



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Bureau for Public Health  
Office of Emergency Medical Services  
State EMS Medical Director's Office

Catherine C. Slemp, MD, MPH  
Commissioner & State Health Officer

Bill J. Crouch  
Cabinet Secretary

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** April 21, 2020

**TO:** EMS Agency Official Representatives  
EMS Agency Medical Directors  
EMS Prehospital Providers

**FROM:** Michael Mills, DO, FACEP  
State OEMS Medical Director

**RE: Use of King Airway Initially Versus First Using an ET Tube During  
Coronavirus (COVID 19) Pandemic**

On March 30, 2020, the West Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) released a memorandum regarding PPE Procedures During Advanced Airway Management and Cardiac Arrest During COVID-19 Pandemic

The OEMS and Medical Policy Care Committee (MPCC) have received several requests regarding the ability of West Virginia EMS Prehospital Providers to utilize the King Airway versus the current recommendation of one attempt using an ET Tube and then utilizing the King Airway.

The King Airway is more likely to develop leaks secondary to improper sealing after inflation of the balloon; however, the King Airway is less time consuming for placement.

Based on risk-benefit, the MPCC has agreed to permit WV EMS Prehospital Providers to utilize placement of the King Airway initially versus one attempt with an ET Tube and then using a King Airway. **This is effective immediately, April 21, 2020.** This applies to the following providers: EMT, ACT, and Paramedics. This applies to patients needing airway management in the field only. This does not apply to patients needing interfacility transports.

Please follow all other guidelines within the PPE Procedures for Advanced Airway Management and Cardiac Arrest during COVID-19 Pandemic.

cc: Vicki Hildreth, Interim Director, WVOEMS