

EMSystem Guidelines

General Guidelines

1. **Purpose of the System:** The EMSystem is designed to provide all hospital Emergency Departments and the Albuquerque Base Communications Center with real-time information regarding the divert status of all area facilities. Accurate, timely information will facilitate transport units in getting patients to the correct facility in a timely manner and allow those transport units to keep patients within the appropriate hospital system whenever possible. In addition, the system allows real-time information exchange between Albuquerque Ambulance Service (AAS) and area facilities regarding MCI's and provides a means for distributing information to all facilities simultaneously through the System Alert mode.
2. **Status Choices:** The current status of each facility Emergency Department (ED) is displayed in the Status column of the display screen. This selection represents the status of the ED only. There are four possible statuses to be displayed for each facility.
 - **Open** - ED accepting patients normally
 - **Caution** - ED is open - however, there are alerts for other areas of the hospital effecting admission. Can also be used to alert for limitations in an open ED - i.e., ED is approaching capacity. Caution can also be used to signify a status regarding interfacility transports. There will be times a hospital will accept all local ambulances but not be able to accept transports from other areas of the State. When cautions are forced open based on our pre-defined algorithms, this caution can remain in effect because it does not influence local ambulance traffic. **This is currently not being utilized in our system.**
 - **Closed** - ED is full - cannot accept patients as normal. Patients should be diverted to another facility. ED's in this status will still accept Code Blues if they are the closest facility. It is understood that an ED listed as closed will still receive patients for direct admit and pre-arranged transfers. UNMH, as the only Trauma Facility, will, at times, utilize the Closed Status while still accepting Trauma patients. Their status will reflect Closed, with notes stating "accepting trauma only." **All facilities on closed status will be opened automatically after three hours "for reassessment." Hospitals can close again if deemed necessary.**
 - **Totally Closed** ED cannot accept patients under any circumstances. Examples: ED is without power or the building is under a bomb threat.
 - **Forced Open** – Facility has been forced open from closed status based on the algorithm below.
3. **General Information:**
 - **Closed Status:** AAS Communications Center (AASCom.) will advise all transporting units to seek an alternate destination. The closed facility will not receive a radio report regarding these divers. However, units transporting pre-arranged transfers and direct admits will contact the closed facility via radio as usual. In the case of a Really Closed status, all units will be diverted regardless of any such limitations.
 - **Caution: ED Full:** The use of this combination is misleading - as the status represents the condition of the ED, if the ED is full, it is closed. AASCom. will divert units as listed under Section A - Closed Status.
4. Revision of the pre-hospital divert protocol was made at 1/17/01 MCB meeting. According to the new protocol, the system can be forced open selectively or completely depending on the status of the 5 principal hospitals: Presbyterian Hospital, Albuquerque Regional Medical Center, UNM, Lovelace and the Kaseman Presbyterian Hospital.
 - When three of the five named hospitals are on similar closed status, then all nine hospitals will be forced open for two hours.
 - Regardless of the closed status, UNM will accept all categorized trauma patients. (Exceptions: diversions per MCI protocol, black status)

Hospital Responsibilities

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- **Access:** Each facility is required to provide the necessary hardware (computer and internet access) for their ED personnel. Each ED needs to have easy access to this hardware for the purpose of adequately monitoring the system twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The maintenance and support of this equipment is the individual facility's responsibility.
- **Status Updates:** Each facility will update their status on the EMSsystem every eight hours.
- **Status Changes:** Each facility is responsible for making status changes for their facility. Facilities should use the check box category reasons whenever possible. AASCom. is capable of making changes for all the facilities, but will do so only when a technical problem prevents the facility from doing this themselves. Any time a facility requests AASCom. to make a status change on their behalf, the caller must identify themselves by full name and title, and provide the reason for AASCom.'s involvement. **When a facility changes its status to closed, they will fill out the "diversion information form" as completely as possible.**
- **Training:** Each facility is responsible for assuring that all personnel authorized to use the EMSsystem are adequately trained in using the software.
- **MCI Alerts:** Each ED needs to fill in their capacity numbers within five minutes from the time the MCI alert is sent out. Hospitals will be opened or remain open during MCI's.

Albuquerque Base Responsibilities

- **System Monitoring:** AASCom. will monitor the system twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. In case of a system failure (loss of access to the EMSsystem website) AASCom. will contact the appropriate technical support personnel. Once the system is up and running, AASCom. will notify all ED's via phone that the system is up and running. Each ED will then need to re-establish their connection with EMSsystem as needed. AAS will send out a System Alert to aid all facilities in testing their connection.
- **Advising Transporting Units:** AAS Communications Center will advise AAS units of Closed statuses in the system. Facilities listed as Closed will not receive a radio call - the unit will divert to another facility. Units with pre-arranged transfers and direct admits will contact the facility as usual. Out of town units will not be diverted - they will be given clearance to contact those facilities via radio. AAScom. has no way of knowing if these units are transporting 911 patients or pre-arranged transfers and therefore the facility needs to divert them individually as appropriate.
- **Status Changes:** AASCom. will change status for a facility as outlined under Hospital Responsibilities. AASCom. will change the status of any closed facility that does not do so themselves when the system is forced open.
- **MCI Alerts:** Any time an MCI is declared within Bernalillo County, AASCom. will issue an MCI alert via the EMSsystem. AASCom. will relay the information entered by the facilities regarding the number of patients they can accept to the Transport Officer at the MCI. AASCom. will open any closed facilities.
- **System Alerts:** AASCom. will issue a System Alert anytime there is pertinent information to be distributed to all facilities. In particular, System Alerts will be sent when the System is forced open.
- **Public Health Alerts:** **The NM Department of Health in conjunction with Dr. Froman will be periodically posting Public Health Alerts as needed to disseminate urgent or emergent information to all area hospitals.**

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- **Additional Information:** Dr. Froman, as AAS Medical Director, is a resource for information regarding the EMSsystem. Contact people for EMSsystem at the different hospitals are....
 - Presbyterian George Kennedy/Diane Cassell
 - UNM Paul Cheney
 - Lovelace/Sandia Mark Epstein
 - Heart Hosp. David Williams
 - V.A. Mick Leo/Audrey Urbano

Do not call Albuquerque Base/AASCom. regarding protocol or specific case issues with EMSsystem, contact your facility representative.