



## Safety Bulletin

### Regular Review and Practice of First Aid Skills

**Date:** November 25, 2014

**To:** All Residential Care Facilities.

**Purpose:** To promote regular first aid and CPR training to ensure employees of residential care facilities respond quickly and appropriately to common emergencies, including choking.

**Background:** Many persons in residential care require supervision while eating. The Residential Care Regulation requires care facility operators to ensure that employees have the appropriate skills to supervise persons in care, as well as to provide first aid when there is an emergency such as a choking incident.<sup>1</sup> According to British Columbia Coroners Service statistics, airway obstruction accounted for 8% of all deaths in community care facilities in the province from 2009 to 2011.

As a result of a recent Coroner's Report and recommendations, the following safety standards are recommended:

1. Persons in care who require supervision and assistance while eating, or whose access to food and beverages must be restricted, must be actively supervised at all times when food and beverages are accessible.
2. Employees that are trained in first aid should regularly practice and review first aid and CPR skills to ensure that they are able to respond quickly and appropriately in recognizing and managing common emergencies, such as choking.
3. Documentation of first aid/CPR practices and reviews should be maintained at the facility. These records should be made available to health authority employees who conduct inspections.

This safety bulletin is issued by:

Doug Hughes, Assistant Deputy Minister  
Health Services Policy and Quality Assurance Division  
British Columbia Ministry of Health

<sup>1</sup> Residential Care Regulation. Section 43(1) A licensee must ensure that persons in care have at all times immediate access to an employee who  
(a) holds a valid first aid and CPR certificate, provided on completion of a course that meets the requirements of Schedule C,  
(b) is knowledgeable respecting each person in care's medical condition, if any, and  
(c) is capable of effectively communicating with emergency personnel.