

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
VA HEALTHCARE NETWORK
UPSTATE NEW YORK AT SYRACUSE**

**Medical Center Professional Memorandum
Chief of Staff 11-132**

April 2015

**CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR) BASIC LIFE SUPPORT (BLS)
AND ADVANCED CARDIAC LIFE SUPPORT (ACLS) TRAINING FOR STAFF**

I. PURPOSE:

To establish a policy for identifying the training, certification and accountability of staff who will be performing CPR, Basic Life Support and Advanced Cardiac Life Support. Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) will be offered to VHA clinical staff in accordance with the American Heart Association (AHA) Guidelines and the Resuscitation Education Initiative (REdi) National Training Center Guidelines

Note: Current Basic Life Support (BLS) certification is required prior to receiving Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) certification.

II. POLICY:

It is the policy of this Medical Center to provide appropriate medical emergency care to any individual in need on VAMC premises. Identified staff will maintain current CPR education and or ACLS education using the current American Heart Association (AHA) and Resuscitation Education Initiative (REdi) guidelines in order to meet this obligation.

III. PROCESS:

A. BASIC LIFE SUPPORT

1. BLS education encompasses many programs (BLS for Healthcare Providers/ Heartsaver/AED and others). These trainings include recognition of cardiac arrest, access to the emergency response system, and basic CPR skills such as pulmonary ventilation and chest wall compressions, and the use of an AED.
2. BLS education is mandatory, every two years following current AHA guidelines, for **all staff having direct patient care and who respond to Code Blue announcements.**

- a. Nursing Personnel who provide direct patient care (**RN, LPN, CNA, NA**) practicing in **Inpatient, Outpatient, and Home-based Primary Care areas.**
- b. Respiratory Therapists
- c. **Social Workers**
- d. **Medical Instrument Technicians**
- e. **Nuclear Medicine Technicians**
- f. **Cardiology Technician**
- g. **Radiology Technicians**
- h. Physical Therapists
- i. Occupational Therapists
- j. Speech Therapists
- k. Recreation Therapists
- l. **Mental Health Therapists**
- m. **Psychology Therapists**
- n. Dental **hygienists, and assistants** (excluding clerical staff)
- o. Medical staff, including Physician Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, and Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists
- p. **Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (CNS, CNL)**
- q. **Ophthalmology Health Technicians**
- r. VA Police Officers (annually per VHA handbook 0730)

- s. **Pharmacists**
 - t. Contractors and volunteers requiring BLS or BLS/ACLS by local leadership must obtain their respective ACLS/BLS through their respective organizations or show a current AHA card.
 - u. Health care trainees will be required to maintain BLS or ACLS certification required by their national accrediting body or local program certification standards. Their records will be maintained by the sponsoring institution.
3. **Employees are responsible** to renew BLS education every 2 years as noted on the HealthCare Provider Card, Recommended Renewal date . Failure to renew may result in the employee being removed from the patient care area until requirement is fulfilled.
 4. BLS education is provided by the Medical Center's Education Department throughout the year.
 5. All new employees in areas indicated above will provide documentation of current BLS education. Those employees, who fail to fulfill this condition, must make arrangements to complete this requirement during the orientation period.
 6. All personnel required to maintain BLS **certification** will initiate emergency measures as indicated and continue until the Code Team arrives.
 7. If any personnel required to maintain BLS education is unable to perform CPR due to medical conditions, they must have a written statement from their physician outlining those restrictions and the time frame of those restrictions. The restrictions will be submitted to the respective supervisor and Employee Health office by the employee.
 8. When a Supervisor receives an authorized CPR exemption statement from an employee's physician, he/she will notify the TMS Domain Manager in Education. The TMS Domain Manager

will temporarily or permanently, depending on the employee's exemption statement, remove CPR requirement from the employee's TMS curriculum.

9. When or if the employee is able to perform CPR, as authorized by the employee's physician, the employee will submit the physician's written statement to their Supervisor and to the Employee Health Office. The Supervisor will contact the TMS Domain Manager in Education. The TMS Domain Manager will re-enter CPR training requirement on the employee's TMS curriculum.

