



**FAMILIES
FIRST**



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2013HLTH0025-000253
Feb. 15, 2013

Ministry of Health
Ministry of Citizens' Services and Open Government

New BC Services Card replaces CareCard

VANCOUVER – British Columbians can now replace their CareCard with the new BC Services Card.

“Starting today, the old CareCard will be replaced by the BC Services Card, a highly secure form of identification,” said Health Minister Margaret MacDiarmid. “This new card will be a secure piece of photo identification with many anti-fraud and security features including secure design, an expiry date and enhanced features which will help to protect citizens' personal information.”

Most adults will need to re-enrol in the Medical Services Plan over the next five years. The easiest way for British Columbians to enrol is to do so when renewing their driver's licence and opt for the combined card that includes both a driver's licence and BC Services Card. People who do not drive can still enrol at the nearest location where driver's licences are issued.

The current CareCard was introduced in 1989 and has not been significantly updated over the last 20 years. The new BC Services Card takes advantage of significant advances in technology, to provide a secure piece of photo identification with enhanced features to protect citizens' personal information. The new card features a photograph of the beneficiary, secure design and an expiry date.

“We have been engaging with the information and privacy commissioner on this program for more than two years and I am pleased that she agrees from a privacy and security point of view we are ready to offer the BC Services Card to citizens,” said Minister of Citizens' Services and Open Government Ben Stewart.

“We are happy to work with government on issuing the new BC Services Card to British Columbians,” said ICBC interim president and CEO Mark Blucher. “The added convenience of getting a combined BC Services Card and driver's licence will be a welcome feature for many of our customers. Just come into an ICBC driver licensing office when it's time to renew your licence, and we will issue the new card.”

Once a person enrolls, they will be mailed a new BC Services Card, and will need to re-enrol and get a new card every five years. Children and certain groups of adults, such as the elderly or those in residential care or extended hospital care – for whom renewed enrolment would be impractical or present a hardship – will be exempt from re-enrolling or managed through special arrangements.

The BC Services Card also provides the foundation for supporting the potential future development of more convenient access for citizens to new online government services.

To learn more, visit: www.bcservicescard.ca

A backgrounder follows.

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BACKGROUND

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Myths and facts about the BC Services Card

Myth: I will need to pay outstanding traffic violations like speeding or parking tickets when I go to re-enrol?

Fact: ICBC has its own processes in place for collecting outstanding traffic violations. No one will be denied re-enrolment in MSP or a BC Services Card due to an outstanding traffic violation.

Myth: The BC Services Card will contain my health information.

Fact: No information will be stored on the card other than what you can see – such as your name, date of birth and personal health number.

Myth: It is mandatory to combine my driver's licence and health card.

Fact: A combined card is optional and entirely your choice. You may combine your driver's licence and BC Services Card for convenience or keep them independent.

Myth: A police officer will be able to see my health records when checking my driver's licence, or conversely, my doctor's office will be able to see my driving history.

Fact: A health-care provider will not be able to see your driving record, just as a police officer or ICBC agent will not be able to see your health records. Your privacy will continue to be safeguarded according to B.C.'s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act which authorizes and restricts how public bodies may collect, use and disclose personal information.

Myth: If my driver's licence is confiscated at the roadside, I won't be able to get health care.

Fact: Loss of your photo BC Services Card or combined BC Services Card does not affect your MSP coverage. People who are enrolled in MSP, but do not have their card with them when seeking health care, can still receive services by providing other identification. If your driver's licence is seized, you should go to an ICBC Driver Licensing Office, ICBC appointed agent or Service BC counter to obtain a replacement standalone photo BC Services Card.

Myth: Children and seniors will need to re-enrol in Medical Services Plan.

Fact: Individuals under 19 years, 75 and older, or residing in residential or long term care will not be required to re-enrol in MSP.

Myth: The chip in the card can be read remotely.

Fact: The cards do not contain radio frequency chips. They contain contactless chips which have a much shorter range. The chip technology is the same used in credit and debit cards across Canada.

Myth: The chip contains all of my personal information.

Fact: In the future, the chip technology will allow you to access a service by tapping your card on a card reader. It will recognize your unique chip and validate your identity to the service provider. It's important to note that the card does not store any personal records like your health or driving record. Access to your records is protected by a pass code, similar to the Personal Identification Number (PIN) you use with your bank card.

Myth: Government will use this data to track me and my access to government services. They will use this data to develop a profile of me.

Fact: Health records will continue to be protected under the Medicare Protection Act and will not be shared with any other government agencies. There is no intent or ability by government to use this card to track or record an individual's access to multiple government services.

Myth: This card will just cost me more money.

Fact: There is no fee for a BC Services Card. If you are combining your CareCard with your driver's licence, you will pay no more than what you pay today to renew your driver's licence. If you choose not to combine your CareCard with your driver's licence, there is no fee to get a BC Services Card.

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