Date: April 7, 2020

To: All Monterey County EMS System Participants

From: John Beuerle, M.D, EMS Medical Director
Monterey County EMS Agency

Regarding: Airway Management Modifications and Considerations

In an effort to reduce the risk of unnecessary potential CoVID exposure, the EMS Agency Medical Director is recommending the following airway-management techniques during the course of the pandemic.

- Avoid nebulized treatments, CPAP, and prolonged bag-valve-mask ventilation, as these treatments increase spread of aerosolized particles.
- When possible, use supraglottic airways (i-gel, LMA, King tube) instead of endotracheal intubation to allow for more distance between patients and EMS professionals during airway management.
- When possible, use plastic-barrier precautions for patients receiving CPAP, MDI or nebulizer treatments, intubation or supraglottic airway placement, or bag-valve-mask ventilation. Plastic barriers should be clear, thick enough to not tear, and large enough to cover the entire face and upper chest and to drape down all sides of the head. All patients for whom plastic-barrier precautions are initiated should receive some form of supplemental oxygen, and the plastic barrier should be loose enough to allow space above the face and evacuation of carbon dioxide. (Figures 1 & 2)
- BVM ventilation, intubation, or insertion of a supraglottic airway can be performed with the provider’s hands under the drape to limit spread of aerosolized viral particles.
Figure 1: Example of a plastic barrier draped over a mayo stand.

Figure 2: Example of a plastic barrier draped over PVC pipe.