B. ADVANCED CARDIAC LIFE SUPPORT (ACLS):

1. Advanced Cardiac Life Support Provider Course is Emergency Coronary Care education designed to teach participants the knowledge and skills needed to evaluate and manage the first ten minutes of an adult ventricular fibrillation/ventricular tachycardia arrest. Educational focus is on definitive treatment aimed at restoring normal heart and ventilation action via use of adjunctive equipment, medications and special techniques for establishing and maintaining effective ventilation and circulation.
2. ACLS certification is mandatory for the following staff every 2 years following AHA guidelines.
 - a. **Health Care personnel that order administer, monitor, or supervise moderate sedation, monitored anesthesia care, or general anesthesia, including dental providers.**
 - b. **Privileged LIPs and registered nurses who work in the following high risk or critical areas:**
 - i. **Intensive Care Units**
 - ii. **Telemetry Unit**
 - iii. **Operating Room**
 - iv. **Post-operative recovery areas**
 - v. **Same Day Surgery**
 - vi. **Emergency Department**
 - vii. **Respiratory Department – therapists**

- viii. **Procedure rooms – Cardiac Catherization, Electrophysiology, Interventional Radiology, Gastroenterology Endoscopy Laboratories**
 - ix. **Any Provider, including the Medical Officers of the Day, which would be required to serve as ‘Code Leader’.**
3. Employees are responsible to renew ACLS certification every 2 years by the expiration date. Failure for providers to renew will result in forfeiture of moderate sedation privileges (including administering, monitoring or supervising residents). Failure for nurses to renew will also result in forfeiture of moderate sedation privileges (including assisting or monitoring of patients) as well as the removal of privileges to independently transport or supervise any monitored patient.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. The Education department is responsible for maintaining equipment, materials and scheduling training classes in BLS and ACLS **education**. A mechanism is in place to identify expiration dates for BLS/ACLS for all clinically-active staff. Reminders are sent to personnel 60 days prior to the expiration date of the certification and every 15 days thereafter until the training is complete. The purpose of this mechanism is to minimize the number of clinically-active staff with an expired BLS/ACLS certification.

BLS and ACLS course completion may be attained through online, live or simulation training for current staff. Proof of successful BLS completion of on-line training from an AHA accredited course plus skills training demonstration with a certified AHA instructor (or completion of DVA REdi training tools) must take place within 60 days or less of completion of the didactic online course.

- B. Facility Talent Management System (TMS) Learning Manager in the Office of Education is responsible for assigning the BLS and ACLS curriculum with two years training requirements to the TMS learning plans of identified staff and recording employees’ BLS and ACLS training into this education tracking system. One license for the online course will be provided per individual by REdi at no cost.

- C. VA TMS will generate electronic mail reminders to the employees and their respective supervisors in advance of due date for retraining need.
- D. Employees completing BLS or ACLS courses outside our VA must show current card to the Education staff for sight verification for entry into our local TMS education tracking record. Acceptable outside agencies are the American Heart Association (AHA) or Military Training Network (MTN).
- E. Employees completing courses outside the facility must present a current American Heart Association card to the Education TMS Learning Manager for verification and the current completion status will be entered in to the TMS database website.
- F. Care Line Managers and Nurse Managers will be responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and for maintaining documentation of employee BLS and ACLS education/training completion.
- F. The facility Chief of Staff (COS)/Associate Director for Patient and Nursing Services (ADPNS) has the authority to grant written waivers to the BLS and ACLS training requirement for any individual under their supervision if there is a justified rationale for not completing the requirements and is responsible for documenting and tracking all granted waivers. This waiver authority also applies to highly-specialized clinical contractors or other non-VA employees, if it is determined that it is in the best interest of Veteran care and access to care. In these cases, the safety of Veterans must be ensured by having sufficient BLS or ACLS trained personnel within the procedure or operating room. A written waiver shall not exceed 60 days.
- G. The COS and ADPNS may grant written waivers of up to 60 days for individuals under their supervision whose certifications have expired if it is in the best interest of Veteran care and access to care. The individual must submit a written request for waiver through their chain of command within 5 business days prior to the expiration of their certification. The individual must complete the recertification within the waived time period. An additional 30 days may be granted at the discretion of the COS and ADPNS based due to extenuating circumstances (example: illness or injury).

- H. It is the responsibility of the COS and ADPNS to determine whether or not to allow an individual on a waiver for BLS/ACLS training to participate in direct patient care.
- I. BLS and ACLS education training is recorded into the education tracking system (TMS) so employees and supervisors can monitor completion needs.

V. REFERENCES:

VHA Directive **1177**, entitled “Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Advanced Cardiac Life Support Training for Staff” dated **November 6, 2014**

VA HANDBOOK 0730, entitled “Police and Security” dated August 11, 2000.

American Heart Association. (2010). Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support Provider Manual. AHA, Dallas, Tx.

American Heart Association. (2010). BLS for healthcare providers. AHA, Dallas TX.

REdi Program Administration Manual 2013

VI. RESCISSION:

Medical Center Professional Memorandum 11-132 Basic Life Support & Advanced Cardiac Life Support Certification dated November 2014

VII. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:

Critical Care Committee

VIII. REVIEW DATE:

April 2017

S ASIF ALI, MD
Acting Chief of Staff