

MATRAC Triage Tag Project

Frequently Asked Questions

Project: This triage tag project will be carried out by all MATRAC affiliated hospitals and EMS agencies. All trauma patients entering the "system" via ground or air ambulance will be tagged with a standard triage tag **every Friday beginning June 2, 2006** for 6-9 months.

Goals:

1. Establish standardized trauma triage criteria in Western North Carolina by all MATRAC affiliated EMS agencies and hospitals.
2. Increase familiarization and utilization of common triage tags among area healthcare providers.
3. Improve trauma patient tracking capabilities through the "trauma system".
4. Measure accurate assessment and triage (tagging) of multiple trauma patients.
5. Ensure that all relevant medical personnel are adequately trained in the use of the triage tags.
6. Ensure that triage tags are placed on all trauma patients during the "Triage Friday" pilot project.
7. Ensure that the triage system accurately distinguishes between minor and major trauma and results in the transport of patients to the most appropriate receiving facility.
8. Improve disaster preparedness capabilities and interoperability among participating agencies.
9. Serve as a model to other regions and the state by sharing information and resources.

Q: How much will this cost?

A: The MATRAC has received funding from Mission Hospital Foundation for initial costs of this project. Training, materials, and initial supply of triage tags are funded at no cost to the participating agency. Replacement of tags will be the responsibility of the EMS agency or hospital. Cost will be negligible since triage tags are a required item on ambulances.

Q: Where will the triage tags end up?

A: Triage tags will be distributed to each participating EMS system in Western North Carolina following training. Each Friday, during the pilot period, trauma patients will be tagged. For this project, trauma shall be defined as any patient with mechanism of injury or actual injury transported by EMS. Upon arrival to the Emergency Department, tags will be removed by nursing staff and placed in a designated location. **(Note: Tag should remain with patient if transferred to Mission Hospital Trauma Center).** Information from the tags will be collected and tallied by the designated contact person at each hospital. Tracking forms will be provided for this purpose. This aggregate data will be forwarded on a monthly basis to the MATRAC Coordinator. All monthly reports will be forwarded to

Western Carolina University for analysis and validation. Results of the pilot project will be made available to all participating agencies following the pilot period.

Q: What is the benefit to my organization? and the region?

A: Standardizing the process for assessing and triaging trauma patient's results in improved quality of care and patient outcome. It also allows healthcare providers to better track patients during a mass casualty incident.

Q: Who should receive the training?

A: All participating EMS Systems and Hospital Emergency Department personnel should be trained. Training will include an overview of the START method of triage and proper use of the triage tags.

Q: How long will the training take?

A: Training material and information can be completed in approximately 90 minutes. This includes a post-test to validate the learning experience.

Q: Who provides the training?

A: The MATRAC Performance Improvement Subcommittee members have developed a train-the-trainer program for the region. This program will be offered on an established timeline to participating EMS Systems and hospitals. An alternate option is for one of the PI Subcommittee members to provide teaching to your staff at a monthly staff meeting or in-service.

Q: What is the timeline for this project?

A: In order to reach our goals, we will establish a teaching period, an implementation period, and an analysis period. Teaching will be determined by the ability to arrange educational sessions with the various providers in our region. The implementation period will last for at least six months. This period may be extended up to an additional three months if the goals have not been met. The analysis period is the time in which all the information gathered will be processed and released to the participants for review.

Q: What happens if I choose not to participate?

A: Nothing. However, as a member of the Mountain Area Trauma Regional Advisory Committee (MATRAC), your participation is strongly encouraged. This committee strives to improve trauma care and standardization in Western North Carolina, so your participation is vital to reaching this goal. This project was endorsed and approved by the voting membership at the November 2005 general meeting.