Utilization of Echo Units

Purpose:

Echo units may be dispatched for all priority 1 and 2 calls in the area utilizing this form of EMS response. After assessing the scene and performing a complete patient assessment, the paramedic will intervene with the appropriate skills according to current standing DEMCA protocols.

These include but are not limited to the following:

1. IV access
2. Oral endotracheal intubations
3. Medication administration
4. Manual Defibrillation, etc.

Procedure:

If advanced care has been provided by the ECHO paramedic, the ECHO paramedic will then accompany the patient to the hospital or transfer care to an equal licensure.

All personnel on the scene shall assist with the patient and equipment until the patient is stabilized and ready for transport.

ECHO Unit crew shall inform responding ambulance(s), of all assessment findings and care provided, as well as patient demographics.

Upon arriving on the scene and finding that a life-threatening situation does not exist, The ECHO unit shall advise the responding ambulance to “go easy”. Upon receiving an advisory to go easy, a responding unit shall immediately change their HOT (lights and sirens) response to COLD (no lights and sirens) and obey all traffic laws.

In the event advanced care is provided, the ECHO unit will accompany the responding ambulance to the hospital. The driver of the ECHO unit shall proceed at normal speeds and obey all traffic laws while en-route to the hospital.

All equipment replacement and documentation must be completed, prior to returning to service.

ALS Response with ALS ECHO:

If an ECHO unit and ALS ambulance are both dispatched, and the ECHO unit provides advanced care to a patient, the ECHO unit can transfer care to the ALS unit.

If an ECHO unit and ALS ambulance are both dispatched, and the ambulance paramedic requires further assistance, the ECHO paramedic can ride along with the ALS ambulance to the hospital.

The ECHO unit will replenish/exchange equipment used with equipment from the responding ambulance.

If the drug box is opened by the ECHO paramedic, the responding ALS ambulance will exchange their unopened drug box with the ECHO unit. When such an exchange occurs, the paramedics from both units will inspect the open box to ensure that the appropriate quantity of medications are in the box. All paramedics involved shall be listed on all drug box replacement forms and the ePCR. Any discrepancy shall follow the appropriate DEMCA procedure.

If the A-Pack is opened by the ECHO paramedic, the responding ALS ambulance will exchange their unopened A-Pack with the ECHO unit. All paramedics involved shall be listed on all A-Pack replacement forms and the ePCR.

BLS Response with ALS ECHO:

If the ECHO unit provides advanced care and the patient will be transported to the hospital, the paramedic from the ECHO unit will become part of the BLS ambulance.

If a patient needs or desires transport to a hospital and does not meet criteria for ALS interventions, or if the only advanced care given is an IV and/or 12-Lead ECG, the patient may be transported by a BLS ambulance. The following criteria must be met:

- Patent airway, maintained without assistance or adjuncts.

- Patient appears hemodynamically stable with medical complaints or injuries that would be cared for at the BLS level.
- No imminent changes are anticipated in the patient's present condition.
- GCS ≥ 14.
- The EMT in attendance must be willing to accept the transfer of care in regards to the patient's condition.
- No patient may be transferred to BLS once an ALS intervention has been initiated.
- Notify Medical Control of ALS to BLS for authorization to transfer care prior to transport.

If the patient has declined treatment and transport, the ECHO unit shall complete all appropriate documentation and will be responsible for the disposition of the run. The ECHO unit shall cancel the responding/dispatched ambulance(s).

In the event patient care has been rendered, but the patient declined transport, the ECHO unit shall complete all appropriate documentation and will be responsible for the disposition of the run. The ECHO unit shall cancel the responding/dispatched ambulance(s).

In the event the patient meets the dead on scene protocol, the ECHO unit shall complete all appropriate documentation and will be responsible for the disposition of the run. The ECHO unit shall cancel the responding/dispatched ambulance(s).