



**EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES AGENCY**
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

**Los Angeles County
Board of Supervisors**

Hilda L. Solis
First District

Mark Ridley-Thomas
Second District

Sheila Kuehl
Third District

Janice Hahn
Fourth District

Kathryn Barger
Fifth District

Cathy Chidester
Director

Marianne Gausche-Hill, MD
Medical Director

10100 Pioneer Boulevard, Suite 200
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

Tel: (562) 378-1500
Fax: (562) 941-5835

*"To advance the health of our
communities by ensuring
quality emergency and
disaster medical services."*



Health Services
<http://ems.dhs.lacounty.gov>

March 31, 2020

TO: Hospital CEO
FROM: Cathy Chidester *cc*
SUBJECT: USNS MERCY PATIENT TRANSFER PROCESS

For patient transfers to the USNS Mercy, please refer to the updated documents attached including an updated USNS Mercy Patient Screening tool (Attachment 2), COVID-19 Testing strategies (Attachment 3), and hospital ship capability information.

In addition, the EMS Agency will be hosting a webinar via Zoom on Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 2:00 pm to discuss COVID-19 EMS Considerations for Hospitals, including a discussion on procedures to transfer patients to the USNS Mercy.

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/627765013>

As a reminder, procedures to transfer a patient to the USNS Mercy are as follows:

The USNS MERCY is unable to accommodate patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 infection or who have signs and symptoms suspicious for COVID-19 infection. Transferred patients must meet COVID-19 Testing Criteria.

COVID-19 Testing Criteria: Must be performed < 72 hours prior to arrival at the pier. Results must be finalized prior to arrival at pier. Patients will not be eligible if they have a fever (>100.4F), cough, or dyspnea without alternative explanation.

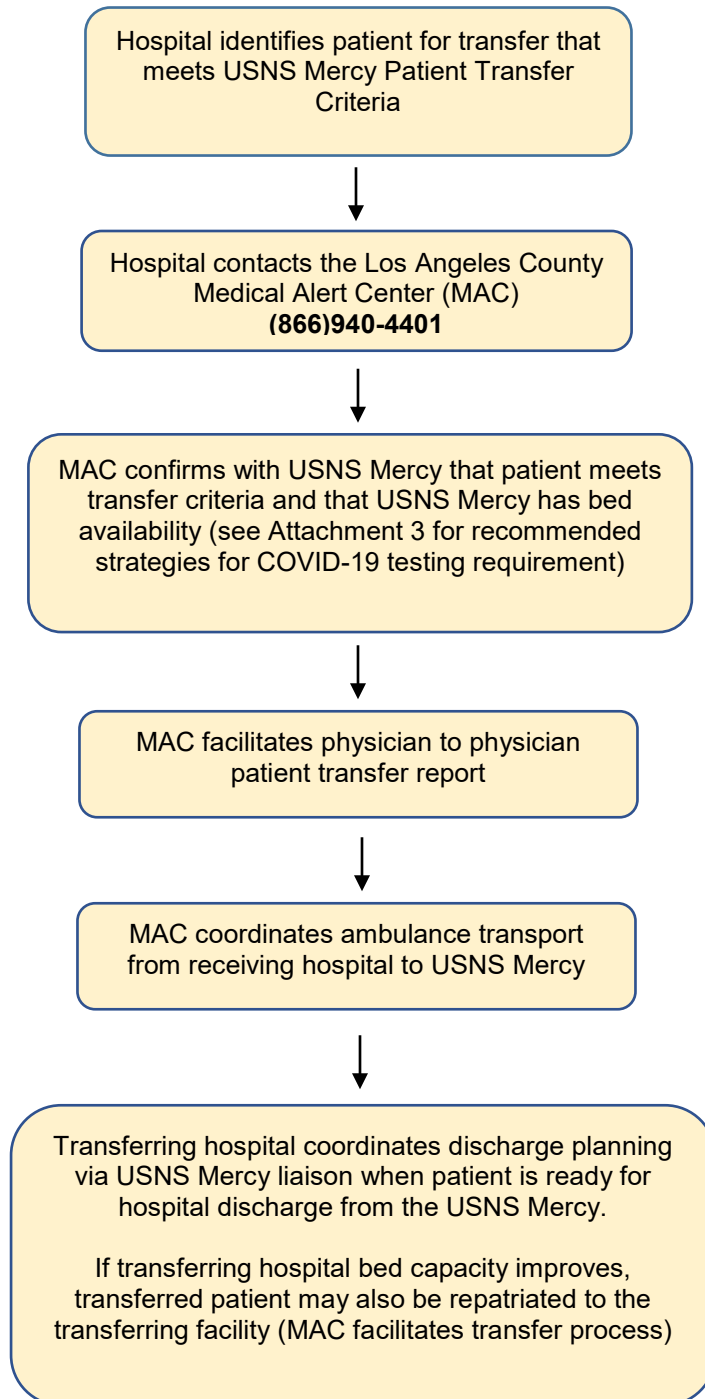
Hospitals located in Los Angeles County that are transferring patients to the USNS Mercy must abide by the following guidelines:

