



Milwaukee County

Office of Emergency Management

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NUMBERED NOTICE

Number: 18-02

Date: January 15, 2018

From: M. Riccardo Colella, DO, MPH, FACEP

Section: EMS Division

To: Milwaukee County EMS Providers

Subject: Intravenous Solution Shortage

Purpose: **Advisory**

SITUATION

Healthcare entities and suppliers in the United States, including Milwaukee County EMS, are facing severe shortages of intravenous solutions necessary for volume replacement, drug mixing and flushing after medication administration.

BACKGROUND

Production of necessary intravenous solutions has not kept pace with demand for myriad reasons which leads to cyclic supply chain interruptions.

Healthcare entities, including Milwaukee County EMS, often administer intravenous fluids as part of “routine” bundled care in stable patients.

Milwaukee County EMS is working with other healthcare entities and suppliers to find alternate supply.

ASSESSMENT

Critical intravenous solution shortages will pose a risk to EMS patients in shock if we lack supply; EMS stewardship on appropriate and targeted use is a key step that can help maintain supply.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Focused EMS stewardship of intravenous solution use as outlined by OEM EMS Division in the Standards of Care Manual in the Universal Care Practice Guideline,
 - **Treatment and Interventions: (#3).** *“Establish vascular access if indicated (need for IV medication, need for fluid resuscitation) or in patients who are at risk for clinical deterioration based on paramedic judgement; routine placement of vascular access not encouraged unless indicated.”*
- Consider ordering alternate volume supply (e.g. order two 500 ml bag solutions if one 1000ml bag are not available by your supplier); keep par minimums low to ensure easy transition back to larger volume bags once supply is restored.
- Consider reallocating intravenous solutions among other partners within the Milwaukee County EMS system so that the supply and demand is best aligned.