

MARYLOU SUDDERS

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Department of Public Health

Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality

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To: Massachusetts Licensed Ambulance Services,

Affiliate Hospital Medical Directors and Hospital Pharmacists



From: Eric Sheehan, JD, Director, Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality

 Jon Burstein, MD, Medical Director, Office of Emergency Medical Services

Date: December 15, 2016

Re: Ketamine authorized for use by paramedics when treating behavioral emergency patients.

**Purpose:**

This notification is intended to update ambulance services, their affiliate hospital medical directors, and their affiliate hospital pharmacists regarding the implementation of the EMS Statewide Treatment Protocols (STP) adding Ketamine as an optional medication, pursuant to Protocol 2.4 Behavioral Emergencies (see attached, as Appendix A).

**Background:**

Ketamine was added to the 2016 STP, effective December 15, 2016, as an approved optional drug for use by paramedics under Protocol 2.4, as a single dose of 4 mg/kg intramuscularly in the rare event of a behaviorally dyscontrolled adult patient whose condition is so severe that it cannot be managed safely in any other manner. The language and dosing align with the 2016 National Model EMS Clinical Guidelines, published by the National Organization of State EMS Officials.

**Timeline:**

Ketamine is a Schedule III controlled substance under chapter 94C of the General Laws. As such, ambulance services wishing to use this option cannot currently carry Ketamine under their existing Massachusetts Controlled Substance Registrations (MCSR).

Once MCSR processes have been updated to reflect this change in STP, ambulance services will be able to apply to carry or use Ketamine as outlined in Protocol 2.4. As this process proceeds, the Department will provide further guidance on implementation of this provision.

**Contact Information**

For questions about the STP, please contact Renee Atherton, at renee.atherton@state.ma.us, or if you have any questions on the MCSR, please contact dcp.dph@state.ma.us.

**Appendix A: Statewide Treatment Protocol 2.4 and 2.5**





