



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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TO: All EMS-Instructors and Course Coordinators

FROM: Kevin Scott Brown, MS, NREMT-P, EMS-I
State Education and Training Coordinator

REF: Clarification of Spinal Immobilization Testing Criteria

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The State EMT-Basic Practical Examination process has made every effort to provide a consistent, reliable framework for evaluating the readiness of candidates to provide emergency care in Connecticut. The criteria for assessing entry-level competency should be as clear as possible. To assure that process, texts, experts in the field, and area physicians are regularly consulted for input toward the establishment of performance standards.

Teaching and testing standards for long backboard and short spine board fixation sequences have always been clear. Criteria identified by the National Registry and observed by OEMS for several years have identified that the sequence for both long and short spinal immobilization devices should be in the following order:

1. Torso fixation
2. Leg fixation
3. Head fixation.

Many of the commonly used EMT-Basic and Paramedic texts have also identified this sequence as the standard. However, the Kendrick Extrication Device (KED) product manual suggests that the top torso strap be secured last, and after the head is secured. This apparent "exception to the rule" may have contributed to student, instructor and examiner confusion.



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The Office contacted the Ferno –Washington, Inc., the manufacturers of the KED for clarification. Based on responses from Ferno spokespeople and effective immediately, the expected sequence of strap application in the Spinal Immobilization - Seated (if the KED is used) will be: Middle Strap, Lower Strap, Leg Straps, Head Immobilization and lastly the Top Strap, as described in the Ferno KED user manual (attached). Until Skill Sheets for Seated Immobilization – Seated with KED are obtained / developed, all other principles and practices described by the station forms obtainable from the National Registry website will remain in effect. The procedure and standards for the use of short spine board devices for this skill set are unchanged.

Please contact me at 860-509-7551 or at kevin.brown@ct.gov with any questions.

Please be sure to incorporate this clarification in both initial and recertification programs that you conduct, and please contact me with any questions or concerns.