

# EMS to ED Handoffs: A Performance Improvement Initiative

## Project Summary

Effective and accurate communication during patient handoff between EMS personnel and the ED is critical to patient safety. Interest in handoffs in general has grown considerably due to concerns for patient safety during transitions of care, as this is the origination of many medical errors. Poor handoffs have been shown to cause treatment delays, treatment errors, increased lengths of stay, avoidable hospital readmissions, and increased treatment costs. There is, however, limited information regarding handoffs in EMS settings. EMS personnel are often the only providers with knowledge of what happened at the scene of an injury. EMS to ED Handoff standardization is challenging and different EDs have different models for EMS flow and handoffs, so “one size” does not fit all settings.

The project team wanted the end educational product to be applicable to other EDs in Florida and nationally, including academic centers and community EDs. This led to the development of a multidisciplinary EMS to ED Handoff Toolkit and development of case scenarios. The toolkit and project materials will be made available on several free access websites and disseminated to all Florida EM residency and fellowship programs, Florida College of Emergency Physicians, Florida Hospital Association, and the Florida Emergency Nursing Association. A recorded webinar in collaboration with the Emergency Medicine Learning and Resource Center <https://www.emlrc.org/> is also planned. Webinar information and access to the toolkit will also be made available on our website.

Often, the best form of communication is telling a compelling story. These compelling videos, with before and after scenarios, can be accessed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6ia9rXlmyU&list=PL3T8VDvcuEJxJKJ4cS0mv7t77lmmzX1MG&index=1>