San Diego County EMS Quality Management Process

Quality Assurance Case Reporting Guidelines

Reporting concerns within the San Diego County EMS system is crucial to ensuring everyone involved, whether you're in the field, at the hospital, teaching, or leading an organization, delivers the highest-quality patient-centered emergency medical care. All members of the EMS community should use the Quality Management System as the platform to share details of any situation where there is a potential to improve out-of-hospital care. Timely communication enables our EMS system to implement policies and protocols that improve patient outcomes, i.e., reduce morbidity and mortality. Case example types include, but are not limited to:

- Unrecognized failed airway[1]
- Failure to treat critical or time-sensitive conditions, including symptomatic dysrhythmias[1]
- Non-transport of patients who would have benefited from evaluation or treatment at a healthcare facility, including concerns about inappropriate refusal to transport or patient abandonment
- Termination of resuscitation in the field for patients who do not meet protocol criteria
- Potential patient abuse or clinical neglect
- Improper transfer of care between EMS and receiving facility staff
- Inadequate or intentionally false documentation, including omissions or additions
- Performing skills or administering medication outside authorized scope of practice
- Medication errors (regardless of adverse outcomes)
- Protocol deviation with potential for harm (e.g., under- or over-treatment)
- General complaints or concerns about clinical care

The San Diego County EMS Office is finalizing the deployment of a unified quality management database. During this transitional period, all system participants, including hospitals, fire agencies, and ambulance services, should submit reports via email to EMSNotifications@sdcounty.ca.gov. Once this reporting software is fully implemented, EMS system participants will be able to securely submit, update, track, and close cases directly through the platform.

Please see the final draft of the San Diego County EMS Quality Management Plan for additional information about case reporting.

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[1] For potential critical severity cases, reports shall be made within one business day of identification.