



VERONICA KELLEY, DSW, LCSW
AGENCY DIRECTOR

MINDY WINTERSWYK, PT, DPT, PCS
ASSISTANT AGENCY DIRECTOR

TAMMI McCONNELL, MSN, RN, MICN, PHN
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
DIRECTOR

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

405 W. 5th STREET, SUITE 301-A
SANTA ANA, CA 92701
PHONE: 714-834-2791
FAX: 714-834-3125
Email: TMcConnell@ochca.com

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TO: Systemwide Distribution

SUBJECT: **CLARIFICATION OF STROKE NEUROLOGY RECEIVING CENTER CRITERIA
POLICY #650.00 REGARDING IN-PATIENT STROKE NEUROLOGY CARE:
EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**

The Orange County EMS (OCEMS) policy that describes the criteria for becoming a Stroke Neurology Receiving Center is #650.00. On page 3, Section IV.C.2.a. of this policy, the expectation for stroke neurology physician care is identified. OCEMS intended this language to apply to in-person care by the neurologist. While it is not specifically stated, it was not intended to imply that such care could be performed by a tele-neurologist working in coordination with a non-physician after the patient was admitted to the hospital. Using a tele-neurologist in the emergency department to make a binary decision as to whether a stroke patient should receive TPA/thrombectomy or other care is currently permitted.

Apparently, there is some confusion regarding this policy. Therefore, this memo is being released to temporarily clarify this issue. A board certified neurologist specializing in strokes must provide in-person care to all patients admitted for strokes. A subsequent change to Policy #650.00 is currently underway that will incorporate specific language prohibiting the use of tele-neurology as the primary medical entity providing stroke care to a stroke patient. As issuing the update will take time, given all policies in the 600 group must undergo a 50 day public comment period, this memo is being released now to protect the public health and safety.

Once the update for policy #650.00 is ready, a notice will be sent to the system informing them of where the updated policy can be found and how they can make comments.

Carl H. Schultz, MD
EMS Medical Director
Orange County Health Care Agency

CS:em#4988