
CMC Emergency Department

Non- Medical Transport to Atrium Health Mercy from Atrium Health's Carolinas Medical Center

Purpose: To execute the prompt transfer of certain patients for medical and surgical conditions/procedural needs from Atrium Health Carolinas Medical Center (CMC) to Atrium Health-Mercy (Mercy) via non-medical transport. This document details the process for both arrival by privately owned vehicle (POV) and Atrium Health Shuttle Service.

Date Effective: 16 Mar 2022; 5 July 2022; 24 Oct 2022 (UPDATED)

Situation: During the COVID-19 pandemic, many facilities in our region have experienced significant patient surge, limitations in hospital capacity, and delays in transportation for patient transfer and redistribution which have delayed or disrupted the planning, scheduling, and workflow of urgent/emergent surgical procedures and medical admissions for ED patients.

Provider Process: Patients are identified by ED Providers and consulted to the appropriate team attending physician via the [CMC ED Single-Call Surgery Consultation and Admission Pathway](#) and [Single Call Medicine Admission Pathway](#) guidance documents.

- The decision to transfer by non-medical transport will be determined considering, but not limited to:
 - The patient must have an appropriate examination leading to diagnosis and the consulting surgeon must have access to all relevant data – including the opportunity for further physical examination performed either face-to-face by a member of the surgical team or by virtual/telecommunications if required
 - POV transport personnel must be appropriate for the kind and nature of transportation required (see exclusion criteria)
 - Additional documentation entered in the patient's electronic medical record must be sufficient that attests to the reason for transfer and confirmation that two (2) providers (APP or MD) have discussed the case and reached agreement that the patient is safe for POV or shuttle transfer
- Patient will review and sign the [Declination of Medical Transport to Atrium Mercy from Atrium Health's Carolinas Medical Center](#) form. The signed form will be electronically scanned into the patient's medical record by the secretary per standard process.

Patient Exclusion:

- Preference for ambulance transport by patient, family, or medical care team
- Supplemental oxygen requirement
- Need for telemetry/cardiac monitoring
- Patients receiving medication drips (PRN adapter OK)
- Recent narcotic medication administration or post-medication drowsiness that prevents safe transportation
- History of IV drug use
- Lack of reliable POV transportation/outside hours of operation
- Inability to ambulate/transfer short distances
- Unstable VS (aligned with direct admission criteria)
- Provider/care team discretion

Hours of Operation:

- Patients may elect transport via [AH Shuttle](#) between the hours of 7a-10p Sun – Sat as long as a clean and ready bed has been assigned (or patient has been accepted in PACU)
 - Between the hours of 7am-5pm the patient will arrive through the AH-Mercy front entrance
 - Between the hours of 5pm-10pm the patient will arrive through the AH-Mercy ED entrance
 - The patient will be escorted to Pre-Op/directly to the assigned room if admitted and be registered
- Patients may elect transport via [POV](#) 24 hours per day, Sun-Sat as long as a clean and ready bed has been assigned (or patient has been accepted in PACU)
 - Between the hours of 5am-5pm the patient will present to the AH-Mercy front entrance
 - Between 5pm-5am the patient will present thru the AH-Mercy ED entrance
 - The patient will be escorted to Pre-Op/directly to the assigned room if admitted and be registered

ED Nurse Process:

- Nurse will receive notification of patient assignment (e.g., pre-op or floor/room)
- Nurse will notify Pre-Op or floor nurse to provide report per standard process
- Patient to receive [Atrium Health - Mercy FAST PASS \(for Patient\)](#) and refer to document
- If applicable/available, Shuttle transport is initiated by notifying the call center (704)-355-2126 and will require patient name, date-of-birth, current location, and destination.

Shuttle Team Process:

- Shuttle arrival to final destination is expected within 45 minutes
- Shuttle Teammate will arrive to ED treatment area and obtain patient face sheet for transport
- Patient will be escorted with belongings in wheelchair to shuttle with up to one additional passenger, if applicable
- Shuttle Teammate will make call-ahead notification to the appropriate unit with estimated arrival time
- In the event of a medical emergency, Shuttle Teammate will follow standard emergency response procedure

Patient arrival after 5pm:

- Patient enters via the ED and is registered in the ED registration area
- Transport to escort patient via wheelchair to pre-op or floor/room, notifies unit charge nurse upon arrival, verifies room number, and delivers patient to inpatient room.
- Transport ensures patient is safely in chair (with wheels locked) or in bed (in low position with wheels locked) and provides patient call bell so patient can contact RN if needed

Receiving RN Process:

- Receiving RN or Charge nurse receives report from ED RN per standard process
- Verifies correct room assignment when transport arrives to unit with patient
- RN and/or HCT enters patient's room within 10 minutes of patient arrival to room orientation and to complete admission process
- If the patient does not arrive within 45 minutes of receiving news of patient transferring by POV or shuttle, the receiving RN should immediately call the transferring facility/unit to verify patient status and prioritize patient safety. If no change in admission status/plan, the receiving RN should call the admitting MD and advise that the patient is still pending arrival.

Additional Information:

[CMC ED Single-Call Surgery Consultation and Admission Pathway](#)

[Single Call Medicine Admission Pathway](#)

[Declination of Medical Transport to Atrium - Mercy from Atrium Health's Carolinas Medical Center](#)

[Atrium Health - Mercy FAST PASS \(for Patient\)](#)

Questions can be directed to Christian Schulz, PA-C, Christine Neagle, Donan Chicot, or Heena Nagarji, DNP, CNL, RN.

Key words: non-medical transport, shuttle, privately operated vehicle (POV), Mercy, Surgery, FAST PASS

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Date: 10 Mar 2022; 5 July 2022; 24 Oct 2022 (UPDATED)