

Cross-Border EMS Issues

GLBHI
Great Lakes Border Health Initiative

(via Teleconference)

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WHTI

Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative

- Implemented on June 1, 2009 for all ports of entry into the United States, requiring citizens of Canada and the US to present a valid passport or another acceptable document recognized by the US Department of Homeland Security to enter the US.

Background

- Each year, more than 500 Ontario patients are transported by ambulance to US hospitals which have been determined as able to offer the required care.
- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Emergency Health Services Branch worked closely with the US Department of Homeland Security - US Customs and Border Protection to facilitate this passage

Enhanced Drivers Licenses

- The Ministry of Health worked with the Ministry of Transportation and Service Ontario to facilitate Ontario paramedics securing Enhanced Drivers Licenses (EDLs)
- One-time funding was provided to EMS Operators to reimburse the Service Ontario fees associated with EDLs

Implementation

- Over 500 paramedics obtained EDLs in advance of WHTI
- There have been no reports by Ontario EMS services of any difficulties crossing the US border.

Non-WHTI Compliant?

- US Customs and Border Protection will continue to allow US and Canadian nationals without a WHTI-compliant document to enter the US in the event of unforeseen medical or non-medical emergency situations, or in cases of humanitarian or national interest.

Statistics and Demographics

- Ontario spans >1M² kms with a population of 13.2M
- Over 95% of population covered by 9-1-1
- 6849 Paramedics
 - 5466 PCPs
 - 1383 ACPs

- Land ambulance services are delivered by 49 certified Land Ambulance Operators
- 22 Ambulance Dispatch Centres control the movement of all ambulance resources
- 7 Regional Base Hospital Programs to provide medical oversight / authorization for controlled medical acts performed by paramedics in the field.

- Each year, there are approximately 1.6M requests for land ambulance service, resulting in 1.2M resources being dispatched and the transportation of nearly 1M patients
- Air ambulance services are delivered by Ornge