



March 27, 2020

REGIONAL DIRECTIVE - UPDATED

TO: ALL WVEMS REGION EMS PROVIDERS AND AGENCIES
FROM: WVEMS Regional Medical Direction Committee
RE: Drug Box Mitigation of Contamination and Decontamination Procedures

In cooperation with the hospital pharmacies and the WVEMS Regional Medical Direction Committee, during this time frame of concern, the policy for drug box use and exchange is as follows:

EMS providers opening a drug box should keep the box clear of patient contact as much as possible without disrupting patient care, for example by positioning it behind the head of the stretcher or in the drug box compartment. Attempt to change your gloves prior to opening and obtaining medications from the box. Aerosolized treatments should be done outside and away from the box when possible.

After the call is completed, and prior to exchanging the box at the facility, EMS providers are required to decontaminate the box with Cavi wipes, or similar approved (COVID-19) sanitizing cleaning wipes. **This applies to ALL drug box exchanges, not just those with possible infectious disease exposure.**

WVEMS Drug Box Decontamination Procedure Form MUST be filled out on all drug box exchanges.

Hospital pharmacies have begun placing all medications in zip-lock or heat sealed bags.

Box Contains Medications in sealed bags: If the medications are in bags, wipe down outside of box AND each bag and compartment within the drug box and the drug box can be exchanged.

Box Contains Medications not in sealed bags: If your call has included an aerosolized treatment, CPAP usage or cardiac arrest where multiple drugs in the box have been handled, please wipe the box down inside and out, place in biohazard bag and inform hospital/pharmacy that the box should be temporarily pulled from rotation, until the suggested 3 day wait period.

The ED and pharmacies are aware of this policy, and will accept the box for exchange as usual.

As with all recommendations at this time, policy and procedure is apt to change and you will be updated.

Thank you for your attention. As always, feel free to contact the WVEMS office with any questions. (540) 562-3482 or wvpharmacy@vaems.org

Thank you,
Charles J. Lane, MD
Regional Medical Director
Western Virginia EMS Council