

	Z21 Operations	<i>EMS Branch / Office of the Medical Director</i>
	2015-06-03	<b>Physician on Interfacility Patient Transfer</b>
	All ages	

Physicians are ultimately responsible to ensure that patients are as stable as possible and remain so during interfacility transfer (IFT). If there is any concern about a patient deteriorating en route and the management of that patient may require medical level intervention, the physician must accompany the patient or ensure that reasonable mechanisms are in place to support that patient.

In many circumstances however patients can be safely transported and managed by non-physician health care providers. Physicians do not routinely have to accompany patients on IFT carried by EMS providers if both of the following conditions are met:

1. **The care required or potentially required by the patient while en route is within the accepted scope of practice of the EMS personnel.**
  - a. “Accepted scope of practice” means in accordance with the procedures and functions as approved by the Minister and as set out in the Manitoba Emergency Treatment Guidelines (Z05.1 and Z05.2).
    - i. The scope of practice for EMS personnel licensed as “Technician”, “Technician-Paramedic”, or “Technician-Advanced Paramedic” is established by MHHLS EMS Branch directive.
    - ii. The scope of practice for aeromedical attendants licensed as “Technician-Advanced Paramedic” is established by MHHLS EMS Branch directive.
    - iii. The scope of practice for aeromedical attendants licensed as “Registered Nurse” is established by the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba (CRNM).
  
2. **The patient’s condition is stable at the time of dispatch or the condition is time sensitive.**
  - a. “Stable” means an absence of any and all critical conditions or issue(s).
    - i. “Critical conditions or an issue” means actual or potential conditions involving, but not limited to, the airway, ventilatory system and/or circulatory system affecting safe patient transport.
      1. “Actual” means as currently known or suspected.
      2. “Potential” means reasonably foreseeable.
  - b. In some exceptional circumstances a condition may be time sensitive. If in the opinion of the referring, receiving or most responsible physician the time to definitive specialty care is judged to be clinically more important than physician accompaniment and there would be no additional benefit to physician presence, the condition of patient stability need not be met.

In all circumstances where the physician does not accompany the transporting EMS staff, the management of any critical condition(s) or issue(s) should be accomplished in the safest manner possible, within the accepted scope of practice of the EMS staff. The referring, receiving or most responsible physician must remain readily available to provide direct on-line control to the EMS crew and/or clinical support to local health care provider(s).

The OMD supports the right of EMS providers to restrict patient care to their accepted scope of practice. EMS personnel can contact on-line medical support or the EMS supervisor on duty for assistance if required.