

CMS Service Level by Frequency

National EMS Database Report Specification

Purpose

This report provides national information regarding the distribution of cardiac arrest etiologies among EMS attended arrests occurring before or after EMS scene arrival.

Definitions

1. **CMS Service Level:** CMS Service level definitions are reproduced from: CMS Manual System, Publication 100-02 Medicare Benefit Policy, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Department of Health and Humans Services (DHHS), March 30, 2007.

Basic Life Support (BLS) - Basic life support (BLS) is transportation by ground ambulance vehicle and the provision of medically necessary supplies and services, including BLS ambulance services as defined by the State. The ambulance must be staffed by an individual who is qualified in accordance with State and local laws as an emergency medical technician-basic (EMT-Basic). These laws may vary from State to State or within a State. For example, only in some jurisdictions is an EMT-Basic permitted to operate limited equipment onboard the vehicle, assist more qualified personnel in performing assessments and interventions, and establish a peripheral intravenous (IV) line.

Basic Life Support (BLS) - Emergency - When medically necessary, the provision of BLS services, as specified above, in the context of an emergency response. An emergency response is one that, at the time the ambulance provider or supplier is called, it responds immediately. An immediate response is one in which the ambulance provider/supplier begins as quickly as possible to take the steps necessary to respond to the call.

Advanced Life Support, Level 1 (ALS1) - Advanced life support, level 1 (ALS1) is the transportation by ground ambulance vehicle and the provision of medically necessary supplies and services including the provision of an ALS assessment or at least one ALS intervention. An advanced life support (ALS) assessment is an assessment performed by an ALS crew as part of an emergency response that was necessary because the patient's reported condition at the time of dispatch was such that only an ALS crew was qualified to perform the assessment. An ALS assessment does not necessarily result in a determination that the patient requires an ALS level of service. An advanced life support (ALS) intervention is a procedure that is in accordance with State and local laws, required to be done by an emergency medical technician-intermediate (EMT-Intermediate) or EMT-Paramedic.

Advanced Life Support, Level 1 (ALS1) - Emergency - When medically necessary, the provision of ALS1 services, as specified above, in the context of an emergency response. An emergency response is one that, at the time the ambulance provider or supplier is

called, it responds immediately. An immediate response is one in which the ambulance provider/supplier begins as quickly as possible to take the steps necessary to respond to the call.

Advanced Life Support, Level 2 (ALS2) - Advanced life support, level 2 (ALS2) is the transportation by ground ambulance vehicle and the provision of medically necessary supplies and services including (1) at least three separate administrations of one or more medications by intravenous push/bolus or by continuous infusion (excluding crystalloid fluids) or (2) ground ambulance transport, medically necessary supplies and services, and the provision of at least one of the ALS2 procedures listed below: a. Manual defibrillation/cardioversion; b. Endotracheal intubation; c. Central venous line; d. Cardiac pacing; e. Chest decompression; f. Surgical airway; or g. Intraosseous line.

Paramedic Intercept (PI) - Paramedic Intercept services are ALS services provided by an entity that does not provide the ambulance transport. This type of service is most often provided for an emergency ambulance transport in which a local volunteer ambulance that can provide only basic life support (BLS) level of service is dispatched to transport a patient. If the patient needs ALS services such as EKG monitoring, chest decompression, or I.V. therapy, another entity dispatches a paramedic to meet the BLS ambulance at the scene or once the ambulance is on the way to the hospital. The ALS paramedics then provide services to the patient. This tiered approach to life saving is cost effective in many areas because most volunteer ambulances do not charge for their services and one paramedic service can cover many communities. Prior to March 1, 1999, Medicare payment could be made for these services, but only when the claim was submitted by the entity that actually furnished the ambulance transport. Payment could not be made directly to the intercept service provider. In those areas where State laws prohibit volunteer ambulances from billing Medicare and other health insurance, the intercept service could not receive payment for treating a Medicare beneficiary and was forced to bill the beneficiary for the entire service. Paramedic intercept services furnished on or after March 1, 1999, may be payable separate from the ambulance transport, subject to the requirements specified below. The intercept service(s) is:

- Furnished in a rural area;
- Furnished under a contract with one or more volunteer ambulance services; and,
- Medically necessary based on the condition of the beneficiary receiving the ambulance service.

In addition, the volunteer ambulance service involved must:

- Meet the program's certification requirements for furnishing ambulance services;
- Furnish services only at the BLS level at the time of the intercept; and,
- Be prohibited by State law from billing anyone for any service.

Finally, the entity furnishing the ALS paramedic intercept service must:

- Meet the program's certification requirements for furnishing ALS services, and,

- Bill all recipients who receive ALS paramedic intercept services from the entity, regardless of whether or not those recipients are Medicare beneficiaries.

For purposes of the paramedic intercept benefit, a rural area is an area that is designated as rural by a State law or regulation or any area outside of a Metropolitan Statistical Area or in New England, outside a New England County Metropolitan Area as defined by the Office of Management and Budget. The current list of these areas is periodically published in the Federal Register.

Specialty Care Transport (SCT) - Specialty care transport (SCT) is the interfacility transportation of a critically injured or ill beneficiary by a ground ambulance vehicle, including the provision of medically necessary supplies and services, at a level of service beyond the scope of the EMT-Paramedic. SCT is necessary when a beneficiary's condition requires ongoing care that must be furnished by one or more health professionals in an appropriate specialty area, for example, emergency or critical care nursing, emergency medicine, respiratory care, cardiovascular care, or a paramedic with additional training. The EMT-Paramedic level of care is set by each State. Care above that level that is medically necessary and that is furnished at a level of service above the EMT-Paramedic level of care is considered SCT. That is to say, if EMT-Paramedics - without specialty care certification or qualification - are permitted to furnish a given service in a State, then that service does not qualify for SCT. The phrase "EMT-Paramedic with additional training" recognizes that a State may permit a person who is not only certified as an EMT-Paramedic, but who also has successfully completed additional education as determined by the State in furnishing higher level medical services required by critically ill or critically injured patients, to furnish a level of service that otherwise would require a health professional in an appropriate specialty care area (for example, a nurse) to provide. "Additional training" means the specific additional training that a State requires a paramedic to complete in order to qualify to furnish specialty care to a critically ill or injured patient during an SCT.

Fixed Wing (FW) Air Ambulance - Fixed Wing air ambulance is the transportation by a fixed wing aircraft that is certified by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as a fixed wing air ambulance and the provision of medically necessary services and supplies.

Rotary Wing (RW) Air Ambulance - Rotor Wing air ambulance is the transportation by a helicopter that is certified by the FAA as a rotary wing ambulance, including the provision of medically necessary supplies and services.

2. **Percentage:** The number of items with a certain characteristic divided by the total number of items in the sample and multiplied by 100. For example, the percentage that represents five out of 20 complaints is 5 divided by 20 x 100, which is 25%.

Required Data Elements

- * E05_04: Unit Notified by Dispatch Date/Time
- * E07_34: CMS Service Level

1. The Unit Notified Date (E05_04) is used to select the records for the Date Range

Formulas

None

Exclusions/Limitations

Null values reported for CMS service level may be not included in the national charts or tables. The actual number of excluded cases will vary based upon the date range specified for each chart (see specific chart footer for number of excluded cases).