British Columbia Ambulance Service

*May 14, 2010*

# Requests for Patient Care Records: Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. How can I request records related to my ambulance service?

All requests must be submitted in writing via the Application for the Release of Patient Care Records form. Please fill the form out completely, as we need this information to process your request. Information and tips for completing the form is available in the Application Form Instructions. Once the form is complete, please mail or fax it to:

British Columbia Ambulance Service
Administrative Headquarters
PO Box 9600 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9P1

Fax: (250) 953-3119

## 2. Who can sign the application form?

In most cases, it is essential that the patient who is the subject of the requested records sign the application form. As a public body, BCAS is bound by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPP Act) and requires written, informed consent before disclosing his or her personal information. Unless an exception to this rule applies (as outlined below), please ensure that your application has been signed by the patient. Otherwise, we will be unable to grant your request.

## 3. What if the patient is a child?

If the patient is a child, **under 12 years of age**, we require consent from the child's legal guardian and confirmation that the request is in the child's best interest. Accordingly, please provide the application form, signed by a custodial parent or guardian and include confirmation that the requestor is the child's custodial parent or guardian (this may consist of a letter from a professional such as a physician, lawyer or teacher); and an explanation of the reasons for the request.

Children **12 and over** are considered to be mature minors. Their authorization is required prior to the release of patient-related records or information.

## 4. What if the patient is incapable of giving consent?

If an adult patient is incapable of giving consent, we will accept the consent of the patient's legally-appointed committee, provided the request is in the patient's best interest. Please provide the Application for the Release of Patient Care Records form, signed by the committee; documentation of the committee's status; and an explanation of the reasons for the request.

Please note, under FOIPP Act, a power of attorney does **not** have right of access to BCAS personal health records.

## 5. What if the patient is deceased?

A person does not lose his or her rights to privacy after death. In situations where a family member or personal representative requests records concerning a deceased person, we must have as much information as possible to determine whether the request is in the deceased's best interest and whether the disclosure of any information would be an unreasonable invasion of the deceased's privacy. Please provide the following:

- the Application for the Release of Patient Care Records form, signed by the deceased's nearest relative, or the executor or administrator of the deceased's estate;
- any documentation concerning the appointment of an executor or administrator; and
- a full explanation of the reasons for the request.

All requests for records of deceased persons are assessed on a case-by-case basis. We may be unable to disclose some or all of a record.

## 6. How long will it take to receive my records?

Due to the volume of requests we receive for patient care records, requests usually take approximately 6-8 weeks to process.

## 7. How can I inquire as to the status of my request?

Inquiries can be directed to the Patient Care Records line at (250) 356-2113.