Recent Amendments to Ontario's Ambulance Act

December 18, 2019

The Ontario legislature has introduced amendments to its *Ambulance Act* regulations. Under the new regulations, ambulance services can transport 911 patients to pre-hospital care centres other than hospital emergency rooms. The amendments to O. Reg 257/00 under the *Ambulance Act* took effect on November 1, 2019. The regulations follow a comment period in October.

These amendments enable new patient care models for ambulance services, where care can be provided safely and appropriately outside of the traditional emergency room setting. The new models are to be published as they are developed, in a yet-to-be-published Ministry document titled "Patient Care Model Standards." Section 11 of the regulation has been amended to require ambulance services to comply with that document, once published.

Among the new patient care models specifically contemplated by the Ministry in its initial proposal are:

- Transport to destinations other than the ED, such as specialty clinics suited to the patient's immediate needs.
- On-scene treatment, either as a full incident of care or as pre-care before transfer to another community-based provider.

The practical changes would include granting the Ministry power to establish care standards and requirements for use of the new care models.

Also of note is that the proposal contemplates the employment of care providers, such as nurses, at ambulance call centres for the purpose of providing clinical advice during on-scene care. Currently, ambulance call centres rely on emergency care physicians for urgent clinical advice. Under the proposal, physician consultations would also be broadened to include different specialties.

It remains to be seen what alternative care models will actually be implemented and how those alternatives will impact pre-hospital care.

The government has also amended Reg. 552 under the *Health Insurance Act* to establish patient-paid charges for transportation to non-hospital destinations. The co-pay charge is set at the same amount as hospital transport co-pays ($45), which the proposal notes is one of the lowest ambulance co-pays in the province.

By

Logan Crowell

Expertise

Health Law

BLG | Canada's Law Firm

As the largest, truly full-service Canadian law firm, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (BLG) delivers practical legal advice for domestic and international clients across more practices and industries than any Canadian firm. With over 800 lawyers, intellectual property agents and other professionals, BLG serves the legal needs of businesses and institutions across Canada and beyond – from M&A and capital markets, to disputes, financing, and trademark & patent registration.

blg.com

BLG Offices

Calgary

Centennial Place, East Tower
520 3rd Avenue S.W.
Calgary, AB, Canada
T2P 0R3

T 403.232.9500
F 403.266.1395

Ottawa

World Exchange Plaza
100 Queen Street
Ottawa, ON, Canada
K1P 1J9

T 613.237.5160
F 613.230.8842

Vancouver

1200 Waterfront Centre
200 Burrard Street
Vancouver, BC, Canada
V7X 1T2

T 604.687.5744
F 604.687.1415

Montréal

1000 De La Gauchetière Street West
Suite 900
Montréal, QC, Canada
H3B 5H4

T 514.954.2555
F 514.879.9015

Toronto

Bay Adelaide Centre, East Tower
22 Adelaide Street West
Toronto, ON, Canada
M5H 4E3

T 416.367.6000
F 416.367.6749

The information contained herein is of a general nature and is not intended to constitute legal advice, a complete statement of the law, or an opinion on any subject. No one should act upon it or refrain from acting without a thorough examination of the law after the facts of a specific situation are considered. You are urged to consult your legal adviser in cases of specific questions or concerns. BLG does not warrant or guarantee the accuracy, currency or completeness of this publication. No part of this publication may be reproduced without prior written permission of Borden Ladner Gervais LLP. If this publication was sent to you by BLG and you do not wish to receive further publications from BLG, you may ask to remove your contact information from our mailing lists by emailing unsubscribe@blg.com or manage your subscription preferences at blg.com/MyPreferences. If you feel you have received this message in error please contact communications@blg.com. BLG's privacy policy for publications may be found at blg.com/en/privacy.

© 2026 Borden Ladner Gervais LLP. Borden Ladner Gervais LLP is an Ontario Limited Liability Partnership.