

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 162

BY REPRESENTATIVE WILLMOTT

A RESOLUTION

To authorize and direct the Department of Health and Hospitals to require through administrative rulemaking that licensed ambulance services establish protocols related to the assessment and transport of patients with cardiac and stroke emergencies.

WHEREAS, "STEMI", an abbreviation for "ST segment elevation myocardial infarction", is a type of heart attack characterized by full thickness cardiac muscle damage resulting from an acute interruption of blood supply to a part of the heart, and is the deadliest form of heart attack; and

WHEREAS, this type of heart attack continues to rank among the leading causes of death in Louisiana along with stroke, which itself is also a leading cause of long-term disability in this state; and

WHEREAS, rapid identification, diagnosis, and treatment of stroke and STEMI can save lives, and in some cases can reverse neurological damage that causes paralysis and speech impairment; and

WHEREAS, although new treatments are available that can improve the clinical outcomes of stroke and STEMI, acute care hospitals often face challenges in deploying the staff and equipment required to optimally triage and treat stroke and STEMI patients; and

WHEREAS, research shows that patients treated in facilities recognized as stroke and STEMI centers have higher survival rates than patients treated at hospitals which may be in closer proximity to the patient, but that are not stroke or STEMI centers; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Emergency Response Network has led a collaborative effort to recognize facilities that are most appropriate for stroke and STEMI care; and

WHEREAS, establishment of pre-hospital destination protocols by licensed ambulance services can help to ensure that stroke and STEMI patients are transported to the most appropriate facilities whenever possible.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby authorize and direct the Department of Health and Hospitals, referred to hereafter as "the department", to promulgate such administrative rules as are necessary to require ambulance services licensed pursuant to the provisions of R.S. 40:1231 et seq., to establish pre-hospital destination protocols related to the assessment and transport of stroke and STEMI patients.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the rules of the department shall require, without limitation, establishment of all of the following:

(1) Plans for the transport of acute stroke patients to the closest comprehensive stroke center, primary stroke center, or acute stroke ready hospital, as defined in LAC 48:I.18701 et seq., within a specified time frame of onset of symptoms.

(2) Plans for the transport of STEMI heart attack patients to the closest STEMI receiving center or, when appropriate, to a STEMI referring center, as defined in LAC 48:I.18901 et seq., within a specified time frame of onset of symptoms.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the rules of the department shall provide that:

(1) An ambulance service may either establish its own pre-hospital protocols which conform to the minimum requirements set forth by the department in rule, or adopt the pre-hospital protocols developed and promulgated by the Louisiana Emergency Response Network.

(2) If a life-threatening condition arises during the transport of a stroke or STEMI heart attack patient, the ambulance service shall transport the patient to the nearest appropriate hospital.

(3) Each licensed ambulance service shall submit to the department annually a copy of its stroke and STEMI transportation protocol.

(4) Any ambulance service that revises its stroke and STEMI transportation protocol shall submit the revised protocol to the department no more than thirty days after implementation of the protocol.

(5) Nothing in the rules of the department shall be construed to limit the right of a patient to refuse emergency transport to a recommended destination.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department shall keep on file each transportation protocol it receives pursuant to rules adopted in accordance with this Resolution, and shall make such protocols available to any person upon request.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department shall promulgate the administrative rules required by this Resolution prior to October 1, 2015.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES