
 <p>Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board</p>	SECTION: Land Ambulance
	POLICY TITLE: Designated Officer
ORIGINAL DATE: September, 2010	POLICY AREA: Operations
REVISION DATE: August, 2016	POLICY NO: LA – 4.7
NEXT REVIEW DATE: September, 2019	APPROVED BY: 

Policy

The Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board (RRDSSAB) ensures that procedures are in place for preventing, minimizing and managing occupational exposures to communicable disease, while meeting the requirements of the:

- a) *Patient Care and Transportation Standards*, as amended;
- b) *Ambulance Service Communicable Disease Standards*, as amended; and
- c) *Preventing and Assessing Occupational exposure to Selected Communicable Diseases – An Information Manual for Designated Officers*.

The “Designated Officer” for the RRDSSAB is the Duty Officer, or Chief of Paramedic Services or designate.

Specific Responsibilities of the Designated Officer

1. Comply with all applicable Acts, Standards, and Directives established by the Director of the *Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC)*, Emergency Health Services Branch (EHSB);
2. Whenever a patient with a suspected and/or known communicable disease is transported by ambulance ensure that:
 - a. the ambulance is removed from service;
 - b. the ambulance is disinfected and deep cleaned before the vehicle is re-used; and

- c. any equipment contaminated or in contact with the patient is disinfected and sterilized, as appropriate, before being re-used.
- 3. Ensure that each employee is educated on current communicable disease risks;
- 4. Ensure that appropriate measures are employed by staff in order to protect themselves and patients from transmission of communicable disease;
- 5. Ensure that each Paramedic, Emergency Medical Attendant (EMA) and ambulance student take appropriate infection control and occupational health measures to prevent transmission of all infectious agents to and from themselves, and to not knowingly expose themselves or their patients to any communicable disease, in the course of their work. The Designated Officer ensures that employee, who are exhibiting an acute symptomatic illness that may be communicable must not be involved in the assessment of or direct delivery of care to a patient;
- 6. Ensure that each Paramedic or EMA adheres to standard practices and precautions, to limit the potential for disease transmission;
- 7. Ensure that, where a Paramedic or an EMA is placed in a situation of reasonable chance of being exposed to a bodily fluid of another person, the Paramedic or EMA:
 - a. wears gloves that meet or exceed the requirements of the *Provincial Equipment Standards for Ontario Ambulance Services*, and
 - b. uses protective eyewear that meets or exceeds the requirements of the *Provincial Equipment Standards for Ontario Ambulance Services*, if a splash is anticipated.
- 8. Ensure that, where a Paramedic or EMA is placed in a situation of reasonable chance of being exposed to any person who may be infected with a communicable disease transmitted by the airborne route, the Paramedic or EMA wears a respirator that meets or exceeds the *Provincial Equipment Standards for Ontario Ambulance Services*;
- 9. Ensure that adequate supplies and equipment used in the prevention of communicable diseases are readily and easily accessible to each staff member and meets the *Provincial Equipment Standards for Ontario Ambulance Services*;

10. Receive reports/calls of possible exposure to a communicable disease from employees and/or outside agencies;
11. Assess the reported incident;
12. Contact the Public Health Unit (if not already informed), once exposure has occurred;
13. Inform the worker of known exposure and steps to take as directed by the Emergency Room Physician or the Public Health Infection Control Practitioner;
14. Forward information to the employee's medical caregiver as directed in writing by the employee;
15. Ensure final reports are available upon completion for the Joint Health & Safety Committee; and
16. Ensure that policies and procedures are adhered to at all times.

Specific Responsibilities of the Employee

1. Comply with all applicable Acts, Standards, and Directives set forward by the Director of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Emergency Health Services Branch.
2. Notify Management immediately of the possibility of exposure.
3. Take appropriate infection control and occupational health & safety measures to prevent transmission of all infectious agents to and from themselves and to not knowingly expose themselves, their partner, or their patients to any communicable disease in the course of their work.
4. Not be involved in the assessment of or direct delivery of care to a patient if the patient is exhibiting an acute symptomatic illness that may be communicable.
5. Where a Paramedic or EMA has reasonable cause to believe that he or she has been exposed to a communicable disease, he or she will:
 - a. report the suspected exposure to the Designation Officer;
 - b. follow the instruction of the Designated Officer; and

- c. complete an *Exposure Report* and *Land Ambulance Incident Report* relating to such exposure by the end of the shift in which the exposure occurred or at the earliest opportunity thereafter.
6. If a Paramedic or EMA is instructed by the designated officer to consult a physician regarding the suspected and/or confirmed exposure to a communicable disease, the Paramedic or EMA will:
 - a. follow the direction from a physician respecting contact with their patients;
 - b. consider/participate in the treatment as proposed by the attending physician;
 - c. notify the Chief of Paramedic Services (PS) or designate; and
 - d. only return to work when medically cleared by a physician, with appropriate medical documentation.
7. In order to minimize the likelihood of cross contamination, the Paramedic or EMA will make every reasonable effort to wash their hands, according to recommended public health guidelines, immediately after contact with the patient, or contact with the patient's excretions, secretions, blood or bodily fluids, has been concluded.
8. When a Paramedic or EMA is placed in a situation of reasonable chance of being exposed to any person who may be infected with a communicable disease transmitted by the airborne route, the Paramedic or EMA will wear a respirator that meets or exceeds the *Provincial Equipment Standards for Ontario Ambulance Services*.

Influenza Control

The Chief of Paramedic Services or designate will:

1. Comply with all applicable Acts, Standards, and Directives set forward by the Director of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Emergency Health Services Branch.
2. Ensure that each Paramedic and EMA receive an annual educational review with respect to the transmission of and protection from influenza.

This review will include all requirements listed under the *Patient Care and Transportation Standards*.

3. Report within the time-lines established by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Emergency Health Services Branch, that each employee:
 - a. provides proof that states he or she has been immunized against influenza, or that such immunization is medically contraindicated; or
 - b. provides a written statement that he or she has taken the educational review and has not been, and does not intend to be, immunized against influenza.
 - c. follow the terms of the Collective Agreement Letter of Understanding on Influenza Immunization in a known or suspected outbreak.
 - d. Report to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Emergency Health Services Branch, by the date established by said branch, the following:
 - i. the total number of active EMAs and Paramedics employed with the Services;
 - ii. the number of EMAs and Paramedics that have provided a valid certificate stating that he or she has been immunized against influenza;
 - iii. the number of EMAs and Paramedics that have provided a valid certificate stating that he or she is medically contraindicated for influenza vaccination; and
 - iv. the number of EMAs and Paramedics that have provided a written statement that he or she has taken the influenza educational review and has not been, and does not intend to be, immunized against influenza.

The Employee will:

1. Annually, provide a valid certificate stating that he or she has been immunized against influenza by a date established by the Chief of Paramedic Services or designate; or

2. Provide a valid certificate stating that he or she is medically contraindicated for influenza vaccination, by a date established by the Chief of Paramedic Services or designate; or
3. Annually, provide a written statement that he or she has taken the influenza educational review and has not been, and does not intent to be, immunized against influenza by a date established by the Chief of Paramedic Services or designate;
4. Follow established policy and procedures as well as protocols that are applicable.

Forms

- a. WSIB Form 7; and
- b. other Forms, as required, by the Chief of PS or designate.

The Paramedic plays a key role in preventing exposures by:

1. Being aware of the risks of occupational exposure to the specified communicable disease;
2. Taking appropriate actions to fulfill his/her duties to prevent or reduce the risk of exposure by using universal precautions and appropriate procedures and equipment routinely; and
3. Complying with all applicable Acts, Standards, and Regulations.