
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2006HEALTH0056-001097
Sept. 11, 2006

Ministry of Health

BCBEDLINE MARKS FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

BURNABY – More than 40,000 critically ill patients have benefited from bcbedline since it was launched five years ago by allowing the timely transfer of patients to the best care setting, said Health Minister George Abbott as he joined staff to celebrate the fifth anniversary.

“It can be a frightening experience for a patient who is critically ill and needs to be transferred to a higher level of care away from their home community,” said Abbott at the bcbedline facility in Burnaby. “That’s where bcbedline comes in. I want to thank the staff who facilitate that transfer by locating the right physician, the right hospital and a bed for the appropriate level of care.”

The bcbedline program was launched in August 2001 as B.C.’s bed management and patient transfer system, run through a central bed registry. It provides information to physicians and other health providers, assisting in the timely transfer of acute and critically ill patients to the appropriate level of care. The service is funded by the Ministry of Health and is currently administered by Vancouver Coastal Health.

The bcbedline service had a total of 12,675 phone calls in 2005/06, an increase of 20 percent from 10,529 in 2004/05. Since the program started in August 2001 to July 31, 2006, there have been 42,885 cases logged with bcbedline.

There are two components to the bcbedline system – an Internet-based provincial bed registry web site and a toll-free 24/7 call centre to facilitate patient transfers. This service helps to reduce the amount of time a physician or other health-care provider spends looking for hospitals that have capacity to receive patients requiring a transfer to a higher level of care. bcbedline is also responsible for transferring patients in and outside of the province.

“bcbedline has played an invaluable role in allowing physicians and hospitals to better manage available resources to ensure safe, quality care for patients,” said Dr. John Shepherd, Vancouver Coastal Health’s VP of Health Service Networks, Clinical Quality and Safety. “In particular, bcbedline’s ability to arrange urgent transfers of patients means that physicians no longer have to spend time looking after transfer arrangements, enabling them to spend more time focusing on the actual patient.”

The bcbedline program, along with the BC NurseLine, BC HealthGuide program and Dial-A-Dietitian, will be transferred to a new organization under the Emergency Health Services Commission in 2006/07. The commission is currently responsible for the BC Ambulance Service.

-30-

Media Marisa Adair
contact: Communications Director
 250 952-1887
 250 920-8500 (cell)

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province’s news feeds using RSS, visit the Province’s website at www.gov.bc.ca.