

Emergency Health Services Branch  
5700 Yonge Street, 6th Floor  
Toronto ON M2M 4K5

Direction des services de santé d'urgence  
5700 rue Yonge, 6<sup>e</sup> étage  
Toronto ON M2M 4K5

Telephone: (416) 327-7909  
Facsimile: (416) 327-7879  
Toll Free: (800) 461-6431

Téléphone: (416) 327-7909  
Télécopieur: (416) 327-7879  
Appels sans frais: (800) 461-6431

August 25, 2003

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Municipal EMS Directors and Managers  
Base Hospitals

**FROM:** Malcolm Bates  
Director  
Emergency Health Services Branch

**RE:** Amendment to the Advanced Life Support Patient Care Standards and  
Provincial Equipment Standards

**Storage of Controlled Substances**

---

Based on advice from the Medical Advisory Committee of the Provincial Base Hospital Advisory Group, the following amendments are made to the Advanced Life Support Patient Care Standards incorporated by reference in legislation made under the Ambulance Act. The following amendments take effect immediately.

- 1.) The *Advanced Life Support Patient Care Standards*, version 1.1 Section 1 - Advanced Life Support Paramedic Practice Standards, Subsection 5 - Narcotic Control - states:

“The Advanced Care and Critical Care Paramedic shall comply with the Narcotic Control Act of Canada.”

This standard has been changed to:

“The Advanced Care and Critical Care Paramedic shall comply with the Narcotic Control Act of Canada.

Advanced Care and Critical Care Paramedics must ensure that controlled substances (opiates and benzodiazepines) are stored in different carrying cases than other medications.”

- 2.) The *Provincial Equipment Standards*, version 1.1 Part A – Legislated Equipment List List 5 – Land Ambulance Advanced Life Support (Equipment and Drug List) states:

“6. Drugs: xx) protective carrying case for glass ampoules”

This standard has been changed to:


“6. Drugs: xx) a) protective carrying case for glass ampoules  
b) separate and clearly identifiable protective cases for both controlled substances (opiates and benzodiazepines) and other medications.”

EMS Directors and Managers need to ensure that all paramedics are advised of these changes to the ALS and Equipment Standards. As well, EMS Directors and Managers need to provide appropriate carrying cases and ensure that their staff store medications as directed.

In addition, base hospitals and approved Advanced Care Paramedic training programs are directed to emphasize during paramedic training the importance of identification and confirmation of a drug prior to its administration.

Further revisions to the Basic and Advanced Life Support Patient Care Standards are expected in the near future to reflect the “new normal” environment following the recent outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

If you require additional information, please contact Ms. Cathy Francis, Manager of Education and Patient Care Standards at (416) 327-7843.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Malcolm Bates

- c: Gail Ure, Executive Director  
CAO's of Upper Tier Municipalities and Designated Delivery Agents  
Dr. Karen Acheson  
F. Rusk  
D. Brown  
EHSB Senior Field Managers  
Dr. Don Eby  
M. Epp  
J. Van Pelt  
C. Francis  
PCP / ACP Paramedic Program Coordinators