

Delaware Basic Life Support Glucose Testing Policy

Definitions:

- **Diabetes:** a metabolic disease that affects a patient's ability to control their blood sugar
- **Glucose:** scientific term for blood sugar
- **Glucometer:** device that measures blood sugar
- **Hypoglycemia:** low blood sugar
- **Hyperglycemia:** high blood sugar
- **CLIA:** Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act, a set of Federal laws and regulations that control laboratory testing procedures (website: <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/clia/regs/toc.aspx>)
- **Quality Assurance:** process to insure the delivery of a service or product meets acceptable standards
- **OEMS:** refers to the Delaware Office of Emergency Medical Services
- **EMS:** emergency medical services
- **County:** refers to one of the three (3) Delaware counties.
- **FDA:** Food and Drug Administration

Philosophy:

Diabetes affects many Delaware citizens and visitors. Many prehospital calls involve patients with diabetes. Many patients with alterations in consciousness have abnormal blood sugars. Knowledge of a patient's blood sugar can improve care and resource utilization. Delaware paramedics have been successfully measuring blood sugar for nearly twenty (20) years. With new and improving technology, accuracy and easy of use, glucometers make it possible for lay persons to measure their own blood sugars at home with little training. Delaware's basic life support (BLS) personnel often arrive on scene before paramedics. Many BLS personnel already have personal experience using glucometers. Information on low blood sugar can allow BLS to initiate oral therapy in awake patients, reducing the need for a paramedic response. In addition, a low blood sugar reading by BLS in a patient with altered mental status can facilitate paramedics arriving on scene who can more quickly administer intravenous dextrose. Normal or high blood sugar readings reported to paramedics by BLS can lead to a quicker focus on other treatment algorithms.

Implementation of a BLS Glucometer Testing Program:

- Coordinate type of glucometer to be purchased with county EMS medical director and county paramedic service.
- Obtain and maintain a FDA approved glucometer and compatible reagent strips (implementing agency responsibility).
- Obtain and maintain an appropriate CLIA waiver.

- 45 • Establish and monitor a blood glucose quality assurance program in
46 accordance with the manufacturer of the glucometer and approved by
47 the State BLS or County EMS medical director.
- 48 • Obtain training on alterations of blood sugars and glucometer use via
49 an OEMS approved course.
- 50 • Inform the county EMS medical director, paramedic service and usual
51 destination medical facilities of the planned glucometer implementation
52 date.

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54 **Documentation:**

- 55 • Report all blood sugars obtained to medical control as appropriate
- 56 • Report all blood sugars obtained to receiving personnel at destination
57 medical facility.
- 58 • Record all blood sugars obtained in patient care report.
- 59 • Document all appropriate quality assurance information in appropriate
60 location and store for seven (7) years (medical – legal requirement).

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62 **Protocol:**

- 63 • Refer to BLS Standing Orders for appropriate patient care algorithms.