



# Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center PHYSICAL THERAPY DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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## MANAGEMENT OF THERAPY OUTPATIENTS WITH URGENT MEDICAL NEEDS

**Policy No.:** 703  
**Reviewed:** October 2021  
**Supersedes:** October 2018  
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**PURPOSE:** To define procedures for obtaining medical response for therapy outpatients with urgent medical needs and to describe conditions that constitute an urgent medical need.

If the clinical condition of the patient is deteriorating or an urgent medical response is necessary, a **Code Assist Team** may be summoned.

In the event of a cardiac arrest, respiratory arrest, unresponsive patient or other potential life threatening condition, a **Code Blue** should be called.

Note \*For visitors - Refer to Administrative Policy B812 Medical Emergency Response - Code Blue, Rapid Response, Code Assist –ACLS.

### PROCEDURE:

#### I. DEFINITION

##### A. URGENT MEDICAL NEED

1. A patient who exhibits symptoms that suggest a new and potentially harmful change in health status. Examples of this include cardiac chest pain or a sudden change in mental status.
  - a. A patient who has vital signs (heart rate, blood pressure, or telemetry results that exceed the limits deemed safe for continuation of rehabilitation program.
2. Physiologic Monitoring Guidelines for Outpatient Therapies (Attachment A) contains a list of symptoms that constitute an urgent medical need. It defines the parameters for blood pressure and heart rate monitoring, and for single lead telemetry monitoring under which a patient can safely continue therapy and describes the conditions under which therapy should be discontinued and where urgent medical intervention is needed.

##### B. DETERIORATING PATIENT CONDITION

Early warning signs that a patient's condition may be deteriorating include but are not limited to the following examples and a **Code Assist** should be initiated immediately:

- Acute change in vital signs (pulse, blood pressure, respiratory rate, pain)
- Acute drop in blood oxygen level ( O2 saturation)
- Acute change in mental function (level of consciousness)
- Any staff member's significant concern about a patients clinical status

C. Cardiac Arrest, Respiratory Arrest or other potential life threatening condition requires a **Code Blue** to be initiated immediately.

If an individual is unresponsive, becomes unresponsive or appears to be in critical need of care, a **Code Blue** should be initiated immediately.

## II. ACCESSING THE OUTPATIENT ON-CALL PHYSICIAN, RAPID RESPONSE TEAM OR CODE BLUE RESPONSE

### A. URGENT NEED:

1. If the patient is in urgent need of care and a physician is in the immediate area, notify the physician that there is an individual who may require urgent assistance. It is then the responsibility of the physician(s) to assess the person and provide appropriate triage. This may include referral to the outpatient medical Clinic.

2. If there is not a physician in the immediate area, call the designated Outpatient Medical Clinic managing urgent triage patients and inform them of the situation. If appropriate and safe, or if directed to do so by the Medical staff in the medical clinic, arrange for transport of the individual to the specified medical Clinic. If transport of patient is not appropriate then call for a **Code Assist**.

3. A medical staff member/physician assigned to the Medical Clinic will provide a medical screening examination, arrange for any stabilizing treatment, and provide recommendations and referral for additional care as needed.

Refer to Administration Policy and Procedure A123 and B812 for criteria and procedure for obtaining emergency medical care.

### B. EMERGENT CARE NEED:

Call the Rancho Operator by dialing "0" and inform the operator of the following:

- a) The specific need (ie. Code Assist, Code Blue),
- b) The specific location including building and room numbers,
- c) If the patient is an adult or child
- d) Your name/extension.

Refer to Administration Policy and Procedure B812 for criteria and procedure for initiating a Code Blue.

- C. Complete Event Notification Report. Refer to Administration Policy and Procedure B705.
- D. The physical therapy documentation should reflect that the consultation with the physician occurred and the proposed plan for continuation of therapy.

Reference:

- Administration Policy and Procedure A123, Emergency Medical Care
- Administration Policy and Procedure B704, Event Notification Report
- Administration Policy and Procedure B812, Cardio/Pulmonary Resuscitation Code Blue, Rapid Response, Code Assist

  
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REVISED October 2021