

Position Paper on Managed Care

THE COMMISSION ON EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SUPPORTS THE ROLE OF EMS AGENCIES TO ENSURE THAT PATIENTS HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO QUALITY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES, AND TO ENSURE THE LONG TERM STABILITY OF THESE SERVICES. THE PUBLIC SHOULD BE ASSURED THAT THE FINANCIAL AGENDAS OF THE SYSTEM PARTICIPANTS WILL NOT OVERSHADOW LEGITIMATE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.

The following four principles regarding emergency medical services and the integration of managed care are:

1. Integration of emergency medical services and managed care organizations should be accomplished in accordance with appropriate medical standards with the participation of interested groups including physicians, nurses, hospital administrators, emergency medical providers, local EMS agencies, consumers and managed care organization representatives.
2. The purpose and integrity of 9-1-1 systems must be maintained and the public encouraged to continue to utilize 9-1-1 systems for perceived emergency health care needs.
3. Emergency medical services systems must continue to provide prompt quality patient care and, if necessary, transport to the closest appropriate acute care facility, and the emergency health care needs of the patient should prevail in the destination decision regardless of the patient's managed care organization affiliation.
4. Alternative health care access entities must be held to medically appropriate quality improvement standards and processes in accordance with the requirements of the responsible regulatory agency. These entities must not be designed to divert direct access to the 9-1-1 system for perceived life-threatening emergencies.