



Medical Advisory

MA-2024-01

Cardiac Arrest On-Scene Resuscitation Time

For: Paramedics certified by the RPPEO;
Online Medical Consultation - Base Hospital Physicians

Issue date: February 28, 2024

Effective date: February 28, 2024, until rescinded

Key message

There is no specified on-scene resuscitation time standard for cardiac arrest patients.

Early transport should be considered for patients who are suspected to have a reversible cause of arrest or an increased chance of survival with transport.

If paramedics are considering a consultation for out-of-hospital termination of resuscitation (TOR), life-saving interventions should be performed for 20 minutes to give the patient the best chance of viability before considering a termination order.

Background

The 20-minute consideration in the Medical Cardiac Arrest Directive of the Advanced Life Support Patient Care Standards (ALS PCS) refers only to the out-of-hospital resuscitation time *before considering TOR among patients with the lowest survivability*.

The ALS PCS TOR criteria is based on current evidence suggesting that the longer the resuscitation continues with no shocks and no ROSC, the less likely the patient is to survive. For patients with a more favourable prognosis or those who may benefit from early in-hospital interventions, there is no requirement for paramedics to continue resuscitation on-scene for any specified time. Paramedics should consider early transport for patients who have an increased chance of survival with in-hospital interventions.

Paramedics may patch to the Base Hospital Physician to help consider transport, on-scene resuscitation, or other care decisions for cardiac arrest patients who do not meet TOR criteria, including discussion of DNR wishes.