

## McHenry Western Lake County EMS System

### Critical Care Transport Plan

This plan has been developed to oversee the inter-hospital transportation of a critically ill or injured adult patient who requires a level of care beyond the paramedic DOT curriculum scope of practice.

This plan also covers the stable pediatric patient with no risk of deterioration or low risk of deterioration, who would be transported at the Tier II level. However stable pediatric patients with a medium or high risk of deterioration or unstable pediatric patient are not covered in this plan, but rather will be referred to a pediatric transport team.

Definitions of categories in concert with the NHTSA:

#### Stable with No Risk of Deterioration – Basic Life Support (BLS)

Oxygen, monitoring of vital signs, saline lock: Requires basic emergency medical care such as basic life support services.

#### Stable with Low Risk of Deterioration – Advanced Life Support (ALS)

3 Lead ECG monitoring, running IV, some IV medications including pain medications, pulse oximetry, increased need for assessment and interpretation skills: Requires advanced care such as an advanced life support service provides

#### Stable with Medium Risk of Deterioration – ALS

Basic medication infusions; requires advanced care such as an advanced life support service, a specialty pediatric team should be given consideration based on the patient's underlying medical condition and reason for transfer.

#### Stable with High Risk of Deterioration – ALS

Patients requiring advanced airway but secured, intubated, on ventilator, patients on multiple vasoactive medication drips, patients whose condition has been initially stabilized, but has likelihood of deterioration, based on assessment or knowledge of provider regarding specific illness/injury.

#### Unstable – ALS

Any patient who cannot be stabilized at the transferring facility, who is deteriorating or likely to deteriorate, such as patients who have unstable vital signs or airway, are post-resuscitation, or who have sustained multiple trauma.

**Critical Care Transports are defined in three Tiers of Care.**

**Tier I**

Provides a level of care beyond the paramedic USDOT Curriculum scope of practice that meets the following criteria:

- A patient who demonstrates a clinical condition that has stabilized and is in need of transfer to another medical facility who requires a level of care beyond the paramedic DOT Curriculum scope of practice, which may include infusion of IV fluids other than NS (with or without supplemental Potassium), Nitroglycerin infusions, Heparin infusions, TPN, or administration of pain medications other than Fentanyl, per system protocols.
- Patient stability is classified as: neurological assessment unchanged from hospital or ED admission, vital signs within normal range for that patient (with or without medication control), respiratory status controlled without the use of mechanical ventilation.
- The attending physician and medical control physician approve the transport can take place with the designated Tier I providers.

**Tier II**

Tier II provides a level of care for patients who require care beyond the USDOT curriculum and expanded scope of practice ALS transport program, and who require formal advanced education for ALS paramedic staff. Tier II transport includes the use of a ventilator, infusion pumps with administration of system approved medication drips, maintenance of chest tubes, and other system approved equipment and treatment, such as, but not limited to peripheral arterial lines; accessing central lines; patient assessment and titration of IV pump medications with OLMC approval.

**Tier III**

Tier III provides a level of care for patients beyond the scope of a critical care paramedic, who require nursing level treatment, modalities and interventions.

**Staffing requirements; provider education, certifications and experience; continuing education plan; treatment and transport protocols specific to critical care transport outlined for each Tier.**

## **Tier I**

### Staffing

- Paramedic Expanded Scope of Practice credentialed or PHRN – to remain with patient at all times
- EMT, Paramedic or PHRN as driver

### Education, Certification and Experience

- Minimum of one year of experience functioning in the field at an ALS level
- Recognized as an ALS provider in good standing within the McHenry Western Lake County EMS System
- Documentation of initial education and demonstrated competencies of expanded scope of practice skills in accordance with the EMS System Plan.
- ACLS, PALS and ITLS (or PHTLS) certifications

### Continuing Education

Annual competencies of expanded scope of practice knowledge, equipment and procedures.  
Maintain ACLS, PALS and ITLS (PHTLS) certifications

### Treatment and Transport Guidelines specific to Tier I

See expanded scope Standard Operating Procedure Manual

## **Tier II**

### Staffing

- System approved Tier II Critical Care Transport medic – to remain with the patient at all times
- Paramedic or PHRN – to remain with the patient
- EMT, Paramedic or PHRN – driver

### Education, Certification and Experience

- Minimum of two years current experience functioning in the field at an ALS level.
- Recognized as an ALS provider in good standing within the McHenry Western Lake County EMS System
- Successful completion of an 80 hour established higher collegiate education or equivalent critical care education based on existing university program models
- Demonstrated competencies of expanded scope of practice as documented by the MWLCEMS System
- ACLS, PALS, NRP and ITLS (or PHTLS) certifications.
- CCEMTP or CCP.

### Continuing Education

- Twelve hours of critical care level education annually
- Currently actively engaged in ALS and critical care transports
- Successful completion of System annual critical care transport written exam and practical examinations.
- Maintain ACLS, PALS, NRP and ITLS (PHTLS) certifications
- Maintain critical care certification

### Orientation Plan

- A Critical care transfer nurse will accompany the Tier II approved paramedic on his/her first 10 Tier II transfers in the role of preceptor/mentor. During this probationary period an evaluation form will be filled out after each transfer by the precepting RN. The evaluation form will be submitted to the EMS office by the end of the shift.

### Treatment and Transport Guidelines specific to Tier II

See expanded scope Standard Operating Procedure Manual

## **Tier III**

### Staffing

- System approved critical care transport RN – remains with patient at all times
- System approved Tier II Transport Paramedic or PHRN – remain with patient at all times
- EMT, Paramedic or PHRN – driver

### Education, Certification and Experience: Paramedic - Same as Tier II

### Education, Certification and Experience: Nurse

- Two years of current experience with demonstrated competency in a critical care setting
- Recognized as a PHRN in good standing within the McHenry Western Lake County EMS System or completes PHRN and system entry per system policies
- Documentation of completion of a critical care nursing course.
- Demonstrated competencies of expanded scope of practice as documented by the MWLCEMS System.
- ACLS, PALS, TNS (TNCC, ITLS, PHTLS), NRP
- Critical care certification: CCRN, CFRN or CTRN
- IABP competency for IABP transfers

### Continuing Education

- Twelve hours of critical care level education annually
- Annually demonstrates competencies in critical care skills by participating in a Northwestern ICU skills day or equivalent.
- Maintain ACLS, PALS, NRP and ITLS (PHTLS) certifications
- Maintain critical care certification
- Maintains competencies for IABP if doing balloon pump transfers