



August 20, 2012

To All EMS Provider Agencies:

As you know, a national shortage currently exists for many of the commonly used medications in emergency medical services (EMS) today. Due to these drug shortages, EMS providers have periodically been unable to meet minimum supply requirements for certain drugs. These recurring shortages have similarly impacted Southern Nevada EMS providers, negatively affecting their ability to consistently meet par inventory levels as required by regulation.

As a community partner, the Office of Emergency Medical Services and Trauma System (OEMSTS) has been collaborating with EMS providers to identify strategies to address these persistent shortages. To ameliorate the strain of maintaining the standard of care in the pre-hospital environment during this crisis, multiple tactics have been implemented and/or suggested. It is the position of the OEMSTS, that the highest priority must be given to maintaining the pre-hospital standard of care while abiding by Nevada law. Accordingly, the OEMSTS, under the direction of the Southern Nevada Health District's Chief Health Officer and the Director of Community Health, find one such tactic, i.e., the decision to extend expiration dates of certain medications unsustainable as a permanent solution to this crisis. For this reason, all Clark County EMS Provider Agencies will be required to cease using expired medications by November 1, 2012.

The OEMSTS understands that EMS agencies must continue to provide emergency care in Clark County. To that end, we do not want agencies to be forced to remove response units from the system as a result of circumstances beyond their control. When an agency does not have, and is unable to obtain, the minimum supply of a drug, the agency must submit to the OEMSTS the documentation specified in the Temporary District Procedure for Managing Drug Shortages. The OEMSTS will review the method proposed by the agency to address the shortage to ensure that the health and safety of the public is protected. If the request meets the defined standards, a 90 day exception to EMS Regulation 1300.530 I. C. (3) will be granted and a letter from the OEMSTS will be issued to the agency. During an inspection, the letter must be presented to the OEMSTS representative. If, after 90 days the agency remains unable to obtain the minimum supply of the drug, the agency must submit to the OEMSTS the documentation specified in the Temporary District Procedure for Managing Drug Shortages, reflecting new efforts to obtain the drug.

The current situation represents a challenge to all EMS providers in the country. Through continued cooperation and diligence we will weather this crisis and continue to provide excellent emergency care to the citizens and visitors in Clark County.

Sincerely,

[Signature on file]

Thomas R. Coleman, M.D., M.S.
Director of Community Health

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Rory Chetelat, M.A., EMT-P
Acting Director of Administration
OEMSTS Manager

cc: File