

# Fulton County Health Center

## MEDICAL SCREENING IN THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

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### Policy

All patients presenting to the emergency department, whether via the reception area or by ambulance, at Fulton County Health Center will be assessed to determine if an emergency medical condition exists prior to obtaining any information regarding the patient's ability to pay. This assessment will include each patient's physical, psychological and social status.

**Note:** Patients entering the Emergency Department will be seen according to severity of illness/injury, not by time of arrival.

### Definition

#### Emergency Medical Condition

- A. A medical condition manifesting itself by acute symptoms of sufficient severity (including severe pain) such that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected to result in:
  1. Placing the health of the individual (or, with respect to a pregnant woman, the health of the woman or her unborn child) in serious jeopardy,
  2. Serious impairment to bodily functions, or
  3. Serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part; or
  
- B. With respect to a pregnant woman who is having contractions
  1. That there is inadequate time to effect a safe transfer to another hospital before delivery, or
  2. That transfer may pose a threat to the health or safety of the woman or the unborn child.

Reminder: pregnancy gestations of more than 20 weeks with pregnancy-related conditions will be sent to the OB Department for evaluation.

### Procedure

Patients will be assessed to determine their condition by questioning the patient or significant other if patient unable to communicate.

1. Patients with Non-emergency Conditions
  - a. Patient will be received in ED by ED/Out-Patient Registration Clerk or by the receptionist.
  - b. Authorization for treatment will be obtained by the ED/Out-Patient Registration Clerk or by the receptionist by having the patient sign the Consent to Treatment form.
  - c. Patient will be assessed by ED RN.
  - d. ED physician/nurse practitioner or attending physician will be apprised of the patient's condition by the ED nurse.
  - e. Treatment will be given per physician's or nurse practitioner's order.
  - f. Registration will be completed by the ED/Out-Patient Registration Clerk at the bedside.
  
2. Patients with Emergency Conditions
  - a. Patient will be assessed by the ED RN.
  - b. ED physician/nurse practitioner will be apprised of the patient's condition by the ED nurse.
  - c. Appropriate treatment will be given per physician/nurse practitioner and/or physician's/nurse practitioner's order.
  - d. Registration will be completed by the ED/Out-Patient Registration Clerk at the bedside.

**Note:** Registration information on patients with emergency conditions will be obtained:

1. From person accompanying the patient.
2. From family member or significant other when arriving at FCHC.
3. By ED registration clerk in the Emergency Department from the patient upon ED personnel's approval.