Our Responsibility: Providing Appropriate Emergency Care

EMTALA Education
2018
Why must we treat all?

Mission Health provides emergency care to all patients.

– Care is given whether or not the patient can pay.

This is a moral and ethical issue. It is simply the right thing to do.

We have a duty to give non-biased care. How we feel about a patient or their situation should never affect the care given.

The Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) is the law. This law clearly states hospitals must protect the poor and uninsured. We must be sure that care is given without discrimination (judgment).
What is EMTALA and its purpose?

All hospitals receiving Medicare funds must meet the terms of EMTALA.

EMTALA **Requires** Hospitals to:

- Perform an appropriate medical screening exam (MSE). This exam must be done by a qualified Medical Person. It is our duty to find an emergency medical condition (EMC) if it exists. EMC’s include a pregnant woman with contractions. Care is provided *regardless of a patient’s ability to pay*.

- Deliver care if an emergency medical condition is present.

- Stabilize the patient’s medical condition.

- If the patient’s condition cannot be stabilized, the hospital must transfer the patient to a hospital that has the ability to do so.
What does EMTALA require for transfers?

EMTALA *Requires* Hospitals to:

Accept appropriate transfers:
- If the hospital has special skills and services
- If the hospital has the space to receive the patient

Transfer patients only when:
- It is medically necessary
- At the patient’s request - transfer only after all transfer requirements have been met
Who is a patient that requires emergency care?

Any patient who comes to the hospital asking for an examination or treatment for a medical condition must be given an “appropriate medical screening exam.” A proper exam is the only way to decide if the patient is suffering from an “emergency medical condition.”
When is EMTALA triggered?

EMTALA is triggered when a person:

- Is on “hospital property” and a request is made for medical care. This request may be made by the person or on the person’s behalf.
- Is unable to ask for care, but has symptoms that show the possibility of an emergency medical condition.

EMTALA does not apply to inpatients, outpatients, or patients coming to off-campus outpatient clinics. These clinics do not normally provide a medical screening exam.
In Summary: What does this mean to Mission Health?

When a patient comes to Mission Health with an emergency, we **must** give a medical screening examination (MSE). An MSE is the only way to decide whether an “emergency medical condition” is present.

- MSE to be given by Qualified Medical Personnel per Hospital/Medical bylaws.
- Our clinicians **must** begin giving care if an “emergency medical condition” (EMC) is present.

Hospitals are required to give stabilizing treatment for patients with EMCs. Appropriate transfer should take place if:

- A hospital is unable to stabilize a patient within its ability
- The patient asks

Our caregivers **must** know and follow the rules and regulations for EMTALA.
Concerns?

If a caregiver has a concern about how emergency care is provided:

– Report it to your supervisor, or
– Call the Compliance Officer at 828-213-3523, or
– Contact 1-877-ETHICS1

• You will not be asked to give your name