



Office of Emergency Management (OEM)

Milwaukee County

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Number: 15-05
Date: September 1, 2015
From: Rosemarie Forster
Section: Quality Management
To: All MCEMS Providers
Subject: Code Stroke Alerts

Milwaukee County EMS has had very positive feedback from receiving hospitals since the inception of the Code Stroke and Code STEMI alerts. Feedback indicates the extra minutes of prenotification has resulted in expedited patient care for time critical diagnoses.

The MCEMS Quality Staff reviews all Code Stroke and Code STEMI alerts paged out in an attempt to verify accuracy of the field working assessment and to determine patient outcome.

A recent audit of the Code Stroke Alerts indicates they're sometimes being paged out inappropriately. Review of the patient care records indicate documentation only supports activating the stroke alert 76% of the time in June (31 of 41 cases met criteria) and 79% in July (49 of 62 cases met criteria). An audit of the EMSCOM Log correlating to these cases indicates only 46% of the information documented by the communicators in June supported a Code Stroke Alert and only 55% of the information documented in July supported paging a Code Stroke Alert.

Communicators have indicated they're paging out Code Stroke prior to getting the criteria information from field staff. They have been instructed not to page out a Code Stroke prior to verifying:

- positive Cincinnati Stroke Scale results **AND**
- Last Known Well time within 8 hours **AND**
- blood glucose level showing the patient is not hypoglycemic

Be prepared for questions if you do not have this information available prior to requesting a Code Stroke Alert. If your patient does not meet the above criteria, the hospital will still be notified of an incoming patient with a primary working assessment of stroke, but it won't be at the alert level.

Please forward questions to Rosie Forster (257-6663) or rosemarie.forster@milwaukeecountywi.gov.