



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### **What is the Emergency Communications Nurse System (ECNS)?**

While all 9-1-1 calls need to be answered as quickly as possible, not every 9-1-1 call needs a lights and sirens response. Not every situation is best served in an emergency room (ER) setting and some can be better assessed and remedied in a non-hospital setting. Based on a 9-1-1 caller's description of their symptoms, they may be transferred to the Emergency Communication Nurse System (ECNS) where a trained Registered ECNS Nurse will determine the most appropriate course of treatment. ECNS will reduce unnecessary ER visits and wait times for you and your loved ones, all while preserving fire, ambulance, and police assistance for life threatening or potentially life-threatening emergencies.

### **How does ECNS work?**

Upon calling 9-1-1, dispatchers will determine if a traditional response (fire, ambulance, police) is required. If a traditional response is not deemed necessary, the caller will be routed to a trained Registered Nurse at the County's 9-1-1 call center. ECNS trained Registered Nurses provide callers with non-life-threatening conditions with services such as local urgent care, all while preserving fire, ambulance, and police assistance for emergencies.

### **How will it be determined if I am transferred to an ECNS Nurse?**

A *certified* Emergency Medical Dispatcher (EMD) will ask you a series of questions when you call 9-1-1 to provide the right course of care for you based on your responses. If your condition is an urgent, life threatening or potentially a life-threatening emergency, the 9-1-1 center will dispatch emergency medical services (fire, ambulance, police) who will assess your symptoms and transfer you to the hospital directly. If, after EMD questioning, your condition is determined to be best served by a trained Registered Nurse, the call will be transferred to the ECNS. This line is staffed by experienced, specially trained, and ECNS-certified Registered Nurses who will be able to provide you with the appropriate care for your condition.

### **What services can an ECNS Nurse provide for me if I don't need an ambulance to the hospital?**

Once on the line with a trained Registered Nurse, they will ask more targeted questions about your situation, assess your symptoms, and determine the most appropriate medical care for your condition.

### **What happens if the ECNS Nurse determines that my condition warrants transport to a hospital emergency department?**

If the trained Registered Nurse determines that your condition is urgent and that you would be best treated at a hospital, they would be able to dispatch emergency medical services to you.

# RIGHT CARE RIGHT TIME

EVERY SECOND COUNTS

## What are the benefits of the ECNS program?

The ECNS program has launched in several other states and has shown success in diverting non-critical calls to the care of nurses. Benefits include:

- Safely managing the growing demands on health care providers by assessing and directing 9-1-1 callers to the appropriate resources and care
- Reducing the demand of already impacted ambulance transportation services
- Reducing unnecessary ER visits and wait times, allowed physicians to quickly assess and care for patients with critical conditions
- Providing patients with appropriate care while being responsive to their needs
- Establishing efficient and effective use of emergency medical services (EMS) and community provider resources
- From a lights and siren response, to speaking to a trained Registered Nurse for additional non-emergency services, ECNS ensures that all 9-1-1 callers will get the *Right Care at the Right Time*.

## When should I call 9-1-1?

9-1-1 calls should be for a serious medical emergency (yourself or someone else) that you believe is life threatening or that may be or become life threatening, for example. Trouble breathing, chest pain, heart attack, cardiac arrest, fainting, a severe allergic reaction, injuries from a fall or accident, seizures, severe pain, or other urgent matters. You should not call 9-1-1 for minor illnesses or injuries, for example, a cold, minor cut, or for a routine or chronic medical matter that can be addressed through an appointment with a primary care physician.

## What is CONFIRE?

The ECNS program is made possible by CONFIRE and various CONFIRE partner agencies. CONFIRE provides regional Fire, Rescue and EMS communications, resource coordination and technology services to enable allied agencies to meet the safety and welfare needs of all those they serve. ECNS Program CONFIRE partner agencies include:

- Apple Valley Fire Protection District
- Big Bear Fire Authority
- Chino Valley Independent Fire
- Colton Fire Department
- Loma Linda Fire Department
- Rancho Cucamonga Fire Department
- Rialto Fire Department
- Redlands Fire Department
- Running Springs Fire Department
- San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
- San Bernardino County Fire District
- Victorville Fire Department