



County of Bucks

EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES



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Larry Loose
Quality Assurance Coordinator

Date: February 19, 2019

To: Emergency Department Directors, Emergency Department Nurse Managers, Hospital CEO's

From: Larry Loose, QA Coordinator, Bucks County Emergency Health Services

RE: Updated Hospital Status Changes for EMS ("Diversion")

Enclosed you will find the updated "Hospital Diversion" procedure for Bucks County. There has been some confusion with regards to hospital diversion and what it means to all stakeholders. We plan to implement the enclosed procedure March 1, 2019.

Our goal is to provide an easy and consistent process for a receiving hospital to notify the communications center of their operational status. We would also like to provide some reasonable expectations for all stakeholders involved.

It must be understood hospital diversion is a courtesy and should not be confused with "closed". When a receiving hospital reports a "divert" status to the Bucks County Communication Center it is notifying the EMS system the facility is experiencing higher than normal volumes. If the patient is stable the EMS practitioner will advise the patient of possible extended wait times. The patient must agree to be transported to an alternate hospital. EMS must also understand there may be extended off load times when transporting to a hospital reporting "Divert"

There are reasons why a patient may not agree to go to an alternate hospital regardless of the wait time. Some of the reasons include, but are not limited to the following: preexisting relationship with a physician, a receiving facility, a medical service (e.g. a dialysis service), or a health insurance plan.

All critical patients should be transported to the closest appropriate facility regardless of status. Divert will not be honored during mass casualty incidents or during inclement weather.