



Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Centre

Northwest Region Prehospital Care Program

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Date: February 8, 2024

To: All Paramedics

Cc: SNEMS, NWEMS, RRDPS, NAOT, & NWRPCP Staff

From: NW Region Prehospital Care Program

Re: Pulse Checks during Cardiac Arrest Management

This correspondence is to provide clarity regarding the process for pulse checks during the management of cardiac arrest. Traditionally, paramedics are instructed to verify the presence or absence of a pulse whenever an organized rhythm is detected during a rhythm check (such as PEA or VT). This approach aligns with ACLS and other established treatment guidelines.

However, recent quality assurance audits have revealed a concerning trend wherein pulse checks are not consistently performed to the required standard. This has resulted in inaccurate interpretations and improper delivery of defibrillation.

In light of this trend, the NWRPCP recommends the following consideration for all paramedics: Regardless of the rhythm observed, we advise incorporating routine pulse checks with each interpretation. This practice will enhance accuracy in interpretation and intervention.

Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated, and we thank you for your ongoing dedication to delivering high-quality patient care.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this guidance, please do not hesitate to reach out to us directly.

Sincerely,

NW Region Prehospital Care Program

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ensemble