



U. S. Department of Justice
Drug Enforcement Administration
8701 Morrisette Drive
Springfield, Virginia 22152

www.dea.gov

DEC 19 2011

Jeremy R. Urekew, Paramedic
Anchorage Fire & Ambulance Districts
1400 Evergreen Road
Louisville, Kentucky 40223

Dear Mr. Urekew:

This correspondence is in response to your letter dated September 27, 2011, to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). In your letter, you asked for DEA's policy pertaining to emergency medical services and their administration of narcotic controlled substances to patients prior to arrival at a hospital. You explained that Anchorage Fire & Ambulance Districts' (Anchorage) current protocols state that a paramedic must obtain an on-line medical control order from a physician prior to administering a narcotic to any patient while under care in the ambulance. You indicated that Anchorage is hoping to revise its current protocols to allow the use of non-patient specific standing orders, instead of on-line medical control orders, for the administration of narcotics to patients meeting predefined criteria. The administering or dispensing of a controlled substance, to be valid, must be for a legitimate medical purpose by an individual practitioner acting in the usual course of his or her professional practice. The dispensing of a controlled substance must be patient and issue specific. A practitioner may not delegate this responsibility. The dispensing of a controlled substance in response to a standing order would therefore not be valid.

I trust this response has adequately addressed your question. DEA appreciates your efforts to comply with the provisions of the Controlled Substances Act and its implementing regulations. You may obtain additional information regarding the Office of Diversion Control at www.DEADiversion.usdoj.gov. If you have any further questions regarding this issue, please contact DEA's Louisville office at (502) 582-5905 or the Liaison and Policy Section at (202) 307-4654.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John W. Partridge".

John W. Partridge, Chief
Liaison and Policy Section
Office of Diversion Control