

Agency Bulletin

November 2009

In this Bulletin we provide details of a refinement in the issuing of out-of-jurisdiction first aid certificates as well as offer a heads up as to where things are regarding some changes coming soon. There will be another agency bulletin issued in December, 2009 that will outline more changes such as the EMR Licence equivalency to OFA 3 and the BC certification for out of Province Paramedics.

1) Issuance of out-of-jurisdiction certificates for non OFA or Equivalent courses conducted in BC

As you are all aware, under the TILMA and AIT legislation we have a process in place to issue OFA Level 1 and Level 3 out-of-jurisdiction first aid certification to holders of first aid certification issued elsewhere in Canada that is recognized by a regulatory body for work in industry.

In the April 2009 Bulletin we attached a document entitled "Provincial First Aid Requirements list" which stated that certain "Certificates issued by these providers in any Province or Territory qualify at the appropriate level". This meant that the applicable course would qualify even if conducted in BC.

We have been informed of the intention of training providers from other provinces to attempt to set up shop in BC, conduct first aid courses that are accepted in other jurisdictions but would not be subject to any WorkSafeBC quality assurance and arrange to have a BC OFA out-of-jurisdiction certificate issued by a BC agency.

In essence, this downloads the responsibility to ensure these certificate holders have the skills and abilities necessary for competency for an OFA Attendant in BC to the employers of BC. These skills and abilities, that may not be included in the courses in question, may include WorkSafeBC first aid regulation, roles and responsibilities of an OFA Attendant, specifics of minor wound care, guidelines governing the referral of minor wounds to medical aid and first aid documentation required in BC.

Courses conducted in BC do not fall under the jurisdiction of the TILMA or AIT legislation. The TILMA and AIT legislation is about the mobility of people not courses.

Effective immediately, out-of-jurisdiction certification will only be issued for courses conducted outside of BC. If a first aid certificate does not indicate the province in which the course was taken, the person applying for an out of jurisdiction certificate must present verifiable written proof that the course was taken outside of BC.

2) Upcoming changes to OFA protocols

The changes to the OFA curriculum are progressing and we intend to have the changes to you before the end of the year. The printers will have to arrange printing and instructors and evaluators will have to be informed of the changes. Barring any unforeseen circumstances it has been decided to start using the new protocols on March 1st 2010.

A quick scan of the protocol changes includes but may not be limited to the following:

Level 3 – removal of traction and joint manipulation and the addition of AEDs

Level 2 – addition of AEDs

Level 1 – the Level 1 Attendant will be considered a “lay rescuer” which necessitates the removal of pulse checks in the Primary Survey and stand alone breathing support (i.e. no breathing = commence CPR) and the addition of AEDs.

TE – since attendants are working more than 20 minutes from medical aid the skills omitted from Level 1 will be added to the TE course. The revised TE course will also include an introduction to OP Airways. Due to the instructional material added to the TE course, the maximum student to instructor ratio in any TE course will remain at 12 students per instructor.

Because AEDs will be included in all three levels, Agencies should prepare by acquiring AED trainers in advance of the March 1 launch date. One AED trainer will be required for every 3 students.

The maximum number of students for each Level 1 class will increase to 18 and was supported by the rationale that making the Level 1 Attendant a lay rescuer would reduce the complexity of the skills taught thereby allowing the instructor to monitor more students. This change has been approved and will take place when the new protocols are introduced in the classroom in March 2010.

3) Duration of OFA certification and requirement for medicals

The change in duration from 2 to 3 years for all OFA and equivalent course certification and the removal of the automatic requirement for medicals has been approved. The departments responsible for consulting stakeholders and changing official guidelines/policies are busy doing that. We will be advising you in the near future of the date when these changes will be initiated.

4) Infection Prevention and Control Measures for Prehospital Care Workers

Due to the recent heightened awareness of flu like illness and other infectious disease transmission issues, WorkSafeBC has information available for first aid attendants on these websites.

<http://www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/FirstAid/Home.asp>

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/alert-alerte/h1n1/hp-ps/pc-sp-eng.php>