



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Office of Emergency Medical Services
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ADVISORY 23-01-01

TO: MA Licensed Ambulance Services
FROM: Susan Lewis, NRP, Deputy Director, Office of Emergency Medical Services
DATE: January 6, 2023
RE: Ambulance Transport to Community Behavioral Health Centers

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has promulgated revisions to 105 CMR 170.000, *Emergency Medical Services System*, effective today. As part of the revisions, DPH amended the definition of “appropriate health care facility” to allow ambulance transports of certain behavioral emergency patients to community behavioral health centers (CBHCs), but only as set out in a DPH-approved point-of-entry plan and only for those patients who fit triage criteria set out in that point-of-entry plan.

In accordance with program specifications for CBHCs issued by the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership (MBHP) on behalf of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS), CBHCs will not have the capabilities to handle emergency patients brought by ambulance until at least late 2023. As a result, DPH has not issued an approved point-of-entry plan for CBHCs. Therefore, ambulance services cannot transport a patient to a CBHC at this time.

Once CBHCs are equipped to accept emergency patients, DPH will follow standard practice for development of point-of-entry plans, including engagement with appropriate stakeholders and review by the EMCAB’s Medical Services Committee. DPH will provide notice to ambulance services when an approved point-of-entry plan is released, as well as additional information on the CBHC locations.