

10/19/2016

Attention: Rule Making Coordinator
Office of NC DHHS

Reference: Continuance of 10A NCAC 13P.204

Henderson County Emergency Medical Services would like to express concerns with the recent decision to allow air medical services that are not affiliated with EMS or hospital systems to establish themselves within North Carolina. North Carolina's current air medical programs have been recognized as a model for safety, quality, and innovation. Through coordination with EMS and state trauma system providers, residents in our state are ensured high quality medical care. These providers represent experienced critical care professionals that have always had a high level of medical oversight through the trauma centers.

In addition to the concern for quality patient care, we also have concerns regarding financial patient protections. Currently each of North Carolina's air medical programs is associated with non-profit hospital systems which have financial assistance and charity care policies. At the time of a medical emergency, the last thing a patient or their family should be worried about is their bill or if they will be able to afford services delivered.

We encourage the state to consider the requirement for health care providers or transport services to be transparent with their billing practices and establish strict patient care standards with ongoing quality control measures, without this the patient will be the one to suffer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Barnett,
EMS Manager
Henderson County EMS
Office: (828) 697-4825