

To: All AHN Command EMS service directors
From: Chadd E. Nesbit, MD, PhD, FACEP
Interim System EMS Medical Director, AHN
Date: 3/30/2020
Subject: Aerosol-generating procedures

Please educate your crews that patients should not be brought into any receiving facility with a nebulizer treatment in process. These are high aerosol-generating procedures and bringing a patient into a facility while performing a treatment places a large number of personnel at risk due to droplets generated by the procedure. It is unlikely that discontinuing this treatment before bringing the patient into the facility will lead to any significant deterioration of the patient's condition.

Please consider if a patient needs this type of treatment. Unless the provider believes that this is a life-saving treatment for a patient *in extremis* please consider not giving nebulized treatments. If the patient is in respiratory distress consider IM epinephrine or IV magnesium as alternatives. Consider having the patient use their own MDI if they have one. Five puffs of albuterol is equivalent to a nebulizer treatment. Additionally, please have the patient bring their MDI to the hospital as well as this may potentially help extend the hospital supply of these devices.

If giving nebulizer treatments is unavoidable, please use a face mask to deliver the treatment and place a surgical mask over the facemask while the treatment is in process. You may wish to consider doing this in the patient's home before transport.

If you cannot avoid giving the patient a nebulized treatment, **you must wear the highest level of PPE that you have available.** Limit personnel in the patient compartment. Use the exhaust system of the ambulance to vent the patient compartment to the outside. If possible, the driver's compartment should already be isolated from the patient compartment using plastic sheeting.

CPAP and CPR also generate high levels of aerosols. If you have a patient who must be brought into the receiving facility with a CPAP in place or CPR in progress, please make sure that the facility is given as much advance notification as is possible. Again, providers must be in the highest level of PPE that you have available if these procedures are in process. Use of an appropriate outlet filter on the CPAP is highly recommended.

After any transport where aerosol generating procedures have been performed, decontaminate the ambulance and all equipment per your service policy using an OSHA-approved disinfectant.

Please adhere to the guidelines set forth above. These are designed to protect your crews and the staff at the facilities where you are taking patients.

As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns.