

May 20, 2021

Crystal Brown
Electoral Area Manager
Peace River Regional District

Dear Crystal Brown:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding protocols for the transport of patients between BC and Alberta. It would be helpful for us if you could clarify what difficulties your District is experiencing with regards to cross-border ambulance services. As there are a number of areas this could refer to, more information on specific issues would help us provide a more fulsome response.

While nothing has changed in terms of our 911 response, we began using a new process involving the automatic launching of STARS to take patients back to Grande Prairie last year.

In terms of where patients are transported to, the regional health authorities are responsible for determining this once they are in a hospital setting. Northern Health provides BCEHS with the referral patterns and agreements with Alberta. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the BC Ministry of Health, regional health authorities and BCEHS were working with the Alberta Ministry of Health on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the transportation of patients between provinces, but unfortunately the sign-off of this MOU has been delayed due to the pandemic.

Throughout the pandemic, BCEHS and the regional health authorities have been meeting weekly with their partners in Alberta looking at all cross-border concerns, including hospital capacity. This has enabled us to build and grow on already established relationships. During the pandemic, our Ministry of Health has also signed off on a ministerial order allowing Alberta air resources to move patients from one BC facility to another in the event that Alberta hospitals are over capacity and not able to accept BC patients.

As you can imagine, transporting patients safely, effectively, and in a timely manner is complex, and we are always looking for ways to improve the service we provide. Again, if you can provide us with more information on specific issues or concerns, we are happy to respond. We also welcome a conversation to discuss this, and are open to meeting with a representative of the Regional District to better understand the challenges you are facing in advance of the meeting planned for October.

Sincerely,

Darlene MacKinnon
Chief Operating Officer
BC Emergency Health Services
Provincial Health Services Authority

Dr. Wilson Wan
Interim Chief Medical Officer
BC Emergency Health Services
Provincial Health Services Authority



PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT

April 13, 2021

BC Emergency Health Services -

Sent via Email - BCAS.Q&A@bcehs.ca

To whom it may concern,

RE: Protocols for Ambulance Transport of Patients across the BC / Alberta Border

At the last Interprovincial Meeting between the Peace River Regional District, the County of Grande Prairie, Saddle Hills County, and Clear Hills County, a discussion took place around the coordination of Emergency Services between British Columbia and Alberta, specifically around the difficulties of cross boarder ambulance services, and moving patients between the two provinces.

The Regional District has tentatively scheduled a follow-up meeting on October 14, 2021 in Dawson Creek, BC. In preparation of this meeting, the Board would like to request that you provide protocols for ambulance transport of patients across the BC and Alberta Boarder.

The Regional Board looks forward to hearing back from you.

Yours truly,

Crystal Brown
Electoral Area Manager

diverse. vast. abundant.

PLEASE REPLY TO:

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