

Kenosha Fire Department

Monthly EMS Continuous Quality Improvement Newsletter



April 2022

The April CQI meeting was spent debriefing refresher discussions around lights and sirens use. Thanks to all who were present and contributed to the discourse at Strawberry Creek. The CQI Team wanted to use this month's newsletter to highlight common L&S themes.

Call Upgrading

Why does the guideline allow for response upgrading? Can things be more black and white?

No computer system is capable of taking all of the factors that may contribute to a decision to use L&S into consideration. As a result, no L&S guideline can provide strict recommendations on when L&S should be used. It is a national recommendation that EMS crews have the final decision on response mode. Below is some more information that can be considered when deciding if L&S is appropriate. Please consider multiple facets of each call. Just because it's rush hour doesn't mean all calls should be emergent.

This list is not exhaustive.

Environmental Factors

A patient injured outside in below zero January is different from the same patient outside on a beautiful spring day. In particular, trauma patients are at a high risk for hypothermia that could contribute to worse outcomes.

Availability of city resources

Monitoring the status of other units may warrant a L&S response for a more timely return to service, with the goal of maintaining available resources for the community. At times, mutual aid may still be necessary.

Calls outside your response district

This should not be an automatic trigger to use L&S, but when added to the other factors may impact your response decision.

Lack of information

If you think additional information would help inform your L&S decision, review the notes of

the CAD and consider asking dispatch for more info. They probably know more than what landed in the dispatch narrative. If you still have unanswered questions that you believe would impact your response, upgrading can be considered.

Traffic conditions

Moving across the city during times of busy traffic may take significantly longer than is normal. Remember that sometimes L&S may cause additional delay such as in busy single lane traffic.

Patient factors

Be mindful of extremes of age, concerning information in the dispatch notes or something else that doesn't sit well.

Review of Upgraded Alpha Calls

Will there be repercussions for upgrading calls?

Lights and Siren is a medical intervention. As a result, it falls under the CQI Team similar to all other aspects of patient care. The CQI Team and the leadership of KFD fully supports your decision to upgrade a response based on your assessment of the dispatch code as well as other information that is available to you. We believe that your response mode is based on an objective evaluation of the data available to you as well as a desire to do what's best for your patient and the other drivers on the road and in the community. **So long as your decision to upgrade is based on these core principles, there will be no retribution for a decision to go emergent to a call.** CQI cases are reviewed by a team of your peers with representatives from each station. Please document your reasoning to upgrade traditionally non-emergent calls. The criteria above can help guide this decision.

CQI Team Representation by Station

Station 1 FF Corwith/FFPKroening
Station 4 Lt. Stahl

Station 2 FFP Alia/ FFP Knopes
Station 6 FFP Mercado/

Station 4 FFP Belsky/TBD
Station 7 FFP Bonczkowski/Dahl