



## POLICY ON DATA INTEGRITY RELATING TO DATA COLLECTION WITHIN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

### 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document is a policy of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) and relates to the integrity of data collection within emergency departments.

The policy is applicable to emergency departments in general, and all Fellows of the College.

### 2. POLICY

- 2.1 Key Performance Indicators reflect the efficiency and quality of an emergency service. Data integrity is essential to inform policy and planning decisions.
- 2.2 ACEM believes all Fellows have a moral and professional responsibility to ensure that data generated in the Emergency department is a true and accurate representation of their service. Lack of data integrity has the potential to:
  - Misrepresent emergency performance indicators which would ultimately have a negative impact on patient care and pose added risk to emergency department staff.
  - Negatively impact upon the link between emergency department resourcing and patient outcomes.
  - Undermine the scientific validity of emergency department research
  - Inaccurately measure the effect of any process change within a department or hospital.
- 2.3 ACEM supports the utilisation of uniform measures to ensure data integrity within the hospital system.
- 2.4 ACEM believes that all staff be educated on the importance of data integrity.
- 2.5 ACEM acknowledges that there are situations where there is retrospective data entry. The medical record will inform this data entry. Hence the accuracy of data entry should be independently verifiable in the medical record should an audit be undertaken.

### 3. PROCEDURE AND ACTIONS

- 1.1 All Fellows need to ensure the accuracy of data collection processes relating to their emergency department.
- 1.2 In situations where there is evidence of willful misrepresentation of emergency department data by a Fellow, that Fellow will be referred by the College to the relevant state and/or federal authorities for further investigation.

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- 1.3 In situations where there is evidence of willful misrepresentation of emergency department data by a staff member, that staff member will be referred to the relevant local health, state and/or federal authority for further investigation in accordance with the relevant legislation.
  - 1.4 Any Fellow found guilty of willful misrepresentation of emergency department data will be subject to College disciplinary proceedings.

#### **4. DATES AND NOTES**

*Approved by Council: March 2011*

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