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MEDICAL HEALTH SERVICES

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

DATE: August 15, 2022

TO: Ambulance Providers
Emergency Receiving Centers (ERCs)
ERC Medical Directors
Base Hospital Coordinators
911 Service Providers
MICNs

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION FOR BYPASSING HOSPITALS WITH 90% APOTs OF 60 MINUTES OR GREATER BY 911 SERVICE PROVIDERS AND AMBULANCES

As many of you are probably aware, the County's 90% APOT numbers have been averaging above the 30-minute standard for several months, with the average being 35 minutes or greater for the last 4 weeks. Some days have been as high as 47 minutes. Individual hospitals have experienced 90% APOTs greater than 2.5 hours without going on diversion. This has never happened in the history of OCEMS and is occurring at the same time that demand for 911 service has increased by almost 40,000 runs this year compared to last year. To try and support adequate 911 service for Orange County citizens, additional interventions are now required to maintain care.

Effective immediately, OCEMS is authorizing ambulances and 911 providers to request the current 90% APOT for their destination hospital from their dispatchers while in the field. This information is available 24/7 from the EMS website: <https://www.ochcahealthinfo.com/about-hca/medical-health-services/emergency-medical-services/ems-system-reports/ambulance-patient>. Ambulances may now bypass their nearest ERC regardless of diversion status if it has a 90% APOT of 60 minutes or more, and travel to the next closest most appropriate ERC with lower APOT numbers even if it is outside their normal 20-minute transport time. OCEMS is hopeful this will result in shorter overall times to off-load patients and return to service.

This directive will remain in effect for the next 6 months and may be extended based on EMS system data.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Carl Schultz, MD'.

Carl H. Schultz, MD
EMS Medical Director