



Health care providers invited to register with Emergency Health Provider Registry

August 23, 2018

Health Emergency Management BC has activated the provincial Emergency Health Provider Registry to assist in the coordination of relief staffing for health care providers in areas impacted by the hundreds of wildfires burning across BC. Any Health Authority is able to access the registry when local emergencies create additional staffing needs.

HSA was consulted in the development of the registry, and worked with the Ministry of Health to ensure that those members who volunteer to provide services in affected communities are fully supported, with their collective agreement rights upheld.

“Following last year’s unprecedented wildfire season, and with several evacuation alerts spanning the province, HSA is glad to see the government initiate the registry. When crisis hits, this tool can help our members access the relief they need,” said HSA President Val Avery.

A provincial State of Emergency was declared on Aug. 15, 2018. As of Aug. 19, there were 27 evacuation orders in effect in B.C.

The raging wildfires may create additional strain on local health care practitioners, particularly in rural and remote communities. The EHPR is an important initiative that can improve health service delivery to communities in crisis and relieve pressures on local staff. In 2017, 139 people provided support to their fellow health care practitioners through the system.

The registry was first created in 2017 to respond to an unprecedented season of wildfires. It has been reactivated with some procedural improvements and will be maintained as a permanent registry that can be used for future disasters. Those that register will have their information retained in the registry for five years, with their consent.

Registration is voluntary, and is open to all registered or regulated health care professionals working for a BC Health Authority. However, HSA members working for affiliate employers are not currently able to register. It is not currently open to health administrators and support staff, but doctors are included in the registry system. While health care staff are encouraged to discuss with their supervisors their plans to register, permission from the employer is not required, marking a change from last year’s registry procedures.

Registration in-take is performed by HealthLink BC at 8-1-1. Registrants will be asked about their current job title and specialty, availability, and regional preferences. If their assistance is required, the applicable staffing office or Medical Affairs Department will contact them to confirm their availability. Prior to deployment, the supervisor must approve the assignment. If contacted, registrants have the right to decline assignments.

For HSA members, compensation will be aligned with current salaries and paid through the home Health Authority. Benefits will not be interrupted and the registrant’s job position will be maintained while on assignment. Travel and accommodation costs are covered and accommodation options vary.

For more information, review the [communiqué and Frequently Asked Questions](#) produced by Health Emergency Management BC.

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