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Community Release: MedStar EMS System Modifying Patient Referral Procedures

Move aims to navigate patients to the most appropriate resources for their medical care

EMS agencies within the Metropolitan Area EMS Authority (MedStar) system are modifying on-scene procedures for patients assessed with **low-acuity** medical complaints who are identified as potentially COVID-19 related.

Patients will receive a full assessment by on scene by EMS personnel. If the patient has signs and symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19, but does not have any priority conditions, or significant risk factors, the patient will be informed that they are in a low risk category, and therefore will most likely will not be tested or receive antiviral medication at the Emergency Department, as there is not one currently available.

The EMS personnel will recommend that the patient **not** go to the ED for evaluation.

The patient will be instructed to contact their primary care provider, and provided with information on home care and self-monitoring instructions, including contact information for the county public health agency, or other resources for further evaluation.

These modifications are being implemented for the following reasons:

1. Assure patients receive the *proper care*, in the *most appropriate setting*.
2. Reduce the risk of patients being exposed to contagious illnesses.
3. Help assure essential hospital services are available for critical patients.