

December 5, 2018

File: 195-20/BCEHS All  
Cliff: 1055522

To: BCEHS All Staff

**Re BCEHS Inclement Weather Inter-Facility Transfer (IFT) Policy and Winter Preparations**

All employees are reminded to prepare for adverse winter conditions so we can ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff and patients.

With winter upon us, BCEHS would like to remind all employees of our Inclement Weather Inter-Facility Transfer (IFT) [Policy](#) and related support tools. These resources are intended to support collaborative decision making related to inter-facility transfers (IFTs) when the weather and road conditions would pose a safety risk to BCEHS staff, the patient, the public, or any other BCEHS vehicle occupant; and, the safety risks associated with transporting patients in inclement weather situations are greater than the likelihood of any adverse clinical outcome that may result by delaying or cancelling the IFT.

Based on feedback we received from crews across the province and employees within our dispatch operations centres, BCEHS has updated the tools related to the Inclement Weather Inter-Facility Transfer (IFTs) Policy.

***For Your Action:***

Review the following updated documents:

1. Inclement Weather Inter-Facility Transfers (IFTs) [Policy](#)
2. Inclement Weather Inter-Facility Transfers (IFTs) [Standard Operating Guidelines \(SOGs\)](#)
3. Inclement Weather Inter-Facility Transfers (IFTs) [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
4. \*Inclement Weather Inter-Facility Transfers (IFTs) [Pre-Travel Checklist](#)
5. \*Inclement Weather Inter-Facility Transfers (IFTs) [Tracking Tool - for declined IFTs](#)

**\*Patient Care Delivery (PCD) crews:** once you are assigned to an IFT during inclement weather, please assess the road conditions for the duration of the IFT by completing an electronic copy of the [Pre-Travel Checklist](#). This form can be found on the BCEHS intranet under **Tools-> Forms-> Form #191**. If you decline the IFT, based on weather and road conditions, please contact dispatch and inform them of your decision. Then call an on-duty supervisor, to ensure he or she is aware of the situation. The final step is to complete the Inclement Weather Inter-Facility Transfers (IFTs) [Tracking Tool - for](#)

[declined IFTs](#), to describe the circumstances related to the declined IFT. This form can be found on the BCEHS intranet under **Tools-> Forms-> Form #179**. These two forms (i.e., the Pre-Travel Checklist and the Tracking Tool - for declined IFTs) were developed from input received by our frontline care providers within PCD and dispatch. They were created with you and your patients' safety in mind and they provide an opportunity for you to give feedback about the circumstances related to the assigned IFT. Your input will enable us to continuously improve, based on your experiences and your interactions with our health authority partners.

While performing safety and readiness inspections on any ambulance or responding support unit, crew members must ensure tire chains are in the vehicle, in good working order, and crews need to know how to apply them. If tire chains are not available at your station, please contact your immediate supervisor to arrange for supply. Please refer to [Policy 8.6.5.2 Use of Tire Chains](#).

Other winter preparations include:

- YakTrax traction device for boots for working on packed snow and ice
- Adequate supply of Ice Melt at the station and on car
- Surgical procedure masks for the crew cabs in preparation for accompanying flu season

Expect variable and challenging winter road and working conditions. All BCEHS staff and leaders need to work together to ensure our crews and patients are safe this winter season. Please share the revised Inclement Weather [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#), [Policy](#), [Standard Operating Guidelines \(SOGs\)](#), [Pre-Travel Checklist](#), and [Tracking Tool - for declined IFTs](#) with your staff and peers.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by*

Paul Vallely  
Senior Provincial Executive Director  
Patient Care Delivery