

PRACTICE UPDATE

Attention: All EMRs and Paramedics

SUBJECT:

Interfacility (IFT) in-situ thoracostomy tubes maintenance, herein referred to as chest tubes

WHAT'S NEW?

EMRs and paramedics transporting patients in the IFT environment are being provided additional direction and support regarding patient's with in-situ chest tubes.

WHY?

Interfacility transfers (IFT) are common events that can range from prescheduled conveyances of stable patients to complex, multi-leg transfers of critically ill patients. In many cases, patients are being transferred to receive a medically necessary intervention that is not provided at the sending facility or they are being repatriated to their home communities or facilities. Patients with in-situ chest tubes, deemed suitable for transfer without escorts by the EPOS physician or CCP-A, are within scope for EMRs and paramedics.

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT MY PRACTICE?

When encountering in-situ chest tubes during an IFT, EMRs and paramedics **must** consult with the CCP-A/EPOS before departure. Crews should conduct a thorough patient assessment and gather patient history prior to this consultation to ensure accurate and efficient call-screening.

It is essential to note that chest tube management is outside the **legal** scope of practice for EMRs and PCPs and ACPs whom do not hold the Schedule 2 chest tube management endorsement.

EMRs & Paramedics are not authorized to perform any procedures, apply suction, or manipulate chest tubes in any way. Instead, patient management should prioritize the protection of the chest tube and any related attachments. In addition, guardrails around IFT pre-screening and resource allocation will include CCP-A/EPOS consultation.

- If issues with in-situ chest tubes arise during transport, crews should consult with EPOS/CCP-A. In the event that EPOS/CCP-A is unavailable, please divert to the nearest ED.
- CCP-As and EPOS are available via CliniCall.

Please direct any questions about this practice reminder to your Unit Chief,
Paramedic Practice Educator, Paramedic Practice Leader or email
clinicalpractice@bcehs.ca.
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