standards review organization which is organized

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in a manner that makes available professional competence to monitor, evaluate, and report on the necessity, quality, and level of specialty health services including, but not limited to, prehospital care services. Guests may be invited to discuss specific cases and issues in order to assist the committee in making final case or issue determinations. Guests may only be present for the portion of the meeting about which they have been requested to review.

2. All members shall sign a confidentiality agreement not to divulge or discuss information that would have been obtained solely through committee membership. Prior to the invited guests participating in the meeting, the Chairperson or designee is responsible for explaining and obtaining a signed confidentiality agreement for invited guest(s).