



San Mateo County Mental Health Assessment and Referral Team (SMART) Policy

APPROVED:  EMS Medical Director  EMS Administrator

1. Purpose

San Mateo County Health Department developed the SMART program to provide immediate assessment, management, transport, and referral as appropriate to individuals presenting with behavioral emergencies in the prehospital setting. The goal of the program is to provide the care and services that will best meet the needs of the individual.

2. The Team

The SMART team is multidisciplinary and is linked through communication that occurs during the initial client encounter, soon after the encounter, and at the time of quality improvement review.

2.1 SMART Paramedic Responder and Vehicle

The SMART responder is a San Mateo County accredited paramedic who has successfully completed a SMART paramedic training program approved by San Mateo County and is therefore authorized by San Mateo County to place 72-hour psychiatric holds under Welfare and Institutions Codes 5150 and 5585.

2.2 Consultation for the SMART paramedic

2.2.1 The SMART paramedic will contact the San Mateo Medical Center (SMMC) Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) on-duty psychiatrist for consultation, in accordance with County SMART protocols.

2.2.2 The SMART paramedic will contact the San Mateo County TIES line, via telephone, for non-medical consultation, in accordance with County SMART protocols.

2.2.3 The SMART paramedic will contact the County's Mental Health Division's SMART Clinician immediately during working hours, or via e-mail, in accordance with County SMART protocols.

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2.3 SMART Health Department Clinician

The County Health Department's SMART Mental Health Clinician will be based in the Mental Health Division and will have responsibility for referral of persons assessed by the SMART and deemed to need referral for services. The SMART Clinician will work closely with staff to include the:

- 2.3.1 Mental Health Division
- 2.3.2 Aging & Adult Services
- 2.3.3 Alcohol and Other Drug Services
- 2.3.4 Housing/Shelter
- 2.3.5 Other services as needed

2.4 Quality Improvement Review Committee (SMART QI Committee)

A multidisciplinary committee SMART QI committee will be responsible for quality improvement activities related to all components of the SMART program to include dispatch, on-scene interaction, client assessment, disposition, documentation, consultation, destination interactions, and SMART Clinician referral. The SMART QI Committee will include, but not be limited to the following individuals:

- 2.4.1 Mental Health SMART Clinician
- 2.4.2 Mental Health Quality Improvement Manager
- 2.4.3 EMS Clinical Coordinator
- 2.4.4 EMS Medical Director
- 2.4.5 Mental Health Medical Director (or designee)
- 2.4.6 Aging & Adult Services Representative
- 2.4.7 SMMC PES Representative
- 2.4.8 Mills-Peninsula PES Representative
- 2.4.9 Law Enforcement Representative
- 2.4.10 SMART Paramedic Representative
- 2.5.11 County Risk Management Representative

3. SMART Access

Access to SMART response will only be through San Mateo County Public Safety Communications (PSC). SMART will respond to Priority 3 (Code 2) requests for responses to behavioral emergencies.

4. SMART Response, Assessment, Consultation, Care, Transport, Referral

4.1 Response

The SMART vehicle will be staffed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week by American Medical Response. In the event that this vehicle is unavailable to respond to a request within 10 minutes, the PSC dispatcher will notify AMR's dispatch center which will dispatch a basic life support (BLS) ambulance to the incident. If no BLS ambulance is available to respond within 10 minutes, PSC will notify the on-duty AMR field supervisor who will determine the response plan for the request. (For algorithm see Page 5)

4.2 Assessment/Management/Transport (For algorithm see Page 6)

The SMART paramedic will perform a physical and mental status assessment, in accordance with County SMART protocols, of the person having the behavioral emergency and will document findings on a prehospital assessment record (PAR). Based upon this assessment, including a telephone consultation with the on-duty SMMC PES Psychiatrist as needed, in accordance with County SMART protocols the SMART paramedic will determine the best disposition for the client.

Disposition options include:

- 4.2.1 Placing the person on a Welfare & Institutions Code 5150 (for adults) or Welfare & Institutions Code 5585 (for children) and transporting to SMMC PES or Peninsula Hospital (PES).
- 4.2.2 Transporting the person to SMMC or Peninsula Hospital for voluntary psychiatric evaluation.
- 4.2.3 Transporting the person to a medical emergency department.
- 4.2.4 Transporting the person to a mental health provider's office/clinic at the direction of the SMART Clinician.
- 4.2.5 Transporting the person to a shelter when arrangements have been made by the SMART Clinician for the shelter to receive the client.
- 4.2.6 For inebriated persons meeting First Chance criteria, transporting to a First Chance facility if the person agrees to First Chance admission.
- 4.2.7 Contacting the County TIES line or Child Protective Services (CPS) for immediate assistance.
- 4.2.8 Making provisions for appropriate referral to the County SMART Mental Health Clinician.
- 4.2.9 Turning the individual over to the appropriate non-medical agency (e.g., law enforcement, Child Protective Services).
- 4.2.8 Leaving the individual at the scene after the person has signed a "Non Transport Form."

5. SMART Medic Authorization to Place 72-hour Hold

Welfare & Institutions Code 5150 identifies the categories of personnel who may place persons on a 72-hour hold. It provides that in addition to those categories listed, a county may designate other "professional persons" to place such holds. San Mateo County Board of Supervisors Resolution #? authorizes paramedics who have successfully completed the County-approved SMART training program to place such holds.

6. SMART Paramedic Qualifications

6.1 Minimum Qualifications

- 6.1.1 Two years work experience as a paramedic
- 6.1.2 Demonstrated strong clinical expertise and decision-making
- 6.1.3 Currently accredited to practice as a paramedic in San Mateo County

- 6.1.4 Successful completion of the County-approved SMART Training Program
- 6.2 Desirable Attributes
 - 6.2.1 Long-term paramedic with proven clinical competence
 - 6.2.2 Long-term paramedic in San Mateo County
 - 6.2.3 Demonstrated good critical thinking skills
 - 6.2.4 Excellent “people skills” – patients, co-workers, other public safety personnel
 - 6.2.5 Able to work with a multidisciplinary team (e.g., mental health clinicians, law enforcement)
 - 6.2.6 Likes people
 - 6.2.7 Able to manage difficult situations and individuals
 - 6.2.8 Ability to work independently
- 7. SMART Training Program

The SMART training program consists of at least 40 hours of classroom sessions and 40 hours of structured clinical experience. The most recent classroom training schedule is Attachment 1. The clinical rotation includes, at a minimum, SMMC PES, Peninsula Hospital PES, County correctional facility, First Chance, the SMMC Ron Robinson Center, and Aging and Adult Services.
- 8. SMART Vehicle

The AMR SMART response vehicle will be a sports utility type with a secure and contained back seat. Specifications for the vehicle are included in the County/AMR contract for SMART services.
- 9. Notification to receiving facilities
 - 9.1 The SMART paramedic will contact the receiving facility prior to arriving with a patient to provide a brief report
 - 9.2 If assistance is needed in transferring the patient for safety of the staff or patient the facility will be contacted as early as possible in the patient transportation.
- 10. SMART Medical Records/Documentation
 - 10.1 SMART Prehospital Assessment Record (PAR)
 - 10.2 PES Psychiatrist/SMART Paramedic Consultation Record
 - 10.3 SMART Clinician Referral Record
 - 10.4 Non Transport Form
- 11. Health Department SMART Client Referral Process

To be developed.

SMART Dispatch Algorithm



