



**DOH**  
New York State  
Department of Health  
**Bureau of Emergency Medical Services**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

*Supercedes/Updates:* **NEW**

**No. 04 - 05**

**Date: 05/31/04**

**Re: Electronic PCR  
Data Submission**

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The New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services is responsible pursuant to PHL Article 30 for the collection of prehospital patient documentation data. The paper Prehospital Care Report (PCR) has been the instrument developed and distributed for patient and EMS event documentation. The primary purpose of the PCR is to document all prehospital care and pertinent patient information as well as serving as a data collection tool for local and statewide quality improvement, protocol development and when approved, research.

The Department collects and compiles raw data into quantitative and summary data as a retrospective review of EMS activity throughout the state. This information is provided to the State and Regional EMS Councils and the State and Regional Emergency Medical Advisory Committees.

Article 30 of the New York State Public Health Law (PHL) requires that all ambulance and advanced life support first response services (ALS-FR) must submit all call reporting documentation to the Department. The regulations, 10NYCRR Part 800 requires that every person certified as an EMS provider, at any level, must complete a PCR for each patient treated.

### **Article 30 § 3053 Reporting**

Advance life support first response services and ambulance services registered or certified pursuant to article thirty of this chapter shall submit detailed individual call reports on a form to be provided by the department, or may submit data electronically in a format approved by the department. The state emergency medical services council, with the approval of the commissioner, may adopt rules and regulations permitting or requiring ambulance services whose volume exceeds twenty thousand calls per year to submit call report data electronically. Such rules shall define the data elements to be submitted, and may include requirements that assure availability of data to the regional emergency medical advisory committee.

### **Part 800.15 Required Conduct**

Every person certified at any level pursuant to these regulations shall:

(a) at all times maintain the confidentiality of information about the names, treatment, and conditions of patients treated except:

(1) a prehospital care report shall be completed for each patient treated when acting as part of an organized prehospital emergency medical service, and a copy shall be provided to the hospital receiving the patient and to the authorized agent of the department for use in the State's quality assurance program;

## Policy

As new technologies emerge, the Department has been working with EMS agencies in an effort to allow the submission of the required data elements through an electronic medium. ***Prior to using any electronic product for the submission of PCR data, the EMS agency MUST RECEIVE WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM THE DEPARTMENT and provide notification to the Regional Program Agencies.*** This policy statement is intended to define the parameters necessary by an EMS Agency for the electronic submission of patient care report data.

### **In order to be considered for approval by the Department to submit PCR data electronically, EMS agencies MUST adhere to all of the following:**

1. Be in compliance with all applicable sections of Article 30 and Part 800.
2. Be submitting paper PCRs to the regional program agency on a routine and on-going basis.
3. Contact the Department, in writing, to determine electronic reporting requirements and request approval for electronic submission.
4. Conduct testing of the data to insure proper format and electronic transmission to the satisfaction of the Department.
5. Apply for appropriate authorization for secure submission to the Department through the Health Provider Network (HPN).
6. Submit PCR data to the Department in the specified data file format at predetermined and scheduled intervals.
7. Services with call volumes greater than five thousand, may submit PCR data electronically directly to the Department. Service with fewer calls, must submit through the regional program agency.
8. If any changes or interruptions are made to the electronic patient record system that may affect data submission, the EMS service must notify the Department, in writing, ten (10) business days in advance of implementation.
9. Notify the appropriate Regional Emergency Medical Services Council(s) (REMSCO) and Regional Emergency Medical Advisory Committee(s) (REMAC) in writing and submit the standard NYS file data to the program agency in a compatible format and on a schedule determined by the program agency.

### **Additional Requirements**

EMS agencies considering submitting patient care data through an electronic medium, are also required to maintain records in accordance with established policies, laws and regulations. This must include, but may not be limited to:

- Strict written confidentiality policies, including a written statement, addressing the electronic transmission, storage and security.
- Records retention policies which must include, but not be limited to:
  - If maintaining original records, they must be secured and available for retrieval within 24 hours of request.
  - Patient records may be stored electronically, however a hardcopy of the like image must be readily available upon appropriate request.
  - Federal Law (HIPPA) requires that medical records be retained for **Six Years**. If the call involves the treatment of persons under age 18, the PCR must be retained for three years after the child reaches age 18.
- Records must be made available for review by the Department, upon request.
- The maintenance of patient records in a readable format upon request by patient or designee.

## **Other Considerations**

It is the Department's expectation that every EMS agency choosing to provide documentation data electronically, will carefully consider, but may not be limited to the following issues:

- Understand and adhere to the applicable HIPAA regulations.
- Have an appropriate secure method of transmission.
- Have the necessary technical staff support to the electronic program.
- Have appropriate infrastructure and back up for the system.
- Researched the product and vendor to insure that all of the state, local and legal requirements are met by the program.

## **The Review Process**

Once the Department receives a written request to submit patient data electronically, we will review the request, work with the service to address data format, determine a submission schedule and test the data file layout. The service will also be required, by memorandum of understanding, to agree to the conditions set forth by the Department.

The conditions may include, but not be limited to:

1. The provision of a confidentiality statement.
2. Description of system infrastructure.
3. Proof of system back up or redundancy.
4. Proof of contracts for technical support, maintenance, upgrading and troubleshooting.
5. Information about the hardware and software products chosen for system.
6. Proof of continuous transmission of data to the Department, REMSOC/REMAC and the EMS service(s).
7. Proof of REMAC review.

## **Notice**

The Department may immediately revoke the authority to submit data electronically from an agency or regional program upon written notice.