

## **REFUSAL OF TREATMENT BY MINOR-AGED PATIENTS AT ACCIDENT SCENES**

When the District is summoned to an auto accident scene, which involves minor patients, the District should handle the minor's treatment as follows:

- Question the patient in order to obtain basic information regarding the patient's background (name, address, and age).
- Attempt to ascertain whether the patient exhibits any visible signs, or complaints of symptoms, which suggest that the minor may have suffered injury.
- Question the patient regarding any possible mechanism of injury, in light of property damages observed (cracked windshield, bent steering wheel).
- Observe the scene and patient for significant mechanisms of injury. Significant mechanisms of injury include:
  - Ejection from automobile
  - Death or patient with an altered mental status in same passenger compartment
  - Extrication time > 20 minutes
  - Falls > 20 feet
  - Rollover
  - High-speed auto crash - Initial speed > 40 mph
    - Major auto deformity > 20 inches
    - Intrusion into passenger compartment > 12 inches
  - Auto-pedestrian/auto-bicycle injury with significant (> 5 mph) impact
  - Pedestrian thrown or run over
  - Motorcycle crash > 20 mph or with separation of rider from bike
- 5. Encourage the minor to seek medical attention, while attempting to contact a parent, if positive signs/symptoms are present.
- 5. If the minor continues to refuse treatment, note the refusal on the District's form; suggest to the minor that he/she seek medical attention; note the suggestion on the form, and include other pertinent information such as degree of damage (or lack thereof) to the vehicle.
- 5. District personnel should insist on treatment only if the minor's conditions suggest to District personnel that a significant risk of injury will result if his or condition is not treated.

5. However, the decision regarding the patient's potential risk must ultimately be made by a physician or peace officer, and therefore, any questions or concerns should be addressed to a police officer on scene.
5. If the police officer does not order the minor patient to be transported to the hospital for his/her own treatment, District personnel may clear the scene. All refusal forms and run sheets must be documented accordingly.
5. District personnel must never mandate that a minor, without a responsible adult's express approval, be transported in ambulances to a medical facility against the minor's wishes.
5. *If a minor requests treatment and a parent or guardian refuses access to the minor or denies permission to render treatment, District personnel should refer to paragraphs 7 and 9 above.*

Adopted: 03/14/01