

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PREHOSPITAL PATIENT CARE PROVIDERS AND THE COORDINATION OF EMS RESOURCES AT A SCENE

The provision of patient care is a responsibility given to certified and/or licensed individuals who have completed a medical training and evaluation program specified by the State of Georgia Department of Health and Human Resources. Pre-hospital providers are required to practice to the standards of the certifying agency (DHR) and the protocols set forth and agreed to by the Lowndes County Medical Director within this manual.

Patient care takes place in many settings, some of which are hazardous or dangerous. The equipment and techniques used in these situations are the responsibility of locally designated, specially trained and qualified personnel. Emergency incident scenes may be under the control of designated incident commanders who are not emergency care providers. These individuals are generally responsible for scene administration, safe entry to a scene or decontamination of patients or responders. When access to a scene is restricted because of safety concerns or other limitations, **medical direction of patient care by certified medical personnel is essential**. This can be provided by trained responders using appropriate personal protective equipment or by communicating instruction to those responders moving or extricating the patient.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Pursuant to the provisions of public health law, the individual having the highest level of pre-hospital certification and is responding with authority, "has a duty to act" and therefore is responsible for providing and/or directing emergency medical care and the transportation of a patient. Such care and direction shall be in accordance with all State of Georgia standards of training, applicable State and regional protocols and may be provided under direct Medical Control.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has established the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS) as the standard command and control system for emergency operations. The Incident Command system (ICS) does not define who is in charge, rather it defines an operational framework to manage many types of emergency situation. One essential component of ICS is Unified Command. Unified command is used to manage situations involving multiple jurisdictions, multiple agencies, or multiple technical needs. The specific issues of the directions and provision of patient care and the associated communications among responders must be integrated into each single or unified command structure and be assigned to the appropriately trained personnel to carry out.