POLICY FOR MANAGEMENT OF MEDICAL EMERGENCIES IN THE UNC SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY
(Adopted by the Department Chairs Committee on March 31, 1999)
(Revisions accepted by the Department Chairs Committee on March 30, 2005)
(Revisions accepted by the Department Chairs Committee on July 8, 2009)
I. Introduction

Medical emergencies in the dental office setting are an unavoidable occurrence. The University of North Carolina School of Dentistry (UNC SOD) experiences approximately 95,000 outpatient visits per year, so it is inevitable that there will be medical emergencies among those patients as well as persons who accompany them. Medical emergencies also occur among our faculty, staff, students, and visitors. The purpose of this policy is to establish the responsibility for patient triage, treatment, disposition and documentation of the emergency incident in both treatment and non-treatment locations within the School of Dentistry Complex. It is the responsibility of School of Dentistry faculty, staff, and student health care providers to be familiar with the medical emergency protocol and basic annual training requirements established by the School of Dentistry. In addition, the School of Dentistry encourages and supports all faculty, staff, and student efforts to seek and maintain advanced emergency training through continuing education courses, e.g. Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS), and Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS).

II. Basic Responsibilities

A. Prevention of Emergencies: Medical History and Vital Signs

All patients who request admission to the School of Dentistry are required to complete a medical history questionnaire for inclusion in their dental patient records. It is the responsibility of the faculty/health care provider to review and update the medical history prior to initiation of treatment. In addition, vital signs (blood pressure and pulse) must be taken and recorded as follows per School of Dentistry policy:

1. Adult patients 18 years old and older: blood pressure and pulse must be taken on each treatment visit to the UNC School of Dentistry
2. Children & adolescent patients, 10-17 years: blood pressure and pulse must be taken on the initial visit to the UNC School of Dentistry and each subsequent 6-month appointment

B. Management of Medical Emergencies in the School of Dentistry Complex During Clinic Hours (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). The School of Dentistry Complex is defined as Brauer Hall, Tarrson Hall, and Old Dental Building.

- An Automated External Defibrillator (AED), located in 086 Brauer Hall, is available for emergency situations. The employee accesses the AED with his/her UNC One Card.
- Employees and students in all instances are to initiate or participate in emergency care to the extent of their education and training.

1. Medical emergencies in clinical areas involving patients receiving dental treatment

For medical emergencies occurring in UNC School of Dentistry treatment areas, the faculty/health care provider assumes responsibility for initial evaluation and appropriate
action. When additional medical assistance is needed, a call to the SOD Medical Emergency Team at 7-3911 is to be made immediately with the caller stating the location and type (if known) of emergency. The caller is to remain on the line so that information can be relayed from the emergency site to the SOD Medical Emergency Team. If the patient is conscious, vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, and respiratory rate) are to be taken immediately and the dental chair positioned according to patient symptoms. An oxygen tank is to be brought to the scene and when appropriate, oxygen is to be administered. If the patient is unconscious, CPR is to be initiated immediately. A chronological recording of the emergency event is to be initiated as soon as sufficient personnel are available.

2. **Medical emergencies in non-clinical areas involving patients, visitors, students, and employees**
   
   For medical emergencies occurring in non-clinical areas of the UNC School of Dentistry, the first person on the scene, employee or student, will initiate emergency treatment as outlined above until a SOD faculty member arrives. It is expected that the first faculty member arriving on the scene assumes responsibility for initial evaluation and appropriate action until the arrival of the SOD Medical Emergency Team.

C. **Management of Medical Emergencies Outside the School of Dentistry Complex or Before or After SOD Clinic Hours (before 8:00 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m. weekdays, on weekends or holidays).** Outside the School of Dentistry complex is defined as outside Brauer Hall, Tarrson Hall, and Old Dental Building

   - An Automated External Defibrillator (AED), located in 086 Brauer Hall, is available for emergency situations. The employee accesses the AED with his/her UNC One Card.
   - Employees and students in all instances are to initiate or participate in emergency care to the extent of their education and training.
   - The first faculty /health care provider at the emergency assumes responsibility for initial evaluation and appropriate action. When additional medical assistance is needed, a SOD employee or student requests assistance from Orange County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) by calling 911. An employee or student must meet Orange County EMS personnel at the Southside Patient Entrance, Brauer Hall and direct them to the emergency patient.

D. **Management of Emergencies at the SOD North Carolina Oral Health Institute (NCOHI) at 4301 Research Commons**

   - Employees and students in all instances are to initiate or participate in emergency care to the extent of their education and training.
   - The first faculty /health care provider at the emergency assumes responsibility for initial evaluation and appropriate action. When additional medical assistance is needed, a SOD employee or student requests assistance from Durham County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) by calling 911. An oxygen tank is to be brought to the scene and when appropriate, oxygen is to be administered. If the patient is unconscious, CPR is to be initiated immediately. A chronological recording of the emergency event is to be initiated as soon as sufficient personnel are available. An employee or student must meet Durham County EMS personnel at the Main entrance, NC Oral Health Institute building and direct them to the emergency patient.
III. SOD Medical Emergency Team

Upon arrival of the SOD Medical Emergency Team, the faculty/health care provider reports the significant medical history of the patient, nature of the emergency situation, patient’s vital signs, and all treatments rendered. **The responsibility for emergency management is transferred to the SOD Medical Emergency Team upon its arrival to the scene.** The SOD Medical Emergency Team, consisting mainly of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery personnel (faculty, residents, & nurses), will be notified of emergency calls and respond. In the absence of designated OMFS faculty members, the senior OMFS resident is the emergency team leader. Event documentation is the responsibility of the nurse or junior OMFS resident.

