



Central Shenandoah Emergency Medical Services Council

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Date: May 26, 2009
To: Regional EMS Agencies
From: Matt Lawler, CSEMS Council *ML*
Re: Protocol Changes

This month, the Medical Control Review Committee (MCRC) approved several protocol modifications, including the introduction of an induced hypothermia protocol. Presently, the protocols are being approved by the regional operational medical directors. While the Council is anxious to implement these new protocols, there are some challenges that must be overcome.

To induce hypothermia when indicated by protocol, chilled normal saline needs to be infused into the patient. Agencies will need to have bags of chilled normal saline, exclusive of the normal saline supplied in the regional drug boxes. The Virginia Board of Pharmacy regulations govern the purchase, storage and replacement of controlled substances. Normal saline for injection is a Schedule VI controlled substance. Regionally, we must ensure we comply with all regulations with respect to the purchase, storage and replacement of the normal saline that is outside the regional drug boxes. Dr. Asher Brand, Regional Operational Medical Director, is working with the Board of Pharmacy on this issue.

For good reason, many are eager to start using the induced hypothermia protocol. That is why we wanted to give you this brief update on the status of the implementation of the protocols. During the month of June, the Council will be conducting training on the new protocols at the skills drills. Additionally, there will be an on-line training program on the new protocols.

The MCRC also moved to make CPAP mandatory for EMS agencies that provide medic-level service. The Committee is sensitive to everyone's financial state of affairs. Therefore, compliance dates for induced hypothermia and CPAP will fall in FY11, giving agencies an opportunity to budget for equipment and/or seek funding through the Rescue Squad Assistance Fund.

Once all of the issues are resolved, the Council will issue additional information on the protocols, including effective dates, compliance dates, guidance documents and resources to acquire equipment and supplies.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Council or your operational medical director.