

Paramedic / Intermediate Crews

It is recognized that in District 6 nearly all paramedic service is provided by crews composed of a paramedic working with an EMT-Intermediate partner. Under the Vermont EMS Protocols, there are some procedures within the scope of practice of the EMT-I which are standing orders for paramedics, but which require online physician medical direction to be performed by EMT-I's. The question has arisen as to whether an EMT-I when caring for a patient in partnership with and under the supervision of a paramedic needs to contact the medical control physician for permission to perform such procedures, or whether he or she may perform under the standing orders of the paramedic who is overseeing the patient's care. The following are guidelines to address such situations:

- The determining factor is whether the paramedic or the EMT-I is the primary EMS caregiver for a particular patient. The primary EMS caregiver is the person who interacts primarily with the patient, performs the assessment, accompanies the patient in the back of the ambulance, and writes the run report.
- If the primary EMS caregiver is the EMT-I, the EMT-I level protocols must be followed, and online medical direction requested as required for the EMT-I. The presence of a paramedic does not allow the EMT-I to use paramedic standing orders unless the paramedic is the primary EMS caregiver.
- If the primary EMS caregiver is the paramedic, the EMT-I may perform procedures within the EMT-I scope of practice under the paramedic level standing orders as directed by the paramedic and under the paramedic's supervision. If paramedic level standing orders are used, the paramedic must continue to act as the primary EMS caregiver, accompany the patient in the back of the ambulance during transport, and write the run report. Each member of the crew remains responsible for the care he or she delivers.

Philip Brown DO
Medical Advisor
Vermont EMS District 6