

POLICY #219: ASSISTING PATIENTS WITH THEIR EMERGENCY MEDICATIONS

I. PURPOSE

- A. To allow EMS personnel in San Luis Obispo County to assist patients in administering physician-prescribed, self-administered emergency medications. This policy is intended for administering emergency medications, not in the EMS personnel's basic scope of practice.

II. POLICY

- A. Paramedics may be requested to assist with the administration of a specific, physician-prescribed emergency medication.
- B. Paramedics may assist patients with the administration of physician-prescribed devices, including, but not limited to, patient-operated medication pumps and self-administered emergency medications.
- C. Please note that this policy applies not only to one condition but any condition in which the patient needs emergency medications administered.
- D. This policy is not intended to circumvent any existing SLOEMSA policy or protocol.

III. EXAMPLE CONDITION

- A. Some children are born with a genetic defect (Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia) that prevents their body from producing adequate amounts of Cortisol. The signs & symptoms of an adrenal crisis include nausea, fever, pallor, confusion, weakness, tachycardia, tachypnea, hypoglycemia, hypotension, and shock, symptoms that might lead to their death.
- B. Families with such a child should be very aware of their condition. When these children experience an adrenal crisis, the proper treatment is the IM administration of the drug, e.g., hydrocortisone (Solu-Cortef). During this emergency, the parents or caregivers may be unable to deliver the IM medication properly and might request assistance from the EMS system. In this type of emergency, paramedics can assist the parents or caregivers with drawing up and administering the Solu-Cortef. The family members should be familiar with the proper dosage and have the necessary equipment, if available. In some cases, such as when a child is at school, the school personnel may have medication and instructions available.

IV. PROCEDURE

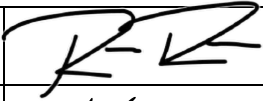
- A. State law authorizes a paramedic to assist a patient or parents who request help administering an emergency medication outside the ordinary scope of practice.

- B. Base Hospital shall be contacted to determine the appropriate course of action if faced with this rare situation. With Base Hospital orders, paramedics may assist patients/families in drawing up and administering emergency medication.
- C. All patients who have received physician-prescribed emergency medication administered by EMS should be transported to the hospital; for those patients who refuse EMS transport, contact Base Hospital and follow Policy #203: Patient Refusal of Treatment and/or Transport.

V. AUTHORITY

- California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9

Approvals:

EMS Agency, Administrator	
EMS Agency, Medical Director	