



## Paramedic Protocol Update – AHA Changes Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### ***Why were the Westchester Paramedic Protocols changed?***

To mirror the changes to the American Heart Association 2005 Guidelines for Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS). The New York State Emergency Medical Advisory Committee (SEMAC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) have identified these guidelines as the standard of care for advanced cardiac interventions.

---

### ***Which protocols were changed?***

The following Westchester Paramedic Protocols were amended:

- Protocol 11/Pediatric Protocol 11a: Non-Traumatic Cardiopulmonary Arrest
- Protocol 12/ Pediatric Protocol 12a: Ventricular Fibrillation or Pulseless Ventricular Tachycardia
- Protocol 13/Pediatric Protocol 13a: Asystole
- Protocol 14/Pediatric Protocol 14a: Pulseless Electrical Activity
- Protocol 16/Pediatric Protocol 16a: Ventricular Tachycardia with a Pulse; Stable
- Protocol 17/Pediatric Protocol 17a: Ventricular Tachycardia with a Pulse; Unstable
- Protocol 18: Suspected Myocardial Infarction
- Protocol 19/Pediatric Protocol 19a: Bradydysrhythmias
- Protocol 22/Pediatric Protocol 22a: Supraventricular Tachycardia

In addition to hardcopies mailed to each ALS agency, the new protocols are available on the Westchester Regional EMS website, [www.wremsco.org](http://www.wremsco.org).

---

### ***When do the updated protocols go into effect?***

The updated protocols go into effect **IMMEDIATELY** after the notification from the Westchester Regional EMS Office was distributed on behalf of the Westchester REMAC.

Each credentialed ALS agency must complete and/or ensure the training of their credentialed Paramedics by **MARCH 31, 2008**, and submit a report to the region upon completion. ***Any ALS Agency that fails to complete the process outlined by that time will be operating outside of Westchester REMAC protocol and practice for credentialed ALS Agencies***

---



# W e s t c h e s t e r R E M A C

4 Dana Road, Valhalla, New York 10595 [www.wremsco.org](http://www.wremsco.org)

Phone: (914) 231-1616 Fax: (914) 813-4161

---

***What material must be included in the update training?***

All Paramedics must be in-serviced on new treatment algorithms found in the AHA ACLS and PALS courses and the revised Paramedic Protocols listed above.

An excerpt from the 2005-2006 edition of Currents which reviews all the major changes to ACLS / PALS has been included with this packet.

---

***Is testing required?***

**DEPENDS** – The application of a written and practical exam must be administered regarding new objectives / content related to the new AHA treatment algorithms:

- If proof of completion of ACLS and PALS is used, then the testing is conducted through the AHA course taken and a follow-up content exam is not needed.
- ***IF AN AGENCY SPECIFIC PROGRAM IS DEVELOPED, ALL TRAINING MATERIALS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE SERVICE MEDICAL DIRECTOR.***

At the discretion of the Service Medical Director, a short quiz highlighting the specific changes to the protocols themselves may be developed and administered to the paramedics at that agency.

***Updated March 2008***

---

***Can an AHA ACLS and/or PALS course satisfy the training/testing requirement for the new algorithms?***

**YES** – as long as the provider has a card from an original or refresher course completed after July 1, 2006. (The new material wasn't required to be taught by AHA Instructors until then.)

However completing these AHA courses does not fulfill the requirement to review the new protocols and test each Paramedic's comprehension of the changes.

---

***Do records have to be retained by the agency to document the completion of the updates?***

**YES** - All ALS agencies should keep on file records to document their compliance with the update process that has been outlined. Records that must be kept at the agency so that they may be made available to the Westchester REMAC on demand for inspection.

---

***What records must be retained by the agency to document the completion of the ACLS/PALS update training?***

If an agency intends on requiring Paramedics to complete official AHA ACLS and PALS programs for training on the treatment algorithms, then a copy of the card issued for each course is sufficient.

If an agency intends to develop its own training for the ACLS/PALS treatment algorithms, this documentation must include, but is not limited to:

- Sign-in and sign-out attendance records.
  - Copies of all educational materials used for the purpose of this training.(i.e. presentation material, handouts, etc)
  - Copies of all written evaluation tools used for each provider who completed the training.
-



# W e s t c h e s t e r R E M A C

4 Dana Road, Valhalla, New York 10595 [www.wremsco.org](http://www.wremsco.org)

Phone: (914) 231-1616 Fax: (914) 813-4161

---

- Copies of all practical evaluation tools used for each provider who completed the training.
  - Documentation of any remediation as needed
- 

***What records must be retained by the agency to document the completion of the new protocol in-service?***

A record showing that each Paramedic received a copy of the new protocols.

If a protocol exam is being required by the Service Medical Director, then copies of all written evaluation tools (quizzes) used for each Paramedic who reviewed the new protocols with the agency should be kept as well.

---

***Do all my Paramedics need to complete the update training/ protocol in-service?***

**YES - ALL NYS certified AND Westchester REMAC credentialed Paramedics must complete the identified training and in-servicing.**

Paramedics who work for more than one Westchester-credentialed ALS service as a Paramedic must document completion of the update training/protocol in-service with his/her **PRIMARY AGENCY OF RECORD**. A secondary agency may accept from the Paramedic proof of completion of the update provided by the Primary Agency, or require that the Paramedic complete update training/ protocol in-service again with that service.

A sample affirmation of completion has been created by the Regional EMS Office to assist with this process. It may be found on the Westchester Regional EMS website, [www.wremsco.org](http://www.wremsco.org).

---