



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Karen E. Timberlake, Secretary

DATE: May 6, 2009

TO: 9-1-1 and Private Dispatch Centers

FROM: Brian Litza, EMS Chief
Emergency Medical Services Section
Wisconsin Division of Public Health

RE: **Guidelines for 9-1-1 Call Centers / PSAP's**

The State of Wisconsin recognizes that EMS resources are not unlimited. It is very important that dispatch centers recognize trends in the increase of calls for respiratory complaints, general illness, and flu-like symptoms. As these calls increase it is important to begin to think about the resources to meet the perceived demands.

The State of Wisconsin Division of Public Health, Emergency Medical Services Section therefore recommends the following to 91-1 Call Centers / PSAP's:

1. Implement severe respiratory infection (SRI) screening for all callers requesting an ambulance.
2. Interrogate the caller to obtain the following information:
 - (a) Has the patient recently been in Mexico, Texas, California, and/or New York (or other outbreak location) or exposed to anyone who has been to those locations?
 - (b) Does the patient have a fever and, if so, is it higher than 100 F (37.7 C)?
 - (c) Does the patient have a cough, congestion, runny nose, sore throat, body aches, or other flu-like symptoms?
 - Relay responses to these questions to EMS units **BEFORE** they arrive on scene.
3. Communicate with the local EMS agencies in order to maintain adequate resources, and to assure coverage of other 9-1-1 related emergencies.
 - Consider dedicating a predetermined number of ambulances to only respond to these types of complaints.
4. As calls increase and resources decrease; provide the following information to the caller;
 - Advise the caller that this is not an immediate life threat and that resources are limited.
 - Advise the caller that an emergent response is not guaranteed, and an ambulance will get to them as soon as possible.
 - Advise that the caller may have to wait up to several hours before a unit can get to them for evaluation and transport.
 - Advise the caller to contact their physician or call 2-1-1.

5. If the ambulance responds, the EMTs will evaluate the patient and make a determination (in conjunction with the hospital) if the patient will need transport to the hospital.
6. The determination will be made jointly by the EMTs / Paramedics and their on-line Medical Control, and the decision will be final. In a public health emergency EMS has the right to refuse transport of a patient, if the situation falls within the guidelines set forth by the department.

Please Monitor:

<http://www.pandemic.wisconsin.gov>

http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidance_ems.htm

Related Resource: [Read full coverage of swine flu pandemic concerns](http://www.ems1.com/special-reports/484330-Swine-flu-outbreak-raises-public-health-concern-for-world-officials/)
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