



EMS Information Bulletin- #22

DATE: July 28, 2004

SUBJECT: EMTs Assisting with ALS Procedures

TO: EMS Training Institutes and CE Sponsors

FROM: Emergency Medical Services Office
PA Department of Health
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EMTs are authorized to provide support and assistance to ALS practitioners as set forth at 34 Pa.B. 3988 (July 23, 2004) Prehospital Practitioner Scope of Practice. Skills identified in 34 Pa.B. 3988 may be performed by a prehospital practitioner at the practitioner's level of certification/recognition only if the practitioner has successfully completed training (cognitive, affective and psychomotor) on the specified skill, which includes training to perform the skill on adults, children and infants, as appropriate.

Several existing continuing education courses contain objectives to address these training needs. Statewide BLS medical treatment protocols support the use of EMTs who have been properly trained to assist in the preparation and use of specific ALS equipment frequently encountered in the prehospital setting to provide support and assistance to ALS practitioners in their provision of specified ALS services.

Please note: The term "ALS Assistant" should not be used to describe EMTs who receive such training because it implies a level of certification that does not exist in Pennsylvania. The Department strongly encourages sponsors and training institutes to re-evaluate existing programs intended to support the training needs of EMTs assisting with ALS procedures for terminology and objectives that could be misinterpreted to suggest that an EMT's scope of practice is broader than it is, i.e., that EMTs may independently perform ALS services or that EMTs may refer to themselves as "ALS assistants." While use of the term "ALS assistant" is strongly discouraged in course titles and materials, if that term is used, the course materials must include an explanation that no ALS assistant practitioner level exists in Pennsylvania and that persons who complete the course may not refer to themselves as ALS assistants to the public or otherwise.

New CE programs will be thoroughly scrutinized to ensure that they do not expressly or implicitly promote the use of EMS titles not recognized under law or contain objectives that are not consistent with the statewide BLS medical treatment protocols. Existing programs will also be subjected to the same review and revisions to courses will be requested if appropriate. Recommended course objectives of continuing education programs designed to train EMTs to assist ALS practitioners in the performance of ALS skill as set forth at 34 Pa.B. 3988 have been written with assistance from the State Advisory Council and are provided for your information in the enclosed attachment.

Effective January 1, 2005, course offerings regarding EMTs assisting with ALS procedures that exceed the attached objectives or do not reflect a review of applicable Statewide BLS Protocols will be awarded zero credit or less than full credit, as appropriate.

Attachment:

1. EMTs Assisting with ALS Procedures: Sample Continuing Education Course Objectives