CERS Assist is the provision of urgent additional clinical assistance in response to a rapidly deteriorating patient in a public health care facility. A CERS Assist request should be considered if a facility is unable to provide sufficient clinical resources to manage the rapidly deteriorating patient (red zone) as defined in the AHS CERS Plan.

WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND OF THE CERS ASSIST INITIATIVE?
The Ambulance CERS Assist initiative has been developed in conjunction with the Between the Flags Program and NSW Health Policy Directive, The Recognition and Management of Patients who are Clinical Deteriorating (PD 2010_026). This initiative has come about as the result of Ambulance being identified as an agency that may have capacity to provide additional assistance in response to clinical emergencies especially at rural and remote locations across the state.

IS CERS ASSIST A STATE WIDE PROGRAM?
Given the broad geographical spread and varying health needs across AHS, Ambulance has prioritised its focus on assisting health care facilities with a role delineation of Level 1 and Level 2 (predominately in rural remote locations) where high level nursing and medical services may not be immediately available. On occasion Level 3 facilities with external co-located buildings may require a CERS Assist response depending on local circumstances. It is not anticipated that higher level facilities in metropolitan and regional areas will require this service.

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT CERS ASSIST?
> Ambulance’s CERS Assist initiative should be viewed as an enhancement to existing health care services and is not intended as a substitute for existing or planned medical or nursing services;
> The Ambulance Service’s core function of responding to emergencies in the community will remain its priority. This means that ambulances may be engaged on emergency calls in the community and may not be available for a hospital response;
> Where Ambulance has the capacity to respond, this response will be to the level of basic life support i.e. cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, including airway management and defibrillation skills;
> In situations in which paramedics are required to work as part of the health care team the paramedics will take instructions from the most senior clinician;
> Ambulance paramedics who have been dispatched by Ambulance in the course of their normal ambulance duties are governed by Ambulance protocols, procedures and pharmacology;
> All CERS Assist requests are to be made via the Triple Zero (000) emergency telephone network;
> A CERS Assist call is not a transport request; and,
> An Ambulance Service charge will apply to the health care facility for each CERS Assist request.

Where can I get further information about CERS Assist?
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