1. Provide discharge planning coordination for those patients, including a discharge plan and any durable medical equipment required when the transferred patient is ready for hospital discharge from the USNS Mercy.
2. As capacity allows, repatriate patients that have been transferred to the USNS Mercy including those that later test positive for COVID-19.

All transfers to and from the USNS will be coordinated by the MAC.

- c: Director Department of Health Services
Chief Medical Officer, each hospital
Emergency Department Medical Director
Emergency Department Director

USNS Mercy Patient Transfer Algorithm





**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

**COVID-19 EMS CONSIDERATIONS FOR
HOSPITALS**

WEBINAR



DATE: Thursday, April 2, 2020

TIME: 2:00pm – 3:30pm

ACCESS: Join Zoom Meeting:
<https://zoom.us/j/627765013>

SCHEDULE

2:00 – 2:10 **Welcome** Dr. Marianne Gausche-Hill
Medical Director
Los Angeles County EMS Agency

2:10 – 2:25 **USNS Mercy Hospital Transfer Process** Dr. Denise Whitfield
USNS Mercy Liaison
Los Angeles County EMS Agency

Dr. Whitfield will provide an overview of the transfer process to the USNS Mercy

2:25 – 3:15 **USNS Mercy Capabilities, Patient Care
and Interface with Local Hospitals** Dr. Michel Kearns
Commander, Director of Medical Operations
USNS Mercy (T-AH-19)

Dr. Kearns will discuss patient criteria for transfer to the USNS Mercy, medical capabilities of the ship hospital, communication processes with sending hospitals, and sending hospital requirements for patient disposition planning

3:15 – 3:30 **COVID-19 EMS/Hospital Interactions** Dr. Nichole Bosson
Assistant Medical Director
Los Angeles County EMS Agency

Dr. Gausche-Hill will discuss recommended best practices for EMS handoffs to hospitals

USNS MERCY Patient Screening Tool for Shipboard Admission

Referring Physician Instructions:

Prior to referral of a patient for admission to the USNS MERCY, please note the limitations in capability and the screening criteria listed below. The USNS MERCY is unable to accommodate patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 infection or who have signs and symptoms suspicious for COVID-19 infection.

If the patient is suitable for admission, the transfer process will be initiated and a doctor-to-doctor telephone handoff with the accepting physician on the USNS MERCY will be arranged.

Please call the Medical Alert Center to discuss ICU level patients, patients on dialysis, or patients with active infection.

Limitations in capabilities and services unavailable:

- Pediatrics (< 18 years-old)
- Behavioral health
- Oncology
- Acute stroke and acute cardiac care
- Acute trauma
- Cardiac and Thoracic surgery
- Pediatric surgery
- OB/Gyn
- Nuclear Medicine
- MRI
- Interventional radiology
- Mammography
- Electrophysiology
- Cardiac catheterization
- Negative-pressure isolation
- No ability to implement disease transmission precautions (e.g. contact, droplet)
- Speech therapy/Occupational therapy
- Ability to accommodate morbidly obese patients (>BMI 35 discussed on case-by-case)
- Thrombocytopenic patients

ATTACHMENT 2

Please complete the following screening questions:

Answers with an asterisk () are a potential contraindication for admission.*

Is the patient pregnant or in need of OB services? Yes* No

Has the patient been tested for COVID-19? Yes No*

If yes, date/time and result of test: _____

COVID-19 Testing Criteria: Must be performed < 72 hours prior to arrival at the pier. Results must be finalized prior to arrival at pier. Patients will not be eligible if they have a fever (>100.4F), cough, or dyspnea without alternative explanation.

