



ORDER OF THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH OFFICER

(Pursuant to section 32 of the *Emergency Medical Assistants Regulation*, B.C. Reg 210/2010)

ADVANCED CARE PARAMEDIC and CRITICAL CARE PARAMEDIC SARS-CoV-2 SWABBING – May 2, 2021

WHEREAS:

- A. On March 17, 2020 I provided notice under section 52 (2) of the *Public Health Act* that the transmission of the infectious agent SARS-CoV-2, which has caused cases and outbreaks of a serious illness known as COVID-19 among the population of the Province of British Columbia, constitutes a regional event as defined in section 51 of the *Public Health Act* (the “**Emergency**”);
- B. There has been an increase in the number of persons infected with COVID-19 associated with remote industrial sites;
- C. Screening for infection with SARS-CoV-2 involves carrying out a nasopharyngeal swab, which requires the insertion of an instrument or device beyond the point of the nasal passages where they normally narrow, a throat swab, which requires the insertion of an instrument or device beyond the pharynx or a mouth rinse (the “**Screening Activity**”);
- D. As per section 8 of the *Emergency Medical Assistants Regulation*, Emergency Medical Assistants may only provide services that are listed in Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 of the regulation. Performing nasopharyngeal swabs, throat swabs and mouth rinses are not within the schedule of services for any licence category of Emergency Medical Assistant.
- E. I am of the opinion that:
 - (i) limiting the provision of a Screening Activity adversely affects the timely delivery of the Screening Activity, and the efficient and effective use of health human resources, throughout British Columbia, and
 - (ii) Emergency Medical Assistants in the licence categories of Advanced Care Paramedic and Critical Care Paramedic employed in industrial sites, including those sites defined as “industrial camps” in the *Industrial Camps Regulation*, may perform the Screening Activity, as authorized by this order, without undue risk to the health or safety of the patient or any other person.

I, Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, order that notwithstanding any requirements set out in the regulations under the *Emergency Health Services Act* that conflict or may conflict with this order, Emergency Medical Assistants in the licence categories of Advanced Care Paramedic and Critical Care Paramedic employed in industrial sites are authorized to perform the Screening Activity, subject to the following conditions:

1. The Screening Activity must be performed in the course of providing a screening program approved by a medical health officer with responsibility for the geographic area in which the activity is performed.
2. The Screening Activity must be conducted in accordance with the guidelines issued by the BC Centre for Disease Control (the “**Guidelines**”) posted at the following website:

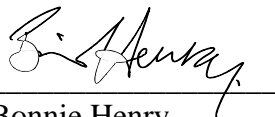
<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/lab-testing>

3. The Advanced Care Paramedic or Critical Care Paramedic must successfully complete health authority or British Columbia Emergency Health Services training materials and assessments that include or are based on Elsevier Clinical Skills. “Specimen Collection: Nose and Throat – CE” published by Elsevier.
4. The Advanced Care Paramedic or Critical Care Paramedic’s employer or a medical health officer must first assess the Advanced Care Paramedic or Critical Care Paramedic’s competence to perform the Screening Activity in a manner that is safe for both the patient and the paramedic, including by requiring the paramedic to demonstrate knowledge, in accordance with the Guidelines, respecting who to test, specimen collection and labelling, and the use of personal protective equipment. The employer may only make this assessment if the employer is acting on the advice of a registrant authorized under the *Health Professions Act* and competent to perform the Screening Activity.

Unless rescinded earlier, this order will end on the date that I provide notice under section 59 (b) of the *Public Health Act* that the Emergency has passed.

DATE: May 2, 2021

SIGNED:



Bonnie Henry
MD, MPH, FRCPC
Provincial Health Officer