**SERTAC Position Statement on the Use of Ketamine in the Prehospital Environment**

Recent media attention on the use of ketamine in the prehospital environment has caused concern among the general population for its continued use in this clinical setting. In response, many national emergency medicine and EMS organizations have put forth statements on the safe, effective, and necessary use of this medication by prehospital providers for analgesia, sedation, and agitation control. After reviewing the current literature and taking all safety considerations into account, SERTAC supports the following statements regarding the use of ketamine in the prehospital environment:

* Ketamine is a safe and effective medication for paramedic administration, when indicated, for analgesia, induction for airway management, and chemical restraint for patient agitation to ensure patient and caregiver safety.
* Paramedics shall have proper initial and continuous training on ketamine use, namely the mechanism of action, pharmacokinetics, indications, contraindications, side effects, proper dosing/routes of administration, therapeutic windows for given indications, and patient monitoring.
* Agencies utilizing ketamine shall have appropriate policies and procedures (guidelines, protocols, etc.) in place regarding the administration of ketamine.
* Ketamine programs shall have appropriate medical oversight by an EMS physician who shall ensure protocols/guidelines are developed and reviewed, education is appropriately provided, and cases of ketamine use are evaluated for quality assurance and improvement.
* Ketamine is only to be used after an appropriate paramedic assessment and based on sound medical judgment for a medical indication (guided by the EMS medical director) and is never to be used as a means of chemical restraint solely for law enforcement purposes.

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