

## **Draft - IMHA HEALTH CARE GUIDELINES ON CRUISE MEDICAL FACILITIES**

The specific medical needs of a cruise ship are dependent on variables such as:

- ship size,
- itinerary,
- anticipated patient mix,
- anticipated number of patients visits, etc.

These factors will modify the applicability of these guidelines especially with regards to:

- staffing,
- medical equipment and
- the ships' formulary.

Medical care on cruise ships would be enhance by ensuring that cruise ships have:

1. A ship medical centre with medical staff (physicians and registered nurses) on call 24 hours/day, examination and treatment areas and an inpatient medical holding unit adequate for the size of the ship. A medical centre with adequate space for diagnosis and treatment of passengers and crew with 360-degree patient accessibility around all beds/stretchers and adequate space for storage.

- ◆ One examination/stabilization room per ship
- ◆ One ICU room/ship
- ◆ Minimum number inpatient beds of one bed/1000 passengers and crew
- ◆ Isolation room or the capability to provide isolation of patients
- ◆ Access by wheelchairs/stretchers
- ◆ Wheelchair accessible toilet on all new builds delivered after January 1, 1997
- ◆ A contingency medical plan defining:
  - one or more locations on the ship that should:
    - be in a different fire - zone
    - be easily accessible
    - have lighting and power supply on the emergency system.
  - portable medical equipment and supplies with:
    - documentation and planning material
    - Medical waste and personal protective equipment
    - Airway equipment, oxygen and supplies
    - IV fluids and supplies
    - Immobilization Equipment and supplies
    - Diagnostic and laboratory supplies
    - Dressings
    - Treatment - medications and supplies
    - Defibrillator and supplies
  - Communication equipment for each member of the medical staff
  - A clear procedure in case the primary medical space cannot be used.

2. Medical staff, who have undergone a credentialing process to verify the following qualifications:

- ◆ Current physician or registered nurse licensure
- ◆ Three years of clinical practice, post-graduate degree

- ◆ Competent skill level in advanced life support and cardiac care.
- ◆ Fluent in the official language of the cruise line
- ◆ Physicians with:
  - board certification in:
    - Emergency medicine or
    - Family practice or
    - Internal medicine
  - OR
  - General practice and emergency medicine experience.
  - Minor surgical skills (i.e. suturing, I&D abscesses etc.)

3. A medical record system with:

- ◆ well organised, legible and consistent documentation of all medical care
- ◆ a system insuring medical record and communication confidentiality.

4. Emergency medical equipment, medications and procedures:

- ◆ Equipment:
  - Airway equipment - bag valve mask, ET tubes, stylet, lubricant, vasoconstrictor, suction equipment (portable)
  - Cardiac monitor and back-up monitor (2)
  - Defibrillator (portable) (2) one of which may be a semi automatic defibrillator
  - External cardiac pacing capability
  - Electrocardiograph
  - Infusion pump
  - Pulse oximeter
  - Nebulizer
  - Automatic or manual respiratory support equipment
  - Oxygen (including portable oxygen)
  - Wheelchair
  - Stair chair and stretcher
  - Refrigerator/freezer
  - Long and short back boards, cervical spine immobilization capability
  - Trauma cart supplies
- ◆ Medications:
 

Emergency medications and supplies for management of common medical emergencies, to include:

  - Thrombolytics and sufficient quantities of advanced life support medications, in accordance with international ALS guidelines, for the management of two complex cardiac arrests.
  - Gastro-intestinal system medications
  - Cardiovascular system medications
  - Respiratory system medications
  - Central nervous system medications
  - Infectious diseases medications
  - Endocrine system medications
  - Obstetrics, Gynaecology and urinary tract disorders medications
  - Nutrition and blood
  - Musculoskeletal and joint disease medications
  - Eye medications

- Ear, nose and oropharynx medications
  - Skin disease medications
  - Immunological products and vaccines
  - Anaesthesia
  - ◆ Procedures:
    - Medical operations manual as required by international safety management code requirements
    - Medical staff orientation to the medical centre
    - Maintenance for all medical equipment
    - Code team trained and updated regularly
    - Mock codes as recommended by ships' physician
    - Emergency preparedness plan as required by the international safety management code
5. Basic laboratory and X-ray capabilities
- ◆ Haemoglobin/haematocrit estimations, urinalysis, pregnancy tests, blood glucose (all with quality control program as recommended by the manufacturer)
  - ◆ X-ray machine for new builds delivered after January 1, 1997
6. A request for patients to provide information regarding any medical needs that may require medical care on board.
7. A health, hygiene and safety program for medical personnel.
- ◆ A regular health, hygiene and safety program for medical personnel
  - ◆ An annual TB screening program for all medical personnel.