Has the patient tested positive for COVID-19 at any time? Yes* No

If yes, has the patient had two negative tests

24 hours apart? Yes No*

Can the patient ambulate with minimal assistance? Yes No*

Is patient experiencing any psychotic symptoms? Yes* No

Was patient admitted with any thoughts of suicide/self-harm? Yes* No

Upon discharge, does patient have stable housing? Yes No*

Does patient have a compromised immune system? Yes No

If yes, please explain in comments.

ATTACHMENT 2

If patient meets criteria, please fill in the information below:

Name: _____ DOB: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Gender: _____ Emergency POC (Name, Relationship): _____

Emergency POC Phone #: _____

Insurance Provider (if applicable): _____

Current Treatment Provider: (Name) _____ (Phone) _____

Allergies: _____

Admitting Diagnosis: _____

Primary Language: _____
No

Translation service needed? Yes

Height (inches): _____

Weight: _____

Special Dietary Needs (if any): _____

Other Diagnoses/Past Medical History:

Current Medications:

Supports/Services Needed:

- Assistance with ADL's
- IV Medications
- Ventilator
- Imaging Needed
- Surgical Needs
- Dental Emergency
- PT / OT / ST
- _____
- _____

Comments: _____

DISCHARGE NOTICE TO REFERRING FACILITY:

If Patient is admitted to the USNS MERCY and their status changes requiring a higher or different level of care, the referring hospital agrees to coordinate care.

Social Worker/Case Manager Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

After Hours POC/Phone #: _____

ATTACHMENT 2

Patient Name: _____

DOB: _____

USNS Mercy Administrative Use Only

Is patient eligible for referral? Yes No Screener Initial/Date: _____

Date/Time Initial contact was made with Bed Manager: _____

Will patient be admitted? Yes No

If Yes:

Name of Admitting Provider: _____ Ward: _____

Name of Bed Manager: _____ Date/Time: _____

ATTACHMENT 3

3-31-2020

COVID-19 Testing Requirements for Patient Transfer to USNS Mercy

The USNS Mercy is available as a transfer resource to decompress regional hospital beds during the COVID-19 pandemic. To be eligible for transfer, patients must meet COVID-19 testing criteria.

COVID-19 Testing Criteria: Must be performed < 72 hours prior to arrival at the pier. Results must be finalized prior to arrival at pier. Patients will not be eligible if they have a fever (>100.4F), cough, or dyspnea without alternative explanation.

To meet these criteria, the following strategies are recommended:

- Identify patients that have already tested COVID-19 negative (<72 hours prior to anticipated transfer arrival time) and determine if they meet the remaining USNS transfer criteria. Contact the Los Angeles County Medical Alert Center (MAC) at (866)940-4401 to initiate the transfer process
- For hospitals with in-house testing capabilities, utilize in-house resources to obtain COVID-19 testing for patients that meet USNS Mercy screening criteria and are being considered for USNS Mercy transfer
- For hospitals that DO NOT have in-house testing capability and are currently Quest clients with active Quest interfaces follow these steps:
 1. Identify patients that are transfer candidates (based on USNS Mercy screening criteria) exclusive of COVID-19 testing results
 2. Contact the MAC to discuss the cases as a group with USNS Mercy liaison physician to confirm the ship can accept identified potential patients
 3. Upon confirmation that the USNS Mercy can accept the patient(s) (contingent upon a negative COVID-19 test)
 - a. Order COVID-19 testing for Quest via standard Electronic Health Record (EHR) ordering
 - b. Instruct Lab Manager to place USNS Mercy patient test sample in bag with **Orange Priority Sheet**; lab sample should be placed on ice
 - c. Quest will pick up lab at standard scheduled afternoon pick up time for your hospital
 - d. Anticipate lab resulting the following morning
 - e. Once the patient is confirmed COVID-19 negative, contact the MAC at (866)940-4401 to complete patient transfer process
- For hospitals that have neither in-house testing capabilities nor a current client relationship with Quest, if a patient meets all other criteria for transfer to the USNS Mercy, call the MAC to discuss the case with the USNS Mercy liaison physician. If the patient meets all other transfer criteria, COVID-19 testing solutions will be determined on a case-by-case basis, as local available resources allow.

For informational purposes only. Consent will be obtained by USNS MERCY staff.

Patient Name: _____ DOB: _____

Last 4 of SSN: _____

**GENERAL CONSENT TO MEDICAL TREATMENT
DURING SHIPBOARD ADMISSION**

1. I consent to undergo all necessary routine tests, medication, treatment and other procedures required in course of the study, diagnosis and treatment of my illness by the staff and other agents and/or employees of the Medical Treatment Facility (MTF), USNS MERCY (T-AH 19). I understand that this is a US Navy Hospital Ship operating in response to COVID 19.

