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<b>Change Notice</b>		
Notice #	Title	Date Issued
#2024-07-30-01	MEFIRS Updates	July 30, 2024
Superseded	Released By	System Impacted
N/A	Maine EMS	MEFIRS
Implementation Date	September 2, 2024	
<p>Summary: On September 2, 2024, at midnight, three changes will take effect: MRN and Encounter Number are required fields for all transports to a hospital for Emergency Responses, The data element "Is the patient experiencing Homelessness" is updated, and if your reason for choosing the destination is diversion, you must select an option in the "Facility Diverted From" element.</p>		

## Change Item 1: MRN and Encounter Number

### **Description of the change.**

A new validation rule will require EMS clinicians to document the patient's Medical Record Number (MRN) and Encounter Number when:

- The type of service requested is one of the following values:
  - Emergency Response (Primary Response Area)
  - Emergency Response (Intercept)
  - Emergency Response (Mutual Aid)
- The transport disposition is one of these values:
  - Transport by This EMS Unit (This Crew Only)
  - Transport by This EMS Unit with a Member of Another Crew

### **Reason for the change.**

Many EMS clinicians experience a sense of incomplete closure when they transport a patient to the emergency department without receiving updates on the patient's outcome when they transfer care to hospital staff. This lack of follow-up can be frustrating and represents a missed opportunity for mutual learning between EMS clinicians and hospital staff based on their shared experiences.

This bi-directional flow of data allows EMS clinicians to:

- **Excellence**
- **Support**
- **Collaboration**
- **Integrity**
- 

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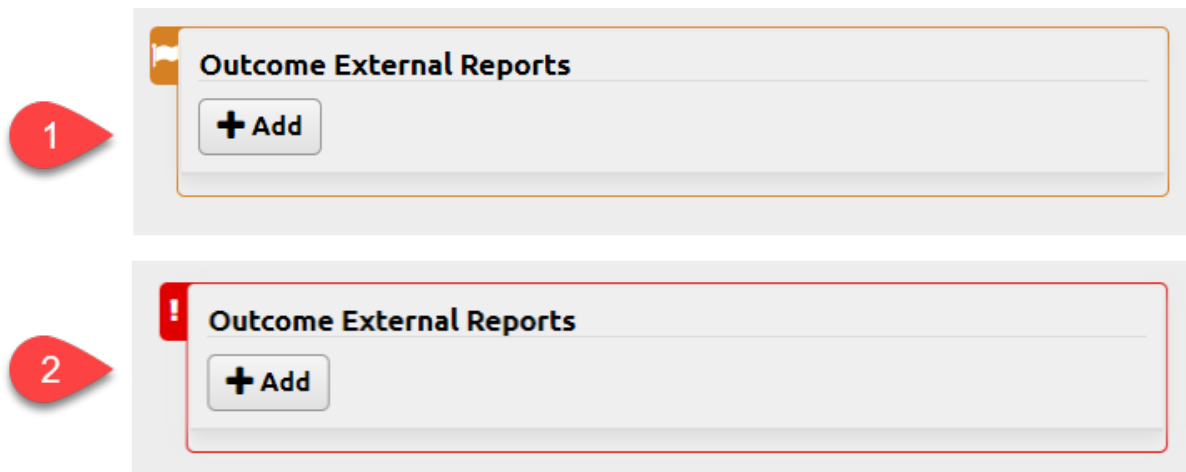
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With offices located at the Central Maine Commerce Center, 45 Commerce Drive, Suite 1, Augusta, ME 04330

- Verify the accuracy of their patient assessment and treatment.
- Identify opportunities for additional education and training.
- Observe geographic and demographic trends and,
- Increase confidence in their assessment skills.

### **Effect on users.**

Beginning at midnight on September 2, EMS clinicians will begin to notice the validation around the current Outcome External reports highlighted in orange (1) fields, which will now be red with five validation points for the MRN and five validation points for the encounter number. (2) The grid will remain red until the EMS clinician documents the MRN and the encounter number. You can find a list of EMS Outcome Data Encounter Number Verbiage [here](#).



## Change Item 2: Patients Experiencing Homelessness

### **Description of the change.**

Maine EMS is replacing a custom value on the run form with a newly released national element with increased functionality. We will remove the field labeled "Is the patient experiencing Homelessness:" and replace it with the field "Alternate Home Residence." The new element has the following values available:

- Homeless
- Foreign Visitor
- Migrant Worker
- And a Not Applicable value.

