



C. Earl Hunter, Commissioner

*Promoting and protecting the health of the public and the environment.*

**To:** EMS Providers

**From:** Alonzo Smith, Director, Division of EMS and Trauma  
Doug Norcross, MD, Chairman, SC Trauma Advisory Council

**Date:** April 28, 2008

**RE:** Trauma Field Triage Decision Scheme

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Division of EMS and Trauma, has approved a Trauma Field Triage Decision Scheme at the recommendation of the State Trauma Advisory Council. This protocol is to take the place of all current trauma transport protocols which are required to be submitted along with regular protocols prior to initial licensure or re-licensure. Use of this protocol is mandatory and will be addressed in the proposed trauma regulations currently being considered by the South Carolina General Assembly.

The Trauma Field Triage Decision Scheme is based on the recommendations of the American College of Surgeons, "Resources for Optimal Care of the Injured Patient," 2006 edition. This protocol, or a similar version, is being utilized by Emergency Medical Services providers across the country.

This protocol is not intended to prohibit EMS providers from utilizing air medical transport. It is, however, intended to help field personnel make better decisions as to when air transport should be requested as well as making better decisions as to which level trauma center is most appropriate based on the patient's condition at the scene. While less emphasis is being placed on mechanism of injury as an indicator of serious injury, sound judgment must still be applied by field personnel when making transport decisions.

The Trauma Field Triage Decision Scheme must be adjusted by each department to reflect the names of trauma centers, non-designated hospitals, burn centers, and air-medical transport providers utilized by your system. A copy of your new protocol must be received in our office within ninety (90) days of the date of this letter.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this document please contact Greg Kitchens, Trauma Coordinator, at 803-545-4333.

Alonzo Smith, Director  
Division of EMS and Trauma

Doug Norcross, MD, Chairman  
SC Trauma Advisory Council