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# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Agencies Implement Medical Transport Plan for New Year's Eve Weekend**

(Las Vegas, Nev. – December 31, 1999) - The Clark County Health District (CCHD) along with the Clark County Fire Department, American Medical Response, the Metropolitan Police Department and volunteer agencies have implemented a medical transportation plan that will meet the medical needs of residents and visitors celebrating on Las Vegas Boulevard during the New Year's Eve holiday.

The overall goal of the medical transport plan is to extricate sick or injured individuals from Las Vegas Boulevard to strategically located triage areas. These areas will be staffed by a physician and/or physician's assistant, an AMR field supervisor, a registered nurse, a paramedic, an emergency medical technician (EMT), and an AMR customer service representative who will help process all paperwork. These triage areas are not meant to be walk-in clinics and the locations will not be advertised to the public. However, no one seeking medical attention will be turned away.

Once at the triage area a person can be evaluated by medical personnel who will then decide whether patients need to go to a hospital, urgent care center, or can be treated and released. This will help to reduce the amount of non-critically ill or injured patients who are seen in the emergency departments of hospitals. A temporary protocol for this procedure has

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been developed. The protocol includes an exclusion criteria that can be used by Clark County Fire Department (CCFD) and American Medical Response (AMR) personnel to ensure that any critically sick or injured person is taken directly to an emergency department.

The use of triage areas is an additional in the procedure used in years past. As in previous years, the Clark County Fire Department will be responsible for extricating sick or injured individuals from the crowds on Las Vegas Boulevard to an ambulance point for paramedic evaluation. The paramedics now have the option of transporting a non-critically injured person to the triage area for further evaluation and basic medical attention. This new option was made possible by a variance passed by the Clark County District Board of Health, which allows ambulances to transport patients to a medical site other than an emergency room for this holiday weekend.

Historically the holiday season creates an increased demand on medical facilities. This makes a well thought out plan especially vital when taking into account the increase in visitors that is expected this holiday season. According to Dr. Kwalick, chief health officer for the Health District, “This plan will allow for public and private entities to work together to provide safe, rapid transport and treatment for the sick and injured – while maintaining the highest level of quality medical care.”

Residents are encouraged to do their part by utilizing the appropriate medical facilities for their illnesses and injuries and reserving the use of hospital emergency departments for life-threatening medical situations. (See attached fact sheet)

Working together with AMR, the fire and police departments, helicopter services, hospitals and other entities, the Health District hopes to ensure that both residents and visitors of the Las Vegas area will have access to the appropriate medical care for all their health needs during the weekend of the Millenium celebration.

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## **Urgent Care vs. Emergency Care**

### **What is urgent care?**

Urgent care provides treatment of injuries or illnesses that are not life threatening but need immediate attention. Typical complaints that are appropriate for urgent care include:

- Lacerations - deep cuts or wounds that may require stitches
- Sprains, strains or contusions (deep bruises)
- Mild to moderate asthma attacks
- Ear infections
- Urinary tract infections
- Upper respiratory infections
- Coughs and congestion
- Diarrhea
- Sore throats
- Insect bites
- Rashes

### **When should you go to the Emergency Department?**

If you or someone else experiences a life-threatening illness or injury, call 9-1-1 to get professional help immediately. Examples of life threatening symptoms include:

- Severe bleeding
- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain or pressure
- Broken bones
- Partial or total amputation of a limb
- Trauma or injury to the head
- Sudden dizziness or difficulty seeing