2. I am aware that the practice of medicine and surgery is not an exact science and I acknowledge that no guarantees have been made to meet as a result of my treatment or examination in the MTF USNS MERCY (T-AH 19).

3. I consent to the release of medical information to the other institutions or agencies accepting me as a patient for medical treatment.

4. I hereby authorize the release of my Social Security Number to a manufacturer of medical equipment in the event I receive a medical device in accordance with federal law and regulations. I further understand that if there is a need to contact me with regard to this device my Social Security Number may be used by the manufacturer to help locate me.

5. I understand that access to medical records for bona fide research and quality assurance is permitted to members of the medical and ship medical staff. I authorize my medical records and results to be used for research. I realize that my records will not be identified as pertaining to me specifically without my expressed permission.

6. I further understand that:

a. Due to the infectious nature of COVID 19, visitation will not be allowed during hospitalization aboard USNS MERCY (T-AH 19).

b. No patient will be involved in any research or experimental procedure without his or her full knowledge and consent.

c. Each patient has the right to consent or to refuse consent to any proposed procedure or therapeutic course.

d. The possibility exists that during my hospitalization, healthcare workers may be directly exposed to my blood or body fluids. In the event of such a direct exposure in a manner which may, according to the Centers of Disease Control guidelines, transmit AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), and the other blood borne diseases, a sample of my blood will be tested for the presence of infectious disease such as hepatitis, syphilis, and AIDS. I further

For informational purposes only. Consent will be obtained by USNS MERCY staff.

understand that the results of my tests will be released to me and to any healthcare worker who suffered an exposure.

7. I agree to abide by the rules of the MTF USNS MERCY (T-AH 19), including to the extent I am able, cooperation with the physician in my care and treatment, and observance of the rights of the other patients.

8. Due to the humanitarian nature of this mission, there will be no fees assessed for care received onboard MTF USNS MERCY (T-AH 19). However, any care received external to this treatment platform is subject to the fee schedule of that organization and not any affiliated with the MTF USNS MERCY (T-AH 19), or the United States Navy.

9. I understand that the USNS MERCY will provide me storage via a small personal locker for my personal effects and valuables, but that this space is limited due to the layout of the ship. I have been advised to bring minimal personal effects and/or valuables.

10. I am aware that there are limitations in the capabilities and services that are available aboard the USNS MERCY (T-AH 19). The following services are not available on the USNS MERCY (T-AH 19):

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| - Emergency Medicine | - Interventional Radiology |
| - Pediatrics | - Mammography |
| - Behavioral Health | - Electrophysiology |
| - Obstetrics | - Cardiopulmonary Bypass |
| - Oncology | - Acute Trauma |
| - Acute Stroke & Coronary Syndromes | - Cardiac Surgery |
| - Geriatrics | - Pediatric Surgery |
| - Speech & Occupational therapy) | - Obstetrics |
| - Nuclear Medicine | - Ability to accommodate morbidly obese patients |
| - MRI | |

This form has been fully explained to me, and I have been provided the opportunity to ask questions regarding its content. I am satisfied that I understand its contents and significance.

X

Patient or Legal Guardian Signature

X

USNS MERCY Representative Signature/Date

USNS MERCY (T-AH 19)
Representative Title/Department/Rank

USNS MERCY (T-AH 19)

INPATIENT CARE CAPABILITIES

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) RELIEF

HOW TO TRANSFER A PATIENT

The transferring provider will contact the Mercy accepting provider at (866)-940-4401 for hand-off and approval for transfer.

CAPABILITIES

SUPPORT

RADIOLOGY

CT Scan: Contrast, Non-Contrast
Angiography Suite
Diagnostic US
Echocardiography

PHARMACY

TPN (Premix)
IV Admixture

INPATIENT DIETICIAN

HIGH COMPLEXITY LAB

Armed Services Blood Bank

PRBC's, FFP, & CRYO

Whole blood collected by special request.

Chemistries, Immunochemistry,
Urinalysis, Hematology, Histology,
Coagulation, Microbiology

MEDICAL

Infectious Disease	Cardiology
Internal Medicine	Respiratory Therapy
Neurology	Pulmonology
Nephrology	Physical Therapy
Critical Care	

BUNK BEDS



Upper Bunk:

Low acuity patients able to scale ladders to upper bunk and require minimal nursing care.

