



UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Department of Emergency Medicine
School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences
Erie County Medical Center
462 Grider Street
Buffalo, New York 14215
(716) 898-4430

June 1, 1995

Dear Chief:

On March 21, 1994 a meeting was held at the Lake Erie Beach Volunteer Fire Company to discuss involuntary patient commitment issues (i.e., 9.41 and 21.09). This meeting was attended by many of your members and officers as well as by Ms. Mary Healy, Project Coordinator, Police/Mental Health Coordination Project; Mr. Greg Skibitsky, ALS Coordinator, Erie County Emergency Medical Services; Mr. Michael Walters, Deputy Commissioner, Erie County Emergency Medical Services and Mayor of the Village of Angola; a representative of the Village of Angola Police Department; and myself. The following is my summation of this meeting.

None of your prehospital care providers should ever be requested or expected to endanger him/herself while caring for any patient. An injured prehospital care provider is not only of no benefit to patient care, but may actually become a hinderance to patient care.

No patient should be transported under "assumed" 9.41 or 21.09 papers unless at least one of the following conditions is met.

- 1.) The prehospital care provider has the original copy of the appropriately and completely completed 9.41 or 21.09 papers.
- 2.) The police/peace officer ordering the 9.41 or 21.09 accompanies the patient in the ambulance.
,or
- 3.) The police/peace officer ordering the 9.41 or 21.09 directly follows the ambulance to the receiving facility.

Medical direction at the Erie County Medical Center should be contacted prior to transport if none of these conditions has been met.

Patients who are medically unstable (e.g., as a result of an overdose) should be transported to the closest receiving facility despite a 9.41 or 21.09 order. Again, on-line medical direction is always available to assist your prehospital care providers with this decision. It is never appropriate to endanger a patient's physical well-being for a psychiatric evaluation.

On-line medical direction should be contacted by ALS or BLS prehospital care providers whenever any questions, problems or other issues arise. These may include patients for whom a 9.41 or 21.09 order cannot be obtained yet the prehospital care provider feels is of danger to him/herself or others.

Please share my comments with all of your prehospital care providers. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any comments, questions, concerns or suggestions. I thank you for your continued commitment to excellence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony J. Billittier IV". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and a distinct "IV" at the end.

Anthony J. Billittier IV, M.D.
Medical Director Prehospital Care
Erie County Medical Center

AJB:gs