 Department of Health Government of Nunavut		<b>NURSING POLICY, PROCEDURE AND PROTOCOLS</b>	
		<b>Community Health Nursing</b>	
<b>TITLE:</b>		<b>SECTION:</b>	<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>
Transmission of Health Information by Facsimile		Communications	06-002-00
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	<b>REVIEW DUE:</b>	<b>REPLACES NUMBER:</b>	<b>NUMBER OF PAGES:</b>
February 10, 2018	February 2021		2
<b>APPLIES TO:</b>			
Community Health Nurses			

**POLICY:**

Health information shall be transmitted by FAX only when required for urgent or emergent care. The sender of the information shall be responsible for ensuring security of the health information being transmitted.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Health Information:** any identifiable individual's healthcare services related data.

**Staff:** includes all employees, physicians, volunteers, students, researchers and contractors.

**PRINCIPLES:**

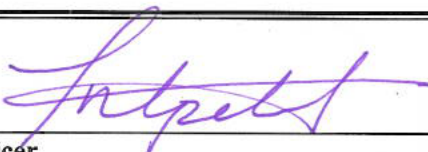

Fax machines present the opportunity for rapid transmission of both written and graphic information which can facilitate health care in urgent or emergent situations. However, the mode of transmission also makes this information vulnerable to interception by non-authorized individuals, posing risk to the client's right to privacy.

**RELATED POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND LEGISLATION:**

Guideline 06-002-01 Guidelines for Transmitting Information by Facsimile

## GUIDELINES 06-002-01

1. The FAX machine shall be located in a secure area where it can be monitored and used by authorized persons only. Machine security features should be utilized; such as activity confirmation reports, key locks, and confidential mail boxes.
2. Use discrimination in determining the selection and number of documents to be transmitted. In most cases it is not necessary to transmit the entire health record. Only information which is immediately necessary for the continuity of client care shall be transmitted.
3. The sender of the information shall be responsible for ensuring security of the health information being transmitted.
4. Senders must take utmost care to assure the accuracy of FAX numbers dialed. Use automatic dialing features for frequently dialed numbers to eliminate the possibility of incorrect dialing. Use visual check on the FAX machine to assure that the correct number was dialed.
5. The sender shall transmit a covering letter to accompany the health information. The letter shall contain the following:
  - a) Name, address and phone number of the sender
  - b) Name, address and fax number of the receiving party
  - c) Number of pages transmitted
  - d) Notice that the accompanying information is confidential.
6. The sender shall seek confirmation of receipt of the transmission.
7. Photocopying of transmitted documents received may be required if they are to be included in the clients' permanent health record. Some FAX machines do not use bond paper; therefore, transmitted documents are not suitable for long term storage.
8. An authorization for release of information transmitted by FAX shall be acceptable, provided the original authorization is forwarded by mail and that the authorization meets all criteria for validity.

Approved by:		Effective Date:
Chief Nursing Officer	11 FEB 2011 Date	April 1, 2011
	February 11, 2011 Date	
Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services		

