



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Office of Emergency Medical Services
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MEMORANDUM

TO: All MA Ambulance Services
FROM: W. Scott Cluett III, NRP, Director
DATE: November 29, 2021
RE: Ensuring Defibrillator Pad Compatibility to Provide Effective Therapy

The Massachusetts Department of Public, Office of Emergency Medical Services (Department), has identified several concerning issues in the field regarding defibrillator pad incompatibility, with pads not being used in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations. This results in the inability to deliver therapy across all age and weight ranges.

In recent inspections, the Department has identified that some services and/or their EMS personnel are placing Zoll Pedi-padz in the Zoll AED Plus units. These defibrillator pads, although manufactured by Zoll, are not compatible with the Zoll AED Plus units and will not plug into the unit. The pediatric pads required for the Zoll AED Plus units are the Pedi-padz II. This may be happening on occasion due to monitor stock for ALS and BLS defibrillators being placed in the same area, with EMS personnel just seeing the word "Pedi" and grabbing the wrong pads.

The Department has also found some services with LP-15 non-manufacturer recommended pads for LP-15 units, with the intent of using them for pediatric patients. These pads have therapy limitations for both age and weight ranges for infants and children in both the manual and AED mode on the LP-15. Some hospitals stock this type of pediatric pads and crews may be replacing from the hospital emergency department as a one-for-one replacement. The pads' packaging states that in manual defibrillator mode, these pads cannot be used for patients weighing under 22 pounds, and in AED mode, are not to be used for patients under age 8.

As a reminder, a BLS-licensed service or EMT-Basics working for an ALS-licensed service, cannot use an LP15 in the AED mode for pediatrics, regardless of pad type. The LP15 operator's manual, in section 5 under "AED intended use" states: "In AED mode, this defibrillator is not designed or tested to interpret pediatric rhythms or administer energy at pediatric joule settings under 8 years old."

The Department also identified one AED that was accompanied by pediatric pads with packaging that had on it red writing and a circle with a line through it around an AED symbol, stating "not for AED use."

Therefore, the Department is reminding all ambulance and EFR services, as well as first responder agencies, to double check all monitors and AED units to ensure they have the correct manufacturer recommended pads stocked in all units. If you have any questions, please contact Deputy Director Susan Lewis, NRP, I/C at Susan.K.Lewis@mass.gov.