



Rick Scott
Governor

H. Frank Farmer, Jr., M.D., Ph.D.
State Surgeon General

July 29, 2011

Dear Chief Executive Officer:

In accordance with section 395.4025(2)(a), Florida Statutes, this letter is to notify Florida licensed acute care hospitals of their right to submit a Letter of Intent, DH Form 1840, January 2010, to apply to become a trauma center. A hospital that is currently approved as a trauma center and seeks to add another level of service must also submit a Letter of Intent as provided by the statute and rules. The Letter of Intent is non-binding, but is statutorily required to preserve the hospital's right to submit a trauma center application to either become a trauma center or, if already a trauma center, to change designations.

Prior to submitting a Letter of Intent, a hospital that desires to become a trauma center should consider the commitment of resources and personnel required to receive and maintain trauma center designation. Trauma center verification criteria include strict requirements for staffing, surgical and non-surgical specialists' availability, response times, training, quality improvement, injury prevention and community education. As all hospitals know, the cost of personnel is the largest expense item for patient care. This expense increases by a significantly greater amount for trauma centers.

These requirements also include specialized supplies, equipment and infrastructure, including a trauma registry. None of this is easy, cheap or quick to create and, more importantly, maintain. All of it is vital to becoming a verified trauma center.

We strongly recommend you review the Trauma Center Standards, Department of Health Pamphlet 150-9, January 2010, to see what is required of trauma centers. We also recommend reviewing your trauma service area and compare the current number of trauma centers with the number of slots set aside, pursuant to Rule 64J-2.010(3), Florida Administrative Code.

Section 395.4025(2)(a), Florida Statutes, provides, "In order to be considered by the department, a hospital that operates within the geographic area of a local or regional trauma agency must certify that its intent to operate as a state-approved trauma center is consistent with the trauma services plan of the local or regional trauma agency, as approved by the department, if such agency exists." A list of contact persons for approved trauma agencies is enclosed.

In order to be eligible for approval as a trauma center, a hospital must complete an application; either the Level I Trauma Center Application Manual, January 2010; the Level II Trauma Center Application Manual, January 2010; or the Pediatric Trauma Center Application Manual, January 2010, depending on which level is identified in the Letter of Intent. The application must be submitted to the Department of Health, Office of Trauma on or before April 2, 2012.

If the hospital does not submit a completed application or does not request an extension to complete its application by April 2, 2012, in accordance with Rule 64J-2.013, Florida Administrative Code, the

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hospital's Letter of Intent is void. This includes existing trauma centers applying for expansion of services for the 2012 application cycle.

Attached is the DH Form 1840, January 2010. Please read the instructions carefully when completing this form. For the department to consider the Letter of Intent, the enclosed DH Form 1840, January 2010, must be completed and returned to the department at the address on the letterhead. Letters of Intent postmarked earlier than September 1, 2011, or later than midnight, October 1, 2011, shall not be accepted by the department. Facsimile transmissions to (850) 488-2512 will be accepted. No later than October 14, 2011, the department will send a letter acknowledging receipt of each hospital's Letter of Intent with directions on how to complete the application process.

If you have any questions regarding the Letter of Intent or the trauma center application process, please call Bernadette Behmke at (850) 245-4444, extension 2756, or me at extension 2760.

Please visit the Department of Health's website to review statutes, rules, standards and applications pertinent to the Letter of Intent and application process at:
<http://doh.state.fl.us/demo/Trauma/index.html>, Letter of Intent 2011.

Sincerely,

M. Susan McDevitt, RN, MS, MBA, FACHCA
Executive Community Health Nursing Director
Consultant

MSM/bb
Enclosures
DH Form 1840, January 2010
List of contact persons for approved trauma agencies
cc: Trauma Medical Directors
Trauma Program Managers