

## **ACTIVATING THE SURGICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (SERT): Columbus Division of Fire and Mutual Aid Partners**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Field limb amputation is a very rare event and should be utilized as a last resort to free a patient only after all other options have been exhausted. The Surgical Emergency Response Team (SERT) is a resource that can be called upon by the Columbus Division of Fire (CFD) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel when they encounter a person who needs procedures which exceed the capabilities of the EMS service and who cannot be extricated and transported in a reasonable amount of time from the scene to definitive treatment. These may include someone who is trapped and requires an emergency amputation, blood loss from trauma that cannot be controlled by conventional means at the scene, or situations where emergency administration of blood products is required.

### **CONSIDERATIONS WHEN REQUESTING A SERT**

- 1) Patient is entrapped and all other options and extrication attempts have been exhausted.
- 2) Extremity entrapment when > one-hour extrication time is anticipated and includes one or more of the following:
  - Amputation will be required.
  - Hemorrhagic shock is present.
  - Respiratory compromise is present.

### **COTS SERT ACTIVATION PROCESSES/PROCEDURE TO A SCENE WITHIN FRANKLIN COUNTY**

- 1) The Incident Commander will be the responsible person to request the SERT by calling the Columbus Fire Alarm Office (FAO).
- 2) The FAO will call the hospital that is on call for SERT to notify them of the activation.
  - a. OSU First call – ED charge nurse 614-293-6546, second call – communications center 614-366-6063.
  - b. Grant first call – Direct line OhioHealth transfer center- 614-566-1572, Second Call – Ohio Health transfer center – 877-933-7264
- 3) The staff at these locations will notify the on-call trauma surgeon that the SERT has been requested by CFD.
- 4) The on-call trauma surgeon will call the FAO and request to be connected to the Incident Commander. The on-call trauma surgeon and Incident Commander will discuss the scene/patient condition/ transport time/extrication efforts/transport mode/all other treatment options in order to determine the need for a SERT response. The on-call trauma surgeon and the incident commander will make the final decision to activate the SERT response.
- 5) The on-call trauma surgeon will notify the FAO and the ED charge nurse of the decision to activate the SERT.
- 6) The SERT will collect and bring all needed supplies including but not limited to the field surgical kit and blood/fluid products per individual hospital protocol (Refer to The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center and the OhioHealth Grant Medical Center protocols).
- 7) The FAO will send the closest available CFD EMS/Fire vehicle to the respective hospital ED to pick up the SERT and take them to the scene of the incident. The paramedics on the transporting vehicle will be responsible for escorting the SERT to the scene and keeping them safe. The CFD EMS/Fire will communicate with the Incident Commander for the event and introduce the SERT to the EMS Officer on scene who will direct them to the patient and explain the situation. The SERT surgeon will assume control of patient care at the scene and during patient transportation to the hospital.
- 8) At the scene, the EMS team continues to provide care per protocol while the SERT surgeon focuses on the extrication procedure. Although EMS and the SERT work collaboratively, the SERT surgeon has final authority over all medical care at the scene.
- 9) The SERT surgeon will perform any procedures outside the scope of practice of the Division of Fire EMS. The CFD personnel will assist the SERT with procedures and interventions that are in their standard EMS protocol.
- 10) After scene stabilization, the patient will be transported to the closest, most appropriate Trauma Center accompanied by the SERT. The SERT will make the decision as to the closest, most appropriate Trauma Center.

### **PEDIATRIC CAVEATS**

The on-call SERT from Grant Medical Center or the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center will be activated as previously outlined in these guidelines. The responding SERT will consult with Nationwide Children's Hospital trauma surgeon leadership, as needed. The patient will be transported to Nationwide Children's Hospital.

### **DEBRIEFING**

An incident debriefing is recommended anytime that the SERT is activated. The debriefing should be coordinated by the requesting scene EMS agency and occur within 30 days following the incident.

### **REFERENCES**

- *Columbus (Ohio) Division of Fire. Standard Operating Procedures 070034, Administrative Protocol, Surgical Emergency Response Team, Reviewed; February, 2019.*
- *OhioHealth Grant Medical Center (Columbus, Ohio). Surgical Emergency Response Team (SERT). Reviewed; February 2019*
- *The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center (Columbus, Ohio). OSU Surgical Emergency Response Team (SERT) Algorithm; Reviewed; February 2019*