The SOD Medical Emergency Team leader determines the disposition of the emergent patient.

A. When emergency management is adequate,
   1. Dental treatment may continue.
   2. The patient may leave the UNC School of Dentistry unattended.
   3. The patient is released to the care of a responsible adult.

B. When additional evaluation and treatment is required, 911 is activated, and the patient is assessed and transported by Orange County EMS to the UNC Hospitals Emergency Department. An employee or student must meet Orange County EMS personnel at the Southside Patient Entrance, Brauer Hall and direct them to the emergency patient. The SOD Medical Emergency Team gives report to Orange County EMS upon their arrival. Once responsibility for the patient is transferred, Orange County EMS personnel determine disposition of the patient and further treatment.

IV. Documentation

A. Medical Emergency Record

A SOD Medical Emergency Record is generated each time the SOD Medical Emergency Team responds to a call. The document is completed by a nurse or junior resident, signed by the SOD Medical Emergency Team faculty member present at the patient emergency, and submitted to the SOD Director of Patient Relations within 48 hours. The original medical emergency record is to be included in the SOD patient record (chart) or, for non-patients, in the medical emergency file maintained by the SOD Director of Patient Relations.

B. Incident Report

For all injuries occurring in the UNC School of Dentistry complex, an Incident Report must be generated. For injuries involving SOD patients, the health care provider (student, resident, and/or faculty) completes this report. For injuries involving non-SOD patients, the first School of Dentistry employee/health care provider on the scene of the emergency completes the report with the assistance of the School of Dentistry Director of Patient Relations, if needed. When no provider/employee/witness to an injury is apparent, the SOD Director of Patient Relations completes the Incident Report. All Incident Reports are completed and filed with the SOD Director of Patient Relations **within 48 hours.**
C. Patients of Record

When the emergency involves a SOD patient of record, the faculty/healthcare provider documents the emergency event in the UNC SOD patient record.

V. Related UNC School of Dentistry Training Requirements

A. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Training

1. Requirement
   All employees and students who supervise or provide direct patient/human subject care must maintain current Health Care Providers’ Level Basic Life Support (CPR) certification according to the standards and guidelines of the American Heart Association, the American Red Cross, or their equivalent.

2. Failure to Comply
   Current CPR certification is a condition for maintaining clinical privileges for all employees and students of the UNC School of Dentistry. Failure to maintain current certification results in suspension of clinical privileges in all areas to which the individual is assigned until evidence of successful course completion is presented to the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs. Disciplinary action up to and including dismissal will be initiated for any employee or graduate student who does not bring himself/herself into compliance with this policy. (See UNC School of Dentistry CPR Policy and Human Resources Manual)

B. Medical Emergency Update

1. Requirement
   All full-time employees and graduate students who provide direct/human subject care must attend a Medical Emergency Training Update annually. The UNC School of Dentistry will provide two live training sessions per year and the employee/graduate student must attend one session per calendar year. Annually, a minimum of two OMFS departmental grand rounds will be dedicated to refresher topics dealing with medical emergency prevention and treatment (in lieu of SOD Medical Emergency Update). Date and attendance records will be forwarded to the Nurse Education Clinician.

2. Failure to comply
   Attendance at a SOD Medical Emergency Update or completing its equivalent is an annual requirement and a condition of employment for the above-mentioned employees of the UNC School of Dentistry. Failure to comply with this policy results in suspension of clinical privileges in all areas to which the individual is assigned until evidence of course completion is presented to the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs. Disciplinary action up to and including dismissal will be initiated for any employee or graduate student who does not bring himself/herself into compliance with this policy. (See Human Resources Manual)

C. Advanced Training including Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)

1. All UNC School of Dentistry employees and students are encouraged to train in medical
emergency procedures beyond the required Basic Life Support (BLS) training.
2. Designated SOD Medical Emergency Team members will maintain current ACLS certification.
3. All SOD Medical Emergency Team members will annually attend an update on the use of the defibrillator.
4. If required by the North Carolina Board of Dental Examiners, SOD employees and graduate students will maintain current ACLS and/or PALS certification.

VI. Emergency Equipment Monitoring

A. Oxygen Equipment

Emergency oxygen tanks and related equipment located in Old Dental Building, Brauer Hall, and Tarrson Hall will be checked weekly by the SOD designated employee. Written inspection records will be kept with the equipment detailing date and inspector. Replacement equipment will be ordered by the Nurse Education Clinician.

Emergency oxygen tanks and related equipment located at North Carolina Oral Health Institute (NCOHI) at 4301 Research Commons will be checked weekly by a designated NCOHI employee.

B. Emergency Team Drugs and Equipment

The Nurse Education Clinician (or OMFS emergency nurse in his/her absence) will monitor and update the Dental School emergency drugs and equipment on a weekly basis. The OMFS nurse (or junior OMFS resident and OMFS staff in the nurse’s absence) will inspect and restock emergency drugs and equipment immediately after each emergency call.

C. Departmental Emergency Equipment

All departmentally maintained emergency drugs and equipment must be checked weekly by a member of that department designated by the Chair. Written inspection records will be kept with the equipment detailing date and inspector.