

# DNR Task Force Update – August 2007

Last year in August 2006, a first formal Update was distributed that described the work of the provincial DNR Task Force. If you have not seen that Update or are unfamiliar with the Task Force, acquiring a copy of the August 2006 Update can provide important background information about its purposes, accomplishments to date and future directions. Copies can be obtained from the Ontario Palliative Care Association's website: [www.ontariopalliativecare.org](http://www.ontariopalliativecare.org). At the time, much work had been done, but much was left to do. This August 2007 Update aims to provide information on what has been since then.

Firstly, the most important news is that a date has been set for implementing across Ontario the DNR Standard and *Do Not Resuscitate Confirmation (DNRC) Form* – November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007. To support the implementation of these, the Task Force worked to complete a “Reference Document”, which consolidated the discipline-specific issues and learning objectives for each of the groups who will be involved i.e. firefighters, nurses, paramedics and physicians. Once this document was finalized in early 2007, planning immediately started for implementing the new DNR Standard and *DNRC Form*, with the Reference Document being used as a basis for the development of educational materials. Sub-groups of the Task Force have been working to ensure that these materials will be available to be accessed starting in September, prior to the November 1<sup>st</sup> implementation date.

DNR Task Force members have been involved in the development of educational opportunities and/or information packages, which according to disciplines include the following:

## **Paramedics:**

A training/orientation package for paramedics is currently under development. The package will consist of a video presentation designed to introduce and orient paramedics to the new DNR Standard and *Do Not Resuscitate Confirmation Form*, a copy of the new DNR Standard and case-based exercises. The package will be distributed to paramedics on a DVD/CD-Rom early in September. Paramedics will be expected to read the new standard and review the video presentation. The completion of the case-based exercises and a written quiz will be utilized to confirm knowledge and the paramedic's ability to apply the new standard. Paramedics will be expected to complete the DNR training/orientation package prior to the November 1, 2007 implementation of the new DNR Standard.

*Submitted by: Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Emergency Health Services Branch, Education and Patient Care Standards*

## **Firefighters:**

The Office of the Fire Marshal is consulting with Emergency Health Services as the above DVD/CD video is being produced. A Communiqué with an attached information package will be distributed to all Ontario municipal fire services in early fall and posted on the OFM website. It is anticipated that the information package will include the copy of the Paramedic DVD/CD, Q & A's as outlined in the final Taskforce Report and several case-based response scenarios/exercises for fire services.

*Submitted by: Office of the Fire Marshal, Academic Standards and Evaluation*

**Nurses:**

Two articles will appear in the Standard, a magazine for members of the College of Nurses of Ontario. The first will be published in the fall issue and will introduce the form and act as a preview. The second article will be published in the winter issue and will contain more details about the *DNRC Form* and process. Another article will appear in the Quality Practice publication for employers. Also, there will be three teleconferences targeted towards nursing leaders in the palliative care field to help them understand and apply the form, and educate their staff in the nurse's role when using the form. The dates for the teleconferences are September 19<sup>th</sup> 10:00 – 11:00, October 17<sup>th</sup> 13:00 – 14:00 and November 21<sup>st</sup> 14:00 – 15:00. For more information and to sign up for the teleconferences please check our website closer to the dates at [www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org).

*Submitted by: College of Nurses of Ontario, Practice and Policy Department*

**Physicians:**

The editor of the *Ontario Medical Review* (OMR) has expressed an interest in publishing an article describing the new Standard. A draft article has been written and submitted for preliminary review. The aim is to publish the article in November of 2007. The OMR is distributed to all physicians in Ontario.

The President of the Ontario College of Family Physicians (OCFP) has also indicated a willingness to write a full length editorial regarding the new Standard. As well, a shorter news item will appear in an upcoming newsletter from the OCFP. These will be distributed to all members of the OCFP.

Lastly support is being sought for a similar distribution to all Emergency Medicine Section members of the Ontario Medical Association (OMA). Other OMA sections that will be approached include Geriatrics, Palliative Care and Pediatrics.

These initiatives should ensure that all Ontario MDs will have the opportunity to become informed via one or several routes of communication.

*Submitted by: Dr. Rick Verbeek, DNR Task Force member*

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The DNR Task Force has worked hard for the last three years to accomplish what it has. It is anticipated that this work will improve circumstances for all paramedics, firefighters, nurses and physicians, but most importantly, for Ontarians living with progressive life-limiting illness and their families.

On behalf of the Ontario Palliative Care Association (OPCA), I would like to extend my appreciation to each Task Force member and the organizations they represent for their commitment and dedication to this process.

*Chris Sherwood*

DNR Task Force Chair and President of OPCA