



Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center

DEPARTMENT OF DENTISTRY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: Emergency Dental Care: Inpatients

Policy No.: 3.4
Supersedes:
Revision Date: 11/24/09
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POLICY:

The Department of Dentistry shall be responsible for emergent and emergency dental care for hospital inpatients including providing emergent treatment and prostheses that are medically necessary for the patient to benefit from his/her rehabilitation or medical treatment program.

PROCEDURE:

1. *During regular clinic hours*, the hospital consultation request procedure is used to obtain emergent consultations from the Department of Dentistry, with a physician phone call for situations that require immediate attention.
 - a. Emergent inpatient consultations must be completed **THE SAME DAY AS RECEIVED** in clinic or on the unit.
 - b. Patients who cannot come to the Dental Clinic must be evaluated on the inpatient unit. If a consultation request is received for a patient who cannot come to the dental clinic, the receptionist will notify the resident on call. If the assigned resident is not available, the receptionist will notify the attending dentist who will assign the consult to another resident.
 - c. The resident will evaluate the patient in the clinic or on the unit and determine the best treatment plan to address the patient's chief complaint. If the patient is a post-fracture patient requiring OMFS evaluation, order appropriate x-rays (mandible series, CT scan of the head, etc.) and schedule the patient during the next oral surgery clinic or call the OMFS residents on call, if more urgent. If the patient is in need of routine or non-emergency treatment, the resident may request the "next available" dental clinic appointment or defer treatment until after discharge.
 - d. The resident will provide a brief summary of findings, diagnosis and plan on the consultation form. Using the CC (long) format for dental emergencies, the resident will complete the dental progress note form. Place the original of each form in the patient's medical record. Place the other paperwork in the patient's dental folder for processing. Write any orders necessary for antibiotics, pain medication, or special oral hygiene techniques.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 08/2002

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES • DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

APPROVED BY: Terrie DeBord, DDS

2. *After regular clinic hours*, the patient's attending physician shall contact the resident on call by way of the Hospital Charge Nurse, who will use the following procedure:
- a. Call the dental resident on call.
 - b. Notify Dr. DeBord or designated attending by pager after contacting the dental resident on call.
 - c. Leave a message on the Department Voicemail stating the patient's name, Rancho number, nature of problem and disposition of the patient.
 - d. The Hospital Charge Nurse and operator shall have a list of current phone numbers for all practitioners in the Department of Dentistry.

The Dental Resident on call shall:

- a. The dental resident on call shall evaluate the patient's urgent problem by phone discussion with the patient's attending physician according to "Patient Treatment Guidelines, 3.2"
- b. If the patient requires immediate treatment for a serious dental emergency that is out of the scope of a general practice resident or general dentist, the physician can transfer the patient to directly to LAC+USC Medical Center per County emergency transfer procedures. He/she should contact the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery resident on call at LAC+USC. Coverage is 24-hours per day.
- c. If medication is required, the physician will order the medications for the patient. The resident on call may place a telephone order for medications with the patient's nurse. If a telephone order is placed the resident or dental attending must sign and date the telephone order on the patient's chart within 48 hours.
- d. Schedule the patient to come into the dental clinic on the next business day.
- e. If it necessary to come to Rancho to evaluate and treat the patient, the resident on call shall contact a second resident to come also. The residents shall see the patient on the unit, taking instruments and supplies necessary from the dental clinic.