State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

JUDITH M. PERSICHILLI, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner

EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE NO: 20-002

Authorization for Paramedics to Work in Hospital Setting

WHEREAS, Coronavirus disease 2019 ("COVID-19") is a contagious, and at times fatal, respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is responsible for the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, which was first identified in Wuhan, the People's Republic of China in December 2019 and quickly spread to the Hubei Province and multiple other countries; and

WHEREAS, symptoms of the COVID-19 illness include fever, cough, and shortness of breath, which may appear in as few as two or as long as 14 days after exposure, and can spread from person to person via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes; and

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a "public health emergency of international concern," which means "an extraordinary event which is determined to constitute a public health risk to other States through the international spread of disease and to potentially require a coordinated international response," and thereafter raised its global risk assessment of COVID-19 from "high" to "very high"; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the CDC expects that additional cases of COVID-19 will be identified in the coming days, including more cases in the United States, and that person-to-person spread is likely to continue to occur; and

WHEREAS, if COVID-19 spreads in New Jersey at a rate comparable to the rate of spread in other affected areas, it will greatly strain the resources, staffing and capabilities of hospitals charged with caring for patients ill with COVID-19 and may become too large in scope to be handled by dedicated hospital medical staff; and

WHEREAS, it is critical to prepare for an increasing number of individuals suspected of having or diagnosed with COVID-19 in New Jersey who require medical care or hospitalization; and

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020 Governor Philip D. Murphy issued Executive Order 103, declaring the existence of a Public Health Emergency, pursuant to the Emergency Health Powers Act, N.J.S.A. 26:13-1 et seq, and a State of Emergency, pursuant to the Disaster Control Act, in the State of New Jersey for COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, under the declared public health emergency, the Commissioner of the Department of Health is empowered, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 26:13-18(a), to require and direct in-State health care providers to assist with the treatment, testing and examination of any individual; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Health recognizes during this public health emergency that hospitals must be afforded the ability and flexibility to maximize staffing capabilities to care for and treat all of their patients,

including those affected by COVID-19, to ensure their patients receive appropriate and necessary medical care; and

WHEREAS, the skill set of certified mobile intensive care paramedics under their scope of practice, which includes the placement of intravenous lines, intubation, EKGs, blood draws and medication administration, is essential for the provision of care in the hospital setting during this public health emergency.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JUDITH PERSICHILLI, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Health, pursuant to the powers afforded to me under the Emergency Health Powers Act, hereby ORDER and DIRECT the following:

1. Notwithstanding the provisions of N.J.S.A. 26:2K-18, hospitals are authorized to utilize New Jersey certified mobile intensive care paramedics in the hospital setting to perform functions and duties within their scope of practice to enhance and supplement their existing medical staff.

2. Advanced life support provider hospitals must continue to maintain advanced life support coverage in their designated certificate of need areas and may not take mobile intensive care units offline in order to use those paramedics in the hospital setting, unless otherwise directed or authorized by the Department of Health.

This Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until such time as it is determined by me that an emergency no longer exists.

Judith Persichilli, R.N., B.S.N., M.A.
Commissioner

3/17/2020
Date