DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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EMS Information Bulletin- #2

DATE: August 13, 2003

SUBJECT: Epinephrine Auto-Injector Administration by EMTs

TO: Ambulance Services
Quick Response Services

FROM: Emergency Medical Services Office
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Epinephrine is a sympathomimetic drug indicated in the emergency treatment of allergic reactions from insect stings or bites, foods, drugs, other allergens and idiopathic anaphylaxis. EMTs are authorized under regulations promulgated by the Department to assist a patient to administer drugs previously prescribed for the patient, as specified by the Statewide BLS treatment protocols. Those protocols permit EMTs to assist patients with the administration of epinephrine by auto-injector when the patient is carrying his or her own prescribed epinephrine.

The Statewide BLS protocols are written to permit an EMT with appropriate training, when functioning with an ambulance service or QRS that meets the requirements to carry epinephrine auto-injectors, and with the approval of the ambulance service or quick response service (QRS) medical director, to use an epinephrine auto-injector to administer epinephrine via subcutaneous or intramuscular routes in accordance with those protocols or medical command orders.

EMTs may only administer epinephrine by auto-injector when following the most current statewide BLS protocol or when directly ordered by a medical command physician. The most up-to-date version of the statewide BLS protocol related to epinephrine auto-injectors will supercede any other guidelines related to the administration of epinephrine auto-injectors.

Service Requirements

The following are requirements for ambulance services and QRS related to the use of epinephrine auto-injectors prior to implementation by the service:

1. The identification of a medical director willing to serve in an oversight capacity in regards to epinephrine auto-injectors.
2. Ability to comply with manufacturers' recommendations for storage and maintenance:
    a. Store in a dark place at room temperature (59-86 degrees F).

b. Do NOT refrigerate.
c. Do NOT expose to extreme cold or heat.
d. Note expiration date on the unit (month and year). Replace before expiration date.
e. Examine contents in clear window of the auto-injector monthly.
f. Replace the unit if the solution is discolored or contains solid particles (precipitate).
g. Protect from prolonged exposure to UV rays.

3. Maintain a supply of two (2) each of adult and pediatric dose epinephrine auto-injectors with the required equipment for the ambulance service or QRS.

Practitioner Requirements

The following are requirements related to the use of epinephrine auto-injectors as it relates to the individual EMT scope of practice:

1. The skill may only be used when an EMT is functioning with an ambulance service or QRS that complies with Department requirements for carrying epinephrine auto-injectors.
2. Only an EMT that has completed the training in the primary use (not patient-assisted) epinephrine auto-injector module through the EMT curriculum or continuing education course # 004124 may use an epinephrine auto-injector.
3. The EMT must be authorized to perform this skill by the ambulance service or QRS medical director for epinephrine auto-injectors.

Ambulance services and QRSs who wish to carry epinephrine auto-injectors, including EMTs who wish to administer them, must contact their regional EMS council for additional information prior to implementation of primary use epinephrine auto-injectors.