



**GOVERNMENT OF
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**



***DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
Board Services***

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| POLICY: Authorization-Proper Authorization of Non-emergency Services and/or Transports | POLICY NUMBER: EHS 2004-11-01 |
| ORIGINAL DATE: November 1, 2005 | LAST REVISED DATE: N/A |

I. PURPOSE:

- A. This policy replaces policy number EHS 2003-09-07 and EHS2003-09-08
- B. To identify the individual responsible for authorizing non-emergency requests for ambulance services.
- C. To identify the Department's requirement that routine ambulance transports must be properly authorized.

II. POLICY:

- A. All ambulance transports of a routine nature shall be authorized by a provincially licenced physician, Registered Nurse, or Police Officer. The individual trained at the highest medical level that assesses and/or treats the patient shall be the one to determine if an ambulance is warranted.
- B. All authorization for routine transports shall be granted prior to the actual transport taking place.
- C. The patient's attending physician is the individual who is responsible for authorizing return and routine transfers. This is taken to mean the physician directly attending the patient at this time. Except under exceptional circumstances, this prohibits authorization of calls by physicians that may care for the patient but who are located outside the area where the patient is currently located or who are not the physician with the most recent knowledge of the patient's condition.
- D. Invoices authorized by physicians not directly attending the patient will be rejected for payment.
- E. If a physician is not available or involved in the care of the patient, then a currently registered nurse with direct knowledge of and responsibility for the care of the patient may authorize the use of ambulance.
- F. Transports of mental health patients may be authorized by a police officer working in the province.

III. PROCEDURE:

- A. When an operator receives a call to perform a routine transport, they must verify the transport is authorized, prior to conducting the transfer, by making direct contact with the physician or the physician's delegate/office staff, indicated as authorizing the transport, to ensure that the patient's attending physician authorized the ambulance.
- B. The operators are to refuse all calls that are not properly authorized.
- C. The operator is to ensure the authorizing official's name, title, and phone number are properly documented on the PCR form.
- D. The Department will check the validity of routine transports that appear questionable.
- E. Transports deemed to have been completed in violation of this policy shall not be honored for payment.
- F. If a currently registered nurse is authorizing the use of ambulance, then similar procedures are to be followed as if a physician was making the authorization.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY:

- A. It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure non-emergency services/calls are properly authorized prior to performing the trip.
- B. It is the responsibility of the Department of Health and Community Services to investigate any transfers which appear to be improperly authorized. The Department reserves the right to enforce this policy retroactively and recover monies inappropriately paid.
- C. It is the ambulance personnel's responsibility to bring improperly authorized transfers to the operator's attention prior to performing the transfer.
- D. It is the responsibility of the operator to properly record the information required regarding the Authorizing Official on the PCR form.
- E. It is the responsibility of the Department to ensure payment is rendered for all properly authorized routine transports that do not violate any other Departmental policy.