



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE**  
HEADQUARTERS AIR COMBAT COMMAND  
LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, VIRGINIA

9 April 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR ACC MEDICAL GROUP COMMANDERS

FROM: HQ ACC/SG  
162 Dodd Blvd, Ste 100  
Langley AFB VA 23665-1995

SUBJECT: After-hours Emergency Dental Care

1. In the process of eliminating 24-hours-a-day medical access, many MTFs have also restricted access for emergency dental care. Rather than being seen in the base Dental Treatment Facility (DTF), dental patients are often referred to an off-base Emergency Department. Although AFI 47-101, Managing Air Force Dental Services, authorizes sending after-hours dental care off base, most emergency departments are not equipped to properly evaluate and treat dental emergencies.
2. Some MTFs may have decided to refer after-hours dental care for fear they would be unable to respond to a medical emergency. JCAHO views the community standard of care for emergency services in the absence of an Emergency Department to be 911, BLS, and Paramedic Ambulance Service. This community standard is met by having the on-call dentist provide care in the DTF.
3. All MTFs within ACC must ensure patients in need of acute after-hours dental care have ready access to a dentist on call. If unusual circumstances prevent treating after-hours dental emergencies in the base DTF, a MAJCOM waiver is required. In addition, guidance in AFI 47-101 must be followed; i.e., prior arrangements will be made to ensure available access, patients will be directed to a specific source of treatment, care will be provided in a timely manner, and the DTF will periodically evaluate the timeliness, appropriateness, and quality of dental care delivered.
4. I appreciate your ceaseless efforts in providing our beneficiaries with the best medical and dental care available. Should you have any questions and/or wish to request a waiver, please contact Col Michael Hutchings, ACC/SGD, DSN 574-1328, or [michael.hutchings@langley.af.mil](mailto:michael.hutchings@langley.af.mil).

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