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November 14, 2014

**TO:** Virginia Emergency Medical Services Agencies  
Regional Emergency Medical Services Councils  
Virginia Operational Medical Directors

**FROM:** Michael D. Berg, BS, NRP  
Manager, Regulation and Compliance

**SUBJECT: Elimination of requirement to obtain medical practitioner signature on prehospital patient care report**

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During the 2013 session of the General Assembly, several bills were introduced and subsequently passed to amend §54.1-3408 of the *Code of Virginia* (<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/54.1-3408>) permitting certified EMS personnel acting within their scope of practice to administer drugs and devices pursuant to an oral or written order or standing protocol. The Board of Pharmacy (BOP) subsequently adopted these changes within their regulation (<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title18/agency110/chapter20/section500>). The following is an excerpt from the above referenced BOP regulation:

*“Drugs may be administered by an emergency medical technician upon an oral or written order or standing protocol of an authorized medical practitioner in accordance with § 54.1-3408 of the Code of Virginia. Oral orders shall be reduced to writing by the technician and shall be signed by a medical practitioner. Written standing protocols shall be signed by the operational medical director for the emergency medical services agency. The emergency medical technician shall make a record of all drugs administered to a patient.”*

Effective November 24, 2014, the *Virginia EMS Regulations* will change to reflect the changes in the BOP regulations and to remove the requirement of a practitioner’s signature for any drug administration, patient assist medications or invasive therapy. Provision of patient care documentation (12VAC5-31-1140) will state in part:

*“EMS personnel and EMS agencies shall provide the receiving medical facility or transporting EMS agency with a copy of the prehospital patient care report for each patient treated at the time of patient transfer. Should EMS personnel be unable to provide the full prehospital patient care report at the time of patient transfer, EMS personnel shall provide an abbreviated documented report with the critical EMS findings and actions at the time of patient transfer and the full prehospital patient care report shall be provided to the accepting facility within 12 hours.”*

There is language in the pending regulatory packet for the BOP to further amend 18VAC-110-20-500 stating:

*“3. Drugs and devices may be administered by an ~~emergency medical technician~~ EMS provider upon an oral or written order or standing protocol of an authorized medical practitioner in accordance with § 54.1-3408 of the Code of Virginia. Oral orders shall be reduced to writing by the ~~technician~~ EMS provider and shall be signed by a medical practitioner. Written standing protocols shall be signed by the operational medical director for the ~~emergency medical services~~ EMS agency. A current copy of the signed standing protocol shall be maintained by the pharmacy participating in the kit exchange. ~~The emergency medical technician~~ EMS provider shall make a record of all drugs and devices administered to a patient.”*

All EMS agencies are encouraged to submit a copy of their agency protocols signed by their agency operational medical director (OMD) to pharmacies frequently used to restock drug kits in anticipation of this regulatory change.

In conclusion, effective November 24, 2014, there is no longer a requirement to obtain a practitioner’s signature for any drug administration, invasive procedure or patient assist medication. The *Virginia EMS Regulations* 12VAC5-31 will be updated on November 24, 2014 to reflect the changes (<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/OEMS/Agency/RegCompliance/Regulations.htm>). If there are additional questions to this memorandum, please contact your area EMS Program Representative or Mr. Michael D. Berg, Regulation and Compliance manager, Virginia Office of EMS at 1-800-523-6019 (toll free in Virginia), 804-888-9131 (direct) or by email at [michael.berg@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:michael.berg@vdh.virginia.gov).