



May 25, 2009

Ref # 8971

Ed Helfrich, Chief Executive Officer
BC Care Providers Association
#301-1338 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6H 1H2

RE: RESIDENTIAL CARE HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

Dear Mr. Helfrich;

We are in receipt of a copy of the Special Feature in the Spring 2009 version of the BC Care Providers Association's Care Quarterly, *Residential Care Health and Safety Guidelines* in which an in-depth description of guidelines for protecting residents and staff are outlined. You note in your article that the guidelines being presented are historical in nature and recently reviewed by your membership at focus sessions.

Like you, the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) is committed to the health and safety of residents and staff and, as such, believes that to fully appreciate the complexity of care provision in residential care requires a sound evidence based approach. Taking our lead from literature and best practice, VIHA gears its expectations of all residential care sites to adopt approaches in which resident health and safety advancement is predictable and achievable.

No such evidence was presented in your article regarding the descriptors entitled the "residential care workload measurement tool". The validity and reliability of the descriptors for measuring the health and safety of residents is essential if any credence is to be given to this document. The guidelines, as presented, would not ensure clinical objectivity.

Your article indicates that the MDS/RAI are tools currently being used at various BC care facilities; however, they are tools that every health authority within BC, and therefore every contracted service provider, is required to have in place. Unlike the descriptors presented in your article, the MDS/RAI is evidence based and creates a holistic picture of each resident, allowing contracted service providers, as well as regulators, to plan care to meet resident needs instead of the focus being on staff tasks.

BC health authorities have been using the RAI HCC for several years and the RAI V 2.0 is now mandatory for all admissions to residential care (and all residents living within the residential care setting by April 2010).

In this challenging economic environment in which we need to find ways to enhance productivity

.../2

Executive Office

located at 2101 Richmond Avenue, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8R 4R7 • Tel: (250) 370-8699 • Fax (250) 370-8750
mailing address: 1952 Bay Street, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8R 1J8

Our Vision: Healthy People, Healthy Island Communities, Seamless Service

while improving the services we provide, it is troubling to learn that BC Care Providers would promote the use of a tool that duplicates efforts that already mandated and where there is no evidence it will produce the results required to fully support individuals with complex care needs and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'M' followed by a long horizontal line that curves upwards and then back down to the left.

Mike Conroy
Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

cc. Marianne McLennan, Acting Executive Director, Continuing Health Services
Sheila Cruikshank, Director, Residential VIHA Operated Services