



# McLean County Area EMS System

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## MEMO

**DATE:** May 24, 2007

**TO:** All MCAEMS Advanced Airway Providers

**FROM:** James Szudera, D.O.  
McLean County Area EMS System  
Medical Director

**RE:** Policy Change

Over the past few months, successful intubation rates have been consistently low. After reviewing charts and looking at possible causes, it appears that one reason the percentages are down is repeated attempts to intubate a patient with a difficult airway.

Due to these findings, the system will incorporate a policy change that after two unsuccessful intubation attempts per provider or three unsuccessful intubation attempts per patient, then the EMT-I/P should then manage the airway with a combi-tube or bag-valve mask and airway adjunct. The definition of an intubation attempt is when the blade has been placed within the oral cavity of the patient.

There have also been a few instances lately where the ET tube has become dislodged after the initial intubation and the patient has required re-intubation. Please remember to secure the tube before moving the patient.

If an EMT- B has already inserted a combi-tube and the airway is adequately managed, do not pull the combi-tube to try and intubate the patient. There are times when intubation with an ET tube will be necessary such as when the patient does not have a patent IV, otherwise the combi-tube will provide an adequate airway for the patient.

Always remember that if there are any questions in the field, please contact medical control for direction.