

Clinical Minute Crash Cart Readiness

What

Crash Cart Readiness

The purpose of an emergency "crash cart" is to provide supplies and equipment used by a team of providers to deliver emergent care when a patient is experiencing a life-threatening situation. Crash carts are designed to contain specific supplies and medications, are to be maintained in areas where patient care activities are carried out, and must be ready for use at all times.



Impact

Risk of Patient Harm and Financial Impact

Providing a fully functional crash cart promotes delivery of timely medical treatment and safe patient care in the event of an emergent condition in which lifesaving equipment and supplies are required. The associated risks include:

- Harm due to delays in care, missing, expired, or mechanically incompatible equipment, medications and supplies
- Harm due to staff knowledge deficit
- Harm due to inadequate policies, procedures, or protocols
- Organization, liability associated with resuscitation cart mishaps (loss of reputation, failure to pass a regulatory survey, liability claims arising out of negligence or malpractice)

Requirement

Organizations Must Show Compliance With the Joint Commission Standards* and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) Requirements.

- The hospital identifies, inspects, tests, and maintains all high-risk equipment. Life support equipment is included.
- Medical gas and vacuum systems are inspected and tested.
- Resuscitation services are provided to the patient according to the hospital's policies, procedures, or protocols.
- Resuscitation equipment is available for use based on the needs of the population served. (See also EC.02.04.03, EP 2)
- Resuscitation equipment is located strategically throughout the hospital.
- Evidence-based training program is used to train staff to recognize the need for and use of resuscitation equipment and techniques.

*TJC Standards: Provision of Care -PC.02.01.11, Environment of Care EC 02.04.01, EC 02.04.03, EC 02.05.09, and Medication Management MM 03.01.03

Implement Protocols That Align With Regulatory Requirements and Best Practice

- Documentation is required to validate compliance with required elements of performance.



Action

1 ENGAGE

- Involve key stakeholders in accountability for emergency preparedness.
- Engage front-line staff in achieving positive patient outcomes through evidence-based practice.
- Share outcome data regularly.

2 EDUCATE

- Facility-specific policies, procedures, and processes.
- Regulatory requirements related to crash cart use.
- Initial and ongoing orientation to the crash cart.

3 EXECUTE

- Standardize process for management of equipment, medications, and crash cart readiness checks.
- Implement policies, processes, and tools designed to increase standardization.

4 EVALUATE

- Crash cart inventory management.
- Maintenance and re-stocking protocols and processes to make sure crash carts are available and fully functioning.
- Departmental maintenance logs to ensure that they are designed to capture required information and completed as required.
- Track and trend any performance outcomes that involve crash carts not functioning as intended.
- Solicit staff feedback regarding adequacy of training pertaining to crash cart use and maintenance.



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