

EMS Helicopter Transfers

Designation of Condition: Allow for safe transfer of patients from EMS units to a helicopter when the helipad is on hospital grounds

Circumstances may require utilization of a hospital helipad to facilitate transfer of either a medical or trauma patient to an appropriate facility.

Request the helicopter through Albuquerque Base

It must be determined that it is in the best interest of the patient for emergent transfer via helicopter versus evaluation in the hospital's emergency department.

Notify the hospital's emergency department that it's helipad will be used for the helicopter intercept only and that no evaluation or treatment in the hospital's emergency department is being requested.

Explanation: EMTALA applies where an individual comes to the hospital's emergency room and a request is made on the individual's behalf for examination or treatment of a medical condition. HCFA has interpreted the phrase, "comes to the hospital's emergency room" to mean that the individual is on the hospital's premises or in an ambulance owned by the hospital. Where the hospital's helipad is being used only to accommodate a transfer of a patient from a ground ambulance to an air ambulance, it is necessary that the hospital's emergency department be informed of what is going on and that no request for examination or treatment is being made.