



Regional Emergency Medical Organization

Office of the Medical Director

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REMAC ADVISORY 2018-01

Re: Medication Shortages (Replaces 2012-02)

Effective Date: Current

EMS continues to face series of medications shortages. Federal and State authorities are working to address this issue, but there will be ongoing problems that will need to be managed on a local basis. The REMAC and REMO will assist as needed with operational questions including potential medication substitutions, alternative sources or other ideas.

To remain operationally sound, agencies may review medication usage, modify their formularies, and reduce quantities based on historical usage patterns. Medication quantities may be reduced and medication concentrations may be changed as needed. No medication substitutions may be made without the approval of the Medical Advisory Committee.

Agency ALS Coordinators must notify REMO with any changes to the approved Regional formulary. All Controlled Substance formulary changes must be approved by the DOH.

Some immediate shortages:

Problem: Diltiazem may be only available in alternative vial sizes and concentrations

Solution: Please be certain to train staff about the medication change and notify REMO. Do not substitute drip formulations for single dose vials because of the potential for medication error. Contact medical control for consideration of metoprolol or amiodarone.

Problem: Controlled Substances are intermittently in short supply.

Solution: Notify REMO as soon as a problem is recognized so that we may assist in researching a solution and guide your agency through the process of amending your controlled substance plan if needed. Do not alter from your controlled substance plan without contacting the Department of Health.

Problem: IV fluids may be in short supply.

Solution: Please check the FDA website for fluids that have been given extended expiration. If still short of normal saline, lactated ringers may be substituted as written in the collaborative protocols.