Emergency Department Patient Advocate Role and Training

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) supports the use of patient advocates in the emergency department (ED). If EDs choose to use patient advocates, there are a number of ways in which patient advocates can contribute to patient comfort, satisfaction, education and safety, including the following:

- Patient experience and comfort
- Patient complaints and compliments/service recovery
- Patient protection and advocacy services
- Discharge planning/readmission reduction
- Community health and support services referrals
- Education, including disease-specific education

ACEP recognizes that there are a variety of training programs, commensurate with responsibilities, to prepare individuals for patient advocacy services in the ED. At a minimum, patient advocates in the ED should receive training in customer service and be able to effectively communicate the ED mission and flow process, in addition to training for specific job functions.