



McLean County Area EMS System

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MEMORANDUM

TO: All MCAEMS BLS Providers
FROM: Michael Crabtree
Quality Assurance Coordinator
DATE: 6/18/2012
RE: BLS Interpretation of 12-Lead ECGs

This memo is to serve as a reminder that it is outside the scope of BLS agencies to interpret ECGs (a.k.a. "4-lead" or "3-lead"). This policy is in accordance with IDPH rules as well as the NHTSA Department of Transportation EMT-B National Standard Curriculum.

In accordance with this guidance, BLS agencies should not be applying the cardiac monitor with the intention of interpreting the underlying rhythm. Since it is outside the scope of practice, BLS agencies should not be documenting the underlying rhythm in patient care reports unless it is a verbatim documentation of the **machine interpretation**.

Unless acquiring a 12-lead ECG, all cardiac monitoring devices on a BLS unit within the system must be utilized in the AED mode only. Manual defibrillation capabilities must be disabled, locked out, or otherwise mechanically prohibited by the machine.

This policy applies to all providers functioning at BLS agencies, regardless of the individual provider's training and knowledge of ECG interpretation. Scope of practice is limited not only by individual licensure level, but also the level of the agency.