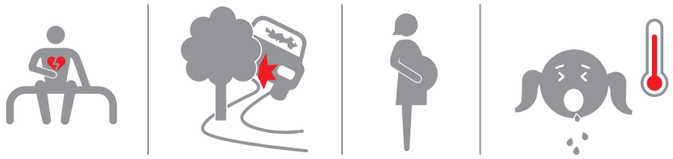
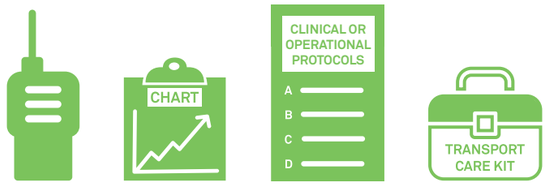
World Health Organization

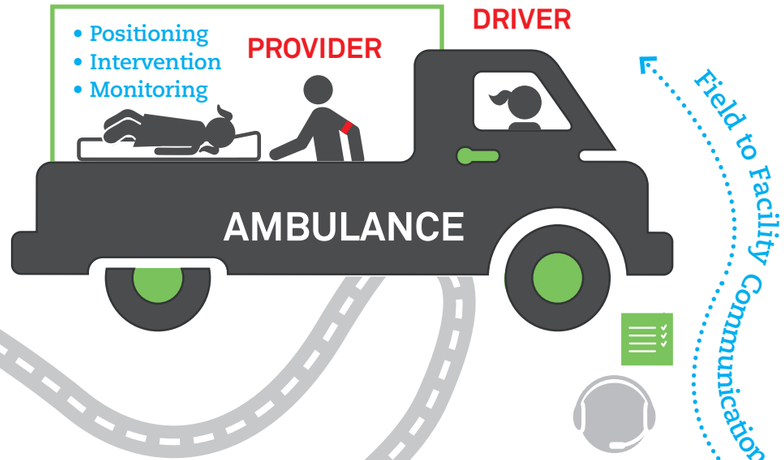
EMERGENCY CARE SYSTEM FRAMEWORK

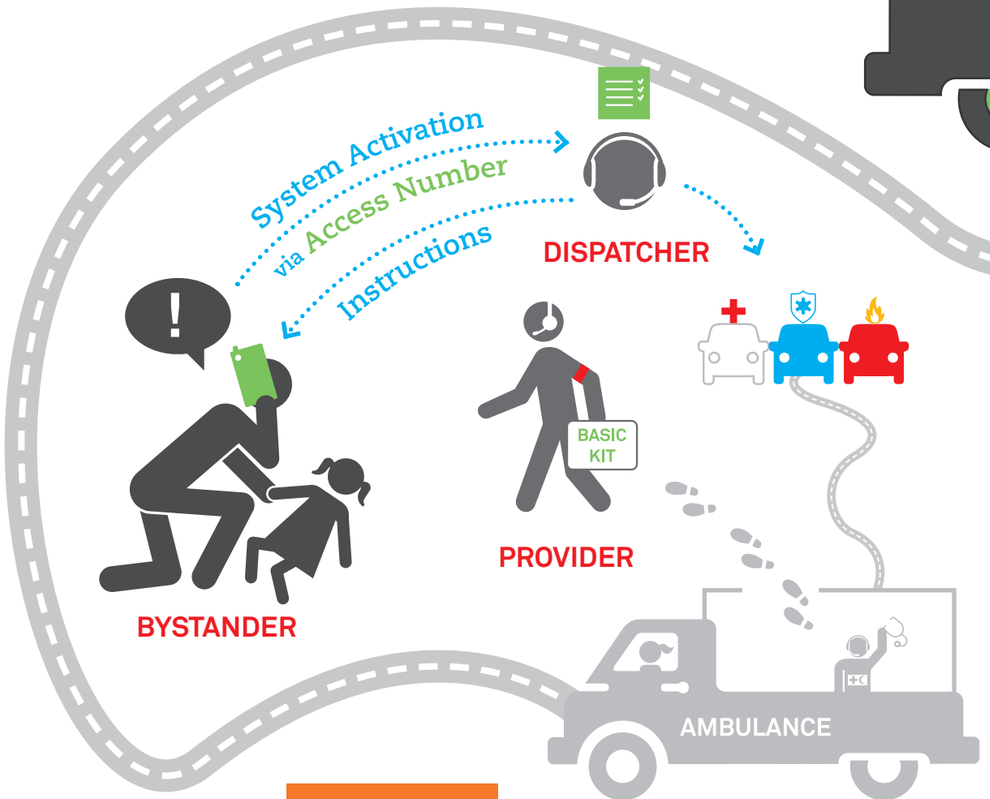
All around the world, acutely ill and injured people seek care every day. Frontline providers manage children and adults with injuries and infections, heart attacks and strokes, asthma and acute complications of pregnancy. An integrated approach to early recognition and management saves lives. This visual summary illustrates the essential functions of a responsive emergency care system, and the key human resources, equipment, and information technologies needed to execute them. The reverse side adresses elements of governance and oversight.

