NURSES FUNCTIONING IN THE PREHOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT

The Board of Nursing generally takes the position that a nurse may practice according to his/her skill and training, regardless of the environment (prehospital or in-hospital). If a question arises as to whether or not the nurse should have performed a particular delegated medical act, the nurse would have to prove to the Medical Director or Board of Nursing that he/she was adequately trained and competent to perform the particular act. The Nurse Practice Act does not specifically require that a nurse function with written protocols. However, in the prehospital setting, written protocols are considered customary and appropriate. COPIC Risk Management recommendations with regard to supervision of non-physician health care providers at any level are that the physician specify what medical acts and skills (scope of practice) the delegate be allowed, protocols be written consistent with that scope of practice, documentation of the training and work history of the delegate be maintained, and a quality improvement program be developed to ensure that supervision is reviewed in a timely fashion.

POLICY

1. Nurses may function in the prehospital environment on EMS agencies in the Mesa County EMS System. Nurses may not, according to State rules, be the sole provider on ground transport ambulances unless they also have EMT certification.
2. They will be required to follow the same procedures as any other provider including signing agreements, probationary periods, and skills testing.
3. The Medical Director reserves the right to set the level of practice of any RN at the level appropriate for that nurse given their field care experience and training level.

PROCEDURE

1. Any nurse who wishes to practice in the Mesa County EMS System will meet with the EMSMD, and a plan for probation and level of practice (EMT, EMT-I, Paramedic or CCP) will be decided upon.
2. The details of this agreement between the EMSMD and a specific nurse will be placed in writing, so as to avoid any confusion regarding the Medical Skills and Acts allowed or the Formulary of Medications Allowed to be Administered by the nurse under the EMSMD’s medical license.
3. The level a specific nurse may function at is solely at the discretion of the EMSMD.