Lower Bunk:

Moderate acuity patients also able to perform some activities of daily living and require occasional nursing care.

TRANSPORT GURNEYS



Patients requiring **short-term, acute monitoring** until stable enough to transfer to ICU Long Term High Acuity Care or Medical/ Surgical Wards.

Orthopedic / Hand
Vascular
Neurosurgery
General

SURGICAL

Urology
ENT/OMFS
GYN
Plastics
Ophthalmology

SERVICES UNAVAILABLE

- | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| - Emergency Medicine | - Coronary Syndromes | - MRI | - Acute Trauma |
| - Pediatrics | - Geriatrics | - Interventional Radiology | - Cardiac Surgery |
| - Behavioral Health | - Speech/Occupational Therapy | - Mammography | - Pediatric Medical |
| - Oncology | - Nuclear Medicine | - Electrophysiology | - Surgical Obstetrics |
| - Acute Stroke | | - Cardiopulmonary Bypass | |

CAPABILITIES

TRANSPORT GURNEYS

Patients requiring **short-term, acute monitoring** until stable enough to transfer to ICU Long Term High Acuity Care or Medical/ Surgical Wards.



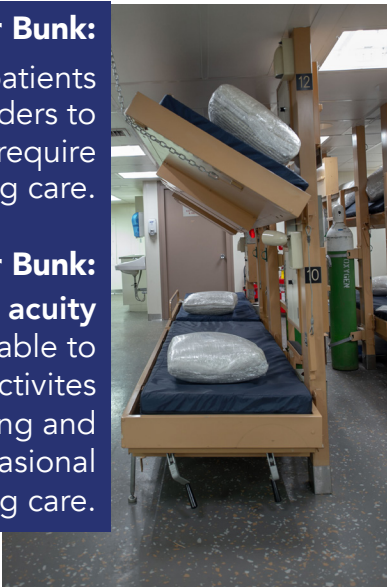
BUNK BEDS

Upper Bunk:

Low acuity patients able to scale ladders to upper bunk and require minimal nursing care.

Lower Bunk:

Moderate acuity patients also able to perform some activities of daily living and require occasional nursing care.



SUPPORT

RADIOLOGY

CT Scan: Contrast, Non-Contrast
Angiography Suite
Diagnostic US
Echocardiography

PHARMACY

TPN (Premix)
IV Admixture

INPATIENT DIETICIAN

HIGH COMPLEXITY LAB

Armed Services Blood Bank
PRBC's, FFP, & CRYO
Whole blood collected by special request.
Chemistries, Immunochemistry, Urinalysis,
Hematology, Histology, Coagulation,
Microbiology

SERVICES UNAVAILABLE

- Emergency Medicine
- Pediatrics
- Behavioral Health
- Oncology
- Acute Stroke
- Coronary Syndromes
- Geriatrics
- Speech/Occupational Therapy
- Nuclear Medicine
- MRI
- Interventional Radiology
- Mammography
- Electrophysiology
- Cardiopulmonary Bypass
- Acute Trauma
- Cardiac Surgery
- Pediatric Medical
- Surgical Obstetrics

MEDICAL

Infectious Disease
Internal Medicine
Nephrology
Neurology
Critical Care
Cardiology
Respiratory Therapy
Pulmonology
Physical Therapy

SURGICAL

Orthopedic / Hand
Vascular
Neurosurgery
General
Urology
ENT/OMFS
GYN
Plastics
Ophthalmology

HOW TO TRANSFER A PATIENT

The transferring provider will contact the Mercy accepting provider at (866)-940-4401 for hand-off and approval for transfer.

STAFFING

Intensive Care Unit Nurses
Medical-Surgical Nurses
Emergency Department Nurses
Hospital Corpsmen



WHO WE ARE

USNS Mercy, a former San Clemente-class super oil tanker, was converted to a hospital ship and delivered to the U.S. Navy in 1986. The ship is designed and equipped to care for casualties of major contingency operations, 60% of which require surgery. It is assumed that casualties are young, previously healthy, and will be transported 4-6 days after admission to a comprehensive, land-based hospital in the continental United States.

Mercy has a full spectrum of medical and surgical services to support convalescent medical and surgical patients.

"STEAMING TO ASSIST"

USNS MERCY (T-AH 19)

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) RELIEF



INPATIENT CARE
CAPABILITIES