To maintain the data that EMS agencies have collected regarding the population of their patients experiencing homelessness, Maine EMS is working with Image Trend to retrospectively populate the new field with a selection of "Homeless" when the element "Is the patient experiencing homelessness:" is equal to "Yes."

### **Reason for the change.**

Maine EMS sees value in better understanding the healthcare needs of the portion of our population that is experiencing homelessness. The new element allows us to expand our understanding of certain subsets of our population that access the EMS system. Additionally, this will allow Maine EMS to simplify validation rules for EMS clinicians when they encounter a patient who is a foreign visitor with a complex postal code. As with the homelessness value, assessing migrant workers interacting with EMS allows us to understand better the need for additional resources for a potentially underserved population.

### **Effect on users.**

Beginning at midnight on September 2, EMS clinicians will notice the new data element on the patient demographics panel, as shown below (2). EMS clinicians should continue to ask their patients if they are experiencing homelessness. Instead of directly asking if someone is a migrant worker, EMS clinicians can consider the patient's situation, particularly for migrant workers or those who may struggle to get medical care. Additionally, EMS clinicians documenting a patient with a foreign address can select "Foreign Visitor" to alleviate the postal code requirement.

The image shows a screenshot of a software interface with two data elements. Element 1, labeled '1' in a red teardrop, is 'Is The Patient Experiencing Homelessness:' with three buttons: 'Yes', 'No', and 'Unknown'. Element 2, labeled '2' in a red teardrop, is 'Alternate Home Residence:' with four buttons: 'Homeless', 'Foreign Visitor', 'Migrant Worker', and 'Not Applicable'. A red arrow points to the 'Not Applicable' button.

## Change Item 3: Diversion Facility

### **Description of the change.**

Maine EMS will be adding the requirement related to patients experiencing diversion. When the reason for choosing the destination contains "Diversion," you must also document the facility diverted from.

### **Reason for the change.**

Brown 1 – Hospital Destination choice of the Maine EMS Prehospital Treatment Protocols reads as below:

*"...Diversion is non-binding, and if a patient insists or if the crew deems that bypass is not in the patient's best interest, then going to a hospital on diversion is appropriate. If*

*OLMC contact is not possible, the ambulance crew is authorized to make this determination. OLMC cannot legally refuse these patients."*<sup>1</sup>

Monitoring hospital diversions allows EMS to assess resource availability. When a hospital is on diversion, EMS can redirect patients to other facilities with available capacity. Balancing patient choice and resource constraints is essential for EMS systems. Patient diversion can strain local resources, potentially affecting underserved communities. Robust tracking systems enhance our understanding of these situations.

### **Effect on users.**

Beginning at midnight on September 2, EMS clinicians will notice when documenting the reason for choosing the facility as "Diversion," they will be required to select the "Facility Diverted From."

The screenshot shows a software interface with two main sections. The first section, labeled '1' in a red teardrop, is titled 'Reason for Choosing Destination:' and features a search box with the text 'Find a Value...'. Below the search box, a dropdown menu is open, showing a single option: 'Diversion'. The second section, labeled '2' in a red teardrop, is titled 'Facility Diverted From:' and contains a red-bordered input field with a red warning icon (an exclamation mark inside a triangle) on the left and a dropdown arrow on the right. To the right of the input field is a menu icon (three horizontal lines).

## Summary

On September 2, 2024, at midnight, three changes will take effect:

1. MRN and Encounter Number are required fields for all transports to a hospital for Emergency Responses,
2. The data element "Is the patient experiencing Homelessness?" is updated, and
3. If your reason for choosing the destination is diversion, you must select an option in the "Facility Diverted From" element.

Thank you for all you do; if you have any questions regarding this change notice, please do not hesitate to contact Jason Oko at [jason.a.oko@maine.gov](mailto:jason.a.oko@maine.gov) or call 207-626-3863.

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<sup>1</sup> Medical Direction & Practices Board. (2024a, January 31). *Effective January 31, 2024*. Maine EMS. Brown 1 – Hospital destination Choice <https://www.maine.gov/ems/sites/maine.gov/ems/files/inline-files/2023-Maine-EMS-Protocols-20240124.pdf>