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REGULATORY/ MEDICAL HEALTH SERVICES

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

DATE: June 14, 2019

TO: ORANGE COUNTY ALS PROVIDERS
ORANGE COUNTY IFT ALS PROVIDERS
ORANGE COUNTY BASE HOSPITAL PHYSICIANS
ORANGE COUNTY BASE HOSPITAL COORDINATORS

FROM: CARL H. SCHULTZ, MD 
MEDICAL DIRECTOR, ORANGE COUNTY EMS

SUBJECT: SHORTAGE OF SODIUM BICARBONATE

There is currently a shortage of sodium bicarbonate for intravenous injection. It is unknown when supply issues for this drug will be resolved.

For providers experiencing difficulty in re-ordering supplies of sodium bicarbonate, they should continue to use unexpired inventory until these current supplies are exhausted. Once this occurs, providers can then use expired sodium bicarbonate for up to 6 months past its expiration date or until supplies of the medication again become available.

If providers wish to use expired sodium bicarbonate, they must inform the patient (if possible) the drug is safe but expired before administration, giving the patient the option to refuse. After administering sodium bicarbonate, the paramedic must inform Orange County EMS by e-mail (cschultz@ochca.com or vsweet@ochca.com) within 24 hours of the patient's name and incident number so that use of the expired drug can be recorded.

Orange County EMS will monitor the availability of sodium bicarbonate and provide notification when it is again generally available for resupply.

CHS:em#3500