



Facility Name(s):	Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City	
Policy / Procedure:	OKLC ED Screening and Stabilization Policy	
Approved by:	Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City - Policy Oversight Committee, Emily Eriksson (Vice President-Patient Care Sv), Jennifer Bramlett (Exec Director-Nursing), Karyl James (VP & Community CNO)	Date: 09/08/2022

Scope: Oklahoma City Emergency Department Coworkers

Purpose:

To assure appropriate medical screening examination and the provision of stabilizing treatment for patients with emergency medical conditions and labor.

Description:

1. All patients presenting to the Emergency Department at Mercy Hospital are screened to determine if an emergency medical condition exists. Patients with pregnancy of greater than 20 weeks gestation, presenting with pregnancy related complaints or concerns, are taken to the Obstetrical Unit for the medical screening examination, if appropriate, as determined by the triage nurse.
 - a. A medical screening examination is provided beyond the initial triaging for all individuals presenting to the Emergency Department, regardless of diagnosis, financial status, sex, religion, race, national origin, or handicap.
 - b. The same level of screening is provided to all patients presenting with comparable conditions or symptoms.
 - c. As specified in the Medical Staff's rules and regulations, a medical provider will assess all patients who present to Mercy Hospital requesting emergency treatment to determine whether an emergency medical condition exists. The physician may be assisted by allied health professionals with appropriate privileges and /or competencies to perform such an examination, who conveys their findings to the physician.

NOTE:

"Emergency medical condition" means a medical condition manifesting itself by acute symptoms of sufficient severity (including severe pain, psychiatric disturbance and symptoms of substance abuse) such that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected to result in:

- a. Placing the health of the individual (or with respect to a pregnant woman, the health of a woman or her unborn child) in serious jeopardy;
 - b. Serious impairment to any bodily functions;
 - c. Serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part, or
 - d. With respect to a pregnant woman who is having contractions:
 - i. There is inadequate time to affect a safe transfer to another hospital before delivery, or
 - ii. That the transfer may pose a threat to the health or safety of the woman or the unborn child.
2. Special Considerations related to the determination of "emergency medical conditions".



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- a. Intoxicated individuals may meet the definition of "emergency medical condition" because the absence of medical treatment may place their health in serious jeopardy, or result in serious impairment of bodily functions, or serious dysfunction of a bodily organ. It is not uncommon for the intoxicated individual to have unrecognized trauma.
 - b. An individual who is expressing suicidal or homicidal thoughts or gestures, if determined dangerous to self or others, is considered to have an emergency medical condition.
3. If the patient with an emergency medical condition refuses a medical screening examination or the provision of stabilizing treatment, Emergency Department staff takes reasonable steps to secure the patient's written informed refusal of such examination and/or treatment.
 - a. If possible, staff explains to the patient the increased medical risks, which may be reasonably expected from not being examined or treated and the medical benefits from the provision of appropriate treatment.
 - b. The documents reflecting such refusal are signed, if possible, by the patient or person acting on the patient's behalf, dated and witnessed by hospital staff, and filed with the patient's medical record.
4. If a patient is determined to be suffering from an emergency medical condition, the patient is provided with stabilizing treatment within the capability and capacity of Mercy Hospital. If appropriate stabilizing treatment is not available, the patient is transferred in accordance with the Mercy Hospital Policy entitled "Patient Transfer to Another Hospital."
5. Mercy Hospital does not delay the medical screening examination in order to inquire about the patient's method of payment or insurance status. Mercy Hospital registration staff follows reasonable registration processes for individuals presenting with an emergency medical condition. Reasonable registration processes include requesting information about insurance as long as these procedures do not delay screening or treatment. All patients shall receive an appropriate medical screening examination regardless of their ability to pay for medical care.
6. Mercy Hospital does not delay the medical screening examination for any patient to obtain approval from the patient's insurer or managed care plan. If the patient is determined to have an emergency medical condition that requires stabilizing treatment, the Mercy Hospital does not refuse to provide stabilizing treatment within the capability and capacity of the Hospital even though the patient's insurer or managed care plan refuses to authorize payment for such screenings and treatment. The insurers and managed health care plans (e.g., HMO, PPO) cannot deny treatment of their enrollees; they may only deny payment.

1 This policy based on the Interpretive Guidelines - Responsibilities of Medicare Participating Hospitals in Emergency Cases, Rev. 2 (05-98)