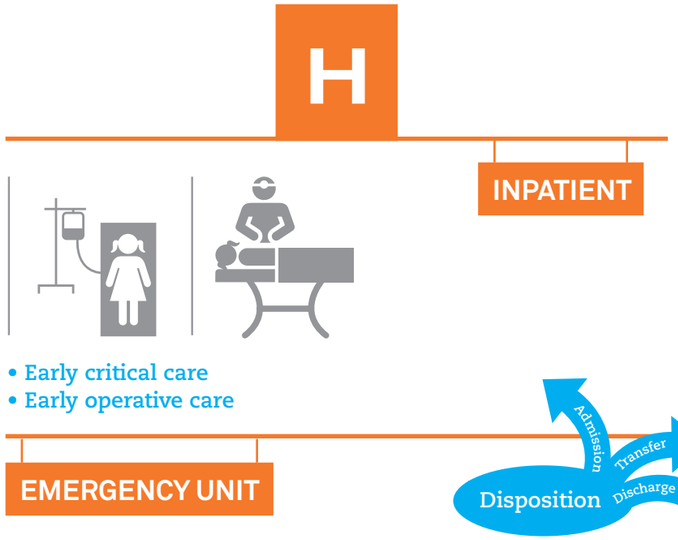


HUMAN RESOURCES · FUNCTIONS · VEHICLES, EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES









SCENE

- BYSTANDER RESPONSE
- DISPATCH
- PROVIDER RESPONSE

TRANSPORT

- PATIENT TRANSPORT
- TRANSPORT CARE

FACILITY

- RECEPTION
- EMERGENCY UNIT CARE
- DISPOSITION
- EARLY INPATIENT CARE

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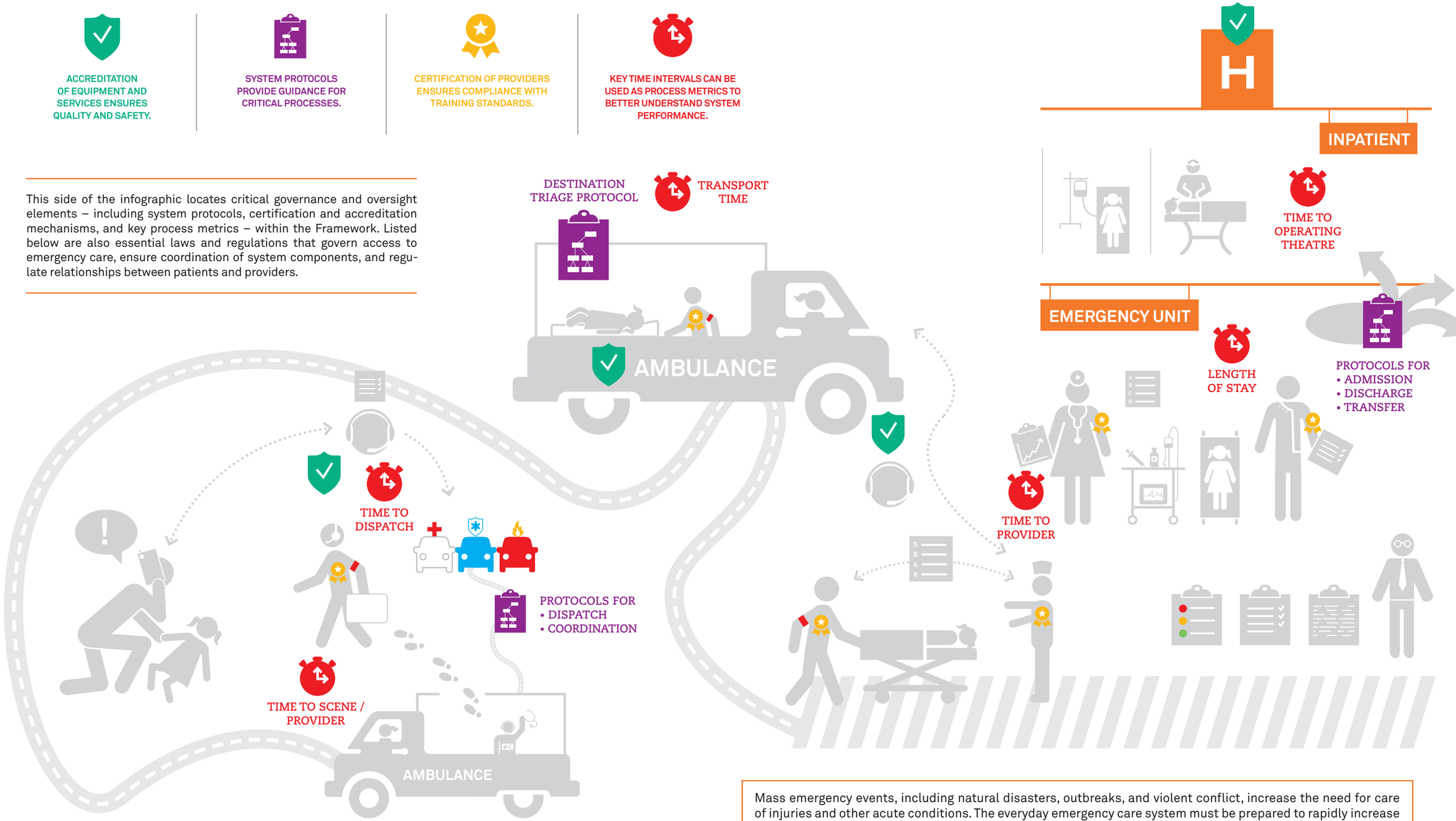
ACCREDITATION OF EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES ENSURES QUALITY AND SAFETY.

SYSTEM PROTOCOLS PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR CRITICAL PROCESSES.

CERTIFICATION OF PROVIDERS ENSURES COMPLIANCE WITH TRAINING STANDARDS.

KEY TIME INTERVALS CAN BE USED AS PROCESS METRICS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND SYSTEM PERFORMANCE.

This side of the infographic locates critical governance and oversight elements – including system protocols, certification and accreditation mechanisms, and key process metrics – within the Framework. Listed below are also essential laws and regulations that govern access to emergency care, ensure coordination of system components, and regulate relationships between patients and providers.



LEGAL MANDATES

- Free call to a universal access number
- Bystander protection laws (Good Samaritan laws)
- Emergency vehicles regulation
- Access to emergency care regardless of ability to pay

SURGE FOR MASS EMERGENCIES

Mass emergency events, including natural disasters, outbreaks, and violent conflict, increase the need for care of injuries and other acute conditions. The everyday emergency care system must be prepared to rapidly increase human, material, and organizational resources (to 'surge') in response to these sudden events. In addition, emergency unit protocols for surveillance and communication with public health authorities are essential for early recognition of outbreaks. Healthcare systems may be disrupted by the direct effects of these events, such as when hospitals themselves are damaged or healthcare providers infected, or may be overwhelmed by increased demand. If emergency care systems collapse, both primary mortality from the event itself and preventable mortality from everyday conditions ('secondary mortality') increase dramatically. Besides meeting everyday population health needs, a well-organized, prepared and resilient emergency care system maintains essential emergency care delivery throughout a mass event, limiting direct mortality and avoiding secondary mortality altogether.

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