



Texas Department of Health Bureau of Emergency Management

TRAUMA SYSTEMS POLICY # TS-01-B

Telemedicine in Trauma Facilities

July 2001

BACKGROUND

At the February 2001 Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council's Trauma Systems Committee, a presentation was delivered on the use of telemedicine in Texas trauma facilities. Subsequently, the Bureau of Emergency Management (Bureau) was asked to clarify its position on the appropriate usage of telemedical capabilities in the care of major and severe trauma patients.

For the purposes of this policy, "telemedicine" is defined as the practice of health care delivery, diagnosis, consultation, treatment, and transfer of medical data through interactive audio, video, or data communications that occurs in the physical presence of the patient. Audio or video communications sent to a health care provider for diagnostic or treatment consultation are also included in this definition.

STATUTE REFERENCE

Not applicable

RULE REFERENCE

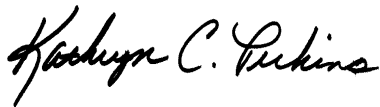
25 TAC, 157.125 Requirements for Trauma Facility Designation; Attachments: Basic (Level IV) Criteria; Level IV Standards; General (Level III) Criteria; and Level III Standards

POLICY

(A) The Bureau acknowledges the value of telemedicine for patients with a variety of medical problems, and appreciates that the growth of information technologies will enhance the ability of rural health care providers to provide a broader range of patient care services to their population base.

(B) Telemedicine does not meet the essential criterion for trauma facilities that requires the physical presence of physicians to care for major and severe trauma patients, including all trauma team activations. Designated trauma facilities must continue to maintain a list of qualified on-call physicians who must be notified upon EMS assessment of a major or severe trauma patient, and who must be on call and promptly available within 30 minutes of request from inside or outside the hospital.

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Kathryn C. Perkins, Chief
Bureau of Emergency Management

Date: July 30, 2001