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CLARK M. WAFFLE, M.D., F.A.C.E.P.  
Medical Program Director

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MEMORANDUM

TO: All Pierce County EMS Agencies

FROM: Clark M. Waffle, M.D., M.P.D. 

RE: No Divert for Adult Medical Patients

As of 1 May 2017, the adult medical 'no divert' policy instituted in January 2017 for EMS at all civilian receiving hospitals in Pierce County will continue for the foreseeable future. Please note this does not apply to pediatric patients or to trauma patients.

At the Community Healthcare Access Steering Committee which met on April 18, 2017, the issue of 'no divert' was discussed. After listening to the subcommittee report regarding this issue it was felt that the current policy will be continued into the future.

EMS Considerations:

1. All EMS transport agencies and departments should be mindful of transport destinations with regard to ED saturation.
2. Transport units should consider 'level loading' when there is more than one facility available in a given area.
3. EMS will utilize WaTrac for ED updates regarding inpatient holds, psych and waiting room volumes – again, being mindful of over-saturating a single facility.

ED Considerations:

1. Frequent and timely updates should be placed in WaTrac regarding ED holds, psych and waiting room patient volumes for facility transparency.
2. Maintain open lines of communication with EMS; *this does not mean suggesting other facilities as transport options* (essentially diverting the ambulance) unless the patient requires a higher level of care (trauma, Cath Lab/CT down, etc.).
3. Charge nurses will maintain open lines of communication between the EDs to help facilitate a collaborative effort amongst receiving facilities.
4. The ED nursing staff will assist EMS personnel to expedite the offload of their patients within 20 minutes or less of arrival 80% of the time.

If there are any concerns with this continuation of policy, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

