



# Hot Topics



The Genesee County Medical Control Authority's

Newsletter for EMS Providers - Also now available on line at [GCMCA.org](http://GCMCA.org)

One Hurley Plaza, Flint 48503

Office Phone 810-262-2555

February 2019



## Patient Refusals

### *What to do After Medications are Given*

The issue of whether to transport a patient or allow them to sign a refusal after they have been given a medication by EMS has seen a spike in discussion and debate in large part due to the increase of overdose patients receiving Naloxone. This medication has miraculous results, giving the provider and patient the sometimes false impression that the medical problem has been resolved. But, a recurrence of the condition, comorbidities, and liability questions still remain.

The GCMCA Protocol Committee and PSRO have recently held discussions on this issue and offer the following to providers in these situations. First, you must contact online medical control for input on these cases. Second, fully describe to the patient the risks of not going to the hospital and strongly encourage them to go with you. Third, make sure that they truly do meet all

of the criteria for competence to sign a refusal. Finally, if the patient is competent and absolutely refuses to be transported, thoroughly document the steps you took before obtaining the refusal. We encourage you to re-read the current Refusal of Care protocol on this and other issues related to signed refusals.

## Chemical Restraint of Patients

The combative patient presents many challenges to EMS providers. In some cases it is possible to calm the patient and limit their agitation, but in others their medical condition results in a potentially dangerous situation for you and further harm to them. Responding quickly by properly assessing the threat and using medication to restrain the patient is sometimes your best option.



Before taking this step, make sure there is no other way to effectively calm or restrain the patient. Also make sure that the patient's condition would not be compromised by giving the drug. Take a few minutes to review the Patient Restraint protocol for further details on this and other key points related to the restraint of patients.

## No Cab Fare

We are receiving reports that EMS personnel are telling patients that if they are brought to the hospital by ambulance that they will receive a cab voucher for their return trip home upon discharge. **This is not accurate and EMS personnel should not be telling patients that they will receive cab vouchers upon discharge.** In rare instances the hospitals will make other arrangements for transportation of discharged patients, but this is an arrangement between the hospital and patient. **EMS personnel should not be providing information on hospital discharge practices.**

## *Congratulations!*

Congratulations to Jerry Hunt for winning our last contest. He scoured our website and found a hidden picture. His diligence and keen eye won him a \$10 gift card. Make sure you read future newsletters for a chance to win our next contest.