



Department of Health
Office of Emergency Medical Services
Monroe County, New York

Maggie Brooks
County Executive

Tim Czapranski
EMS Administrator

To all Monroe County EMS and Fire Agencies; Rochester Region Hospitals, 911 Centers and County Coordinators:

As many of you are aware the 5 hospitals in Monroe County developed a Hospital Color Code system to help track potential wait times in the emergency departments. The Color Codes were applied to several different categories of patients.

Over the course of the last 2 years the Monroe Livingston Regional Medical Advisory Council (REMAC) led an effort to study drop times at local hospitals. Part of the research included efforts to understand the impact of the Hospital Color Codes. The Greater Rochester Quality Council and members of the EMS and hospital community spent a good deal of time and effort on this project. It was determined that Color Codes had little effect, were not accurate at predicting wait times, and in fact, may have negative consequences.

In light of this information, the 5 hospitals represented by the ED Directors, decided to suspend the Color Code system beginning May 01, 2010 to last until September 01, 2010. In a meeting of the ED Directors in August, the decision was made to permanently delete the Color Code system. The following reasons are cited:

- There have been positive effects on patient care, specifically regarding patients ability to be seen at "their" hospital
- An overall decrease in EMS drop times
- There have been no major negative effects on patient care

Important: Some portions of the Color Codes will remain:

1. The color code black will remain for hospital emergencies resulting in the ED being closed (fire, haz-mat, and loss of power).
2. The color codes for patients needing psychiatric services will remain for the near future but not on a web page.

The Monroe County 911 Center will keep the latest data on psych color codes. Additionally, if a Monroe County hospital becomes color code black the Monroe County 911 Center will broadcast this information over the air.

Please call me with any questions and share this information as appropriate.

Regards,

Tim Czapranski

cc: Dr. Doniger/Steve Bowman/ Patrick Byrne/Ross Zastrow/Dr. Cushman/Dr. Shah