



Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center

Communication Disorders Department Policy and Procedure

**SUBJECT: USE OF ELECTRICAL STIMULATION
AS A TREATMENT MODALITY**

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PURPOSE

To establish clear guidelines for the procedure to be followed in the provision of electrical stimulation therapy within the communication disorders treatment program.

POLICY

Electrical stimulation modality treatment is performed on the order of a physician by a clinician who has demonstrated competency in the use of this modality.

PROCEDURES

1. When evaluation results indicate that a patient may benefit from the application of the electrical stimulation modality, the speech-language pathologist will obtain a written physician's order including the patient's name and the reason for use of the treatment modality (dysphagia, facial weakness or both).
2. Treatment will be performed by a clinician who has demonstrated competency in the use of this modality for dysphagia.
3. Appropriate precautions and contraindications will be observed. Patient candidacy guidelines include the following:
 - A. Patients with stroke, TBI or other neurological disorders or disease resulting in oral and/or pharyngeal dysphagia or facial weakness. Other medical treatment approaches should be considered for patients with cricopharyngeal dysfunction.
 - B. The following conditions are contraindications for the use of electrical stimulation:
 1. Presence of a pacemaker
 2. Presence of metal implant in head, neck or upper thoracic cavity.
 3. Presence of neoplasm, thrombophlebitis or infection at site of electrode application.
 4. Electrode application over carotid sinus and eyeballs will be strictly avoided.
4. Patient's status and progress will be recorded according to hospital and departmental documentation standards.