GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

November 19, 2007

This statement responds to the following recommendation of the Task Force on Emergency Medical Services:

"The Medical Director, with the support of the City Administrator shall, no later than November 20, 2007, establish and clarify roles and responsibilities for the Department and the Metropolitan Police Department for treatment of uninjured intoxicated patients and for transport of patients to the District's detoxification facility."

We have reviewed the current policies and protocols of the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS) and Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) with respect to the treatment and transport of intoxicated persons (attached). While the current protocols are adequate, we have identified areas for potential improvement in policy, training and inter-agency coordination. The goal of these improvements will be to ensure that individuals who require medical assessments receive them from FEMS, when necessary, and that decisions to transport patients to the District's detoxification facility are based on such assessments.

To that end, we are committed to the following next steps:

- Revising MPD protocols to include additional information and guidance on when a medical assessment of an apparently intoxicated person is necessary and thus FEMS should be called to the scene, and ensuring that officers are educated on the new protocols;
- Participating in joint training exercises in which common scenarios involving complex intoxicated individuals are jointly processed by both agencies;
- Improving existing efforts to identify individuals at high risk of public intoxication and connecting them with appropriate social and health services to minimize the impact of chronic intoxication in particular; and
- Evaluating increasing joint dispatches for both MPD and FEMS to "SIC-MO" and or "Man Down" calls, when necessary according to revised protocols, with inter-agency agreements establishing an incident command structure.

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