Emergency Medicine Society of South Africa

PRACTICE GUIDELINE
EM007

PATIENT HANDOVER AT EMERGENCY CENTRES
This Practice Guideline sets out a method for patient handover at Emergency Centres. This method helps to ensure that no information is omitted from the handover.

Excluding the cover page, this Practice Guideline is 2 pages.

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Responsible committee member: Prof Lee A Wallis
Effective communication of patient information by prehospital staff is essential to good patient care. In an effort to ensure that the necessary information is transferred with maximum retention by receiving staff, a structured approach is required.

The De M I S T system has proven effective both locally and internationally:

- **De** = Demographics: name, age
- **M** = Mechanism of injury / Illness
- **I** = Injuries sustained/suspected
- **S** = Signs as recorded (observations)
- **T** = Treatment administered; times involved

**STRUCTURED HANOVER**

When EMS arrives to deliver or collect a patient from an Emergency Centre, the handover is done on a one-to-one basis. EMS staff should communicate directly with one Emergency Centre Staff member. For the duration of the handover, all attention should be directed at this communication.