

TEMPLATE POLICY: 2014-09-17-00100

SUBJECT AREAS: BC CARE AIDE REGISTRY, HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

DATE: October 3, 2014

TITLE: CARE AIDE REGISTRY – EMPLOYER NOTIFICATION OF ABUSE

BCCPA POLICY POSITION

- *The BC Care Providers Association (BCCPA) maintains that a well-functioning Care Aide Registry will achieve its mandate of protecting vulnerable residents and improving the quality of care of residents; further there is the potential to be more cost-effective in terms of eliminating the need for future investigations of abuse caused by Care Aides who have already been found to be abusive.*
- *The BCCPA supports a transparent policy and procedure for notifying all employers of an employee who is working in multiple care facilities and has committed an abuse that has been substantiated through a formal investigation.*
- *The BCCPA supports a policy where all confirmed abuse is reported on the Care Aide Registry.*
- *The BCCPA supports that it be incumbent on the Care Aide to notify all their home and community care employers of their active registration status on the Registry or, at a minimum, for the employer to check such status every twelve months.*

BACKGROUND

- Over 30,000 registered Care Aide / Community Health Workers (Health Care Assistants) have recently verified their account on the registry confirming their work as care aides. The registry prompts Health Care Assistants (HCAs) to verify their account annually.
- Care aides are a vital part of the health care team. They provide up to 80 percent of the direct care received by older Canadians living in long term care or in their homes.ⁱ Their roles are becoming increasingly significant. As their roles expand, care aides are helping clients with increased complex care needs – and arguably, increased vulnerability to abuse.
- Research dealing with the mistreatment of seniors in care confirms that paid caregivers “are seen as having the potential to mistreat elders.”ⁱⁱ

- The Registry's three-fold mandate includes: 1) To protect vulnerable patients, residents and clients; 2) To establish and improve standards of care in the care aide and community health worker occupations; and 3) To promote professional development for care aides and community health workers and to assist these workers in identifying career opportunities.
- The Registry's protection mandate is limited to abuse.ⁱⁱⁱ An employer only reports a care aide to the Registry if they have been suspended or terminated for alleged abuse.
- As noted in the BCCPA report *Seniors Care for a Change* (June 2014), when the Registry investigates an allegation of abuse of a resident by staff, it is often reported in an untimely manner, is expensive to the provider and is often more lenient than the internal and other external investigations.^{iv}
- The BCCPA has outlined some its concerns with registry in the *Seniors Care for a Change* report along with an interim report it produced earlier this year. Further recommendations for improving the registry will be outlined in a subsequent final report.

FACTS

- Employers of health care assistants in British Columbia must apply before they can log in to the Registry's database to check if an HCA is registered in BC.
- Registrants are entitled to access their registration and receive written confirmation from the Care Aide Registry that they remain on the registry.
- The Registry is a database of credentialed or "registered" care aides and community health workers working for, or wanting to work for, publicly funded employers in BC. This includes acute care, assisted living care, long-term care, and home and community care.
- Since the Registry's establishment in 2010, it has received almost 300 alleged abuse reports from employers. Of these 159 were terminated by their employers and 138 received temporary suspensions. This means that the internal investigation and external investigation conducted by licensing officials found that abuse occurred, and that the employee was no longer suitable to be working in that home.
- Of the 159 terminations, 55 employees were removed from the Registry, while 15 were returned to the registry without an investigation. Of the 89 investigations, only 17 employees were permanently de-registered; while 43 were temporarily deregistered, 22 were re-registered; 3 are temporarily de-registered and 4 are currently under investigation.
- In February 2013, an independent review of the registry was completed and released by the Ministry of Health outlining areas for improvement including in its governance, gaps in

protection and funding. Sienna Consulting is also conducting an assessment of private employers of HCAs to explore expanding registry beyond publicly funded employers. The Ministry of Health has committed to making registry participation by all employers of HCAs.

- The BCCPA has advocated moving towards a zero tolerance approach to elder abuse. In 1990, our predecessor, the B.C. Association of Private Care, issued the following abuse prevention and response policy: “The policy should state clearly what the penalty for abuse is. The industry standard is dismissal. This is one circumstance where progressive discipline does not apply.”^v

REFERENCES / RESOURCES

ⁱ Whitney Berta, Audrey Laporte, Raisa Deber, Andrea Baumann and Brenda Gamble, “*The evolving role of health care aides in the long-term care and home and community care sectors in Canada*,” *Human Resources for Health* 2013, 11:25 at 1.

ⁱⁱ Marie Beaulieu and Lise Bélanger, “Intervention in Long-Term Care Institutions with Respect to Elder Mistreatment,” in *Abuse & Neglect of Older Canadians: Strategies for Change*, Michael J. MacLean, ed. (Ottawa: Canadian Association on Gerontology, 1995) at 29.

ⁱⁱⁱ Per the Letter of Understanding, Appendix A, cl. 4, the definition of “abuse” for the purposes of the Registry is the definition in part 5, division 2, s. 52(1)(a) of the [Residential Care Regulation](#), BC Reg 96/2009, which refers to s. 1 of Schedule D.

^{iv} BCCPA. Seniors Care for a Change. June 2014. Accessed at: <http://www.bccare.ca/wp-content/uploads/Seniors-Care-for-a-Change-FC.pdf>

^v Quality Assurance / Risk Management Bulletin #16, “Abuse Prevention and Response” (August 1990) at 10.