Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

Subject: **AMBULANCE HANDOVER IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS**

Superseded by MP 0199/26 Ambulance Transfer of Care Policy on 28 August 2026

SCOPE

This policy applies to all WA metropolitan adult tertiary hospitals.

BACKGROUND

Current practice recommends that patients that arrive at metropolitan Emergency Departments (ED) by St. John Ambulance Australia (SJAA) should be triaged as soon as practicable after arrival for optimal patient safety and quality of care. The patient continues to remain in the care of SJAA until formal handover occurs with ED.

CURRENT STATUS

All ambulance patients are now to be clinically handed over by SJAA to the receiving hospital staff and the patient transferred from the ambulance stretcher within 30 minutes of ambulance arrival.

A Rapid Assessment Team (RAT) or equivalent, headed by a senior clinician, should be utilised to expedite triage and subsequent care. The RAT should be operational between the hours of 1000 - 2200 or at a minimum during peak hours.

Early assessment and decision making will ensure patients receive the right care at the right time and improve patient flow through the ED.

Triage of Metropolitan Emergency Department Patients that Arrive via Ambulance into the Waiting Room provides direction with regard to the triage of ED patients that arrive via ambulance, into the waiting room.

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