



# How the *Health Protection Act* Relates to Health Care Administrators

## What is the *Health Protection Act*?

- The Health Protection Act is legislation designed to protect the health of the public. It comes into force on Nov. 1, 2005.
- The Act
  - provides the legal framework enabling public health officials to protect the public and to prevent, detect, manage, and contain health threats without unduly interfering with civil rights and liberties
  - deals with notifiable diseases or conditions, communicable diseases, health hazards, public health emergencies and good safety
  - lays out the duties and responsibilities of public health officials and of the ministers responsible
  - accords sufficient weight to ethical values especially individual liberty, protection of the public from harm, reciprocity, and privacy and confidentiality of health information

## What are the responsibilities of health care administrators under this Act?

A health care administrator

- *must ensure that an appropriate reporting system is in place*

A health care administrator must ensure that an appropriate system is in place so that all reports are made in accordance with the regulations. See bullets below for more specific information. [S7 of *Reporting of Notifiable diseases and Conditions Regulations*.]

- *must report notifiable diseases or conditions*

A health care administrator must report to the Medical Officer of Health if they have reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a person who is a resident of the institution has or may have a notifiable disease or condition or has recently had a notifiable disease or condition. [S31(1)] A resident includes a person who has been placed in, remanded or admitted to an institution. [S2(2)(b)(i) of *Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Conditions Regulations*]

The list of notifiable diseases and conditions appears in Schedule A of the Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Conditions regulations.

- *must report unexpectedly high rates of diseases and rare or unusual forms of disease*

A health care administrator must report to a Medical Officer of Health if an illness is serious and occurring at a higher rate than normal, i.e., a disease that is occurring more frequently than would normally be expected or in a rare or unusual form. [S31(5)]

## How are reports made to the Medical Officer of Health?

The report

- Is made to a Medical Officer of Health who has jurisdiction in the area in which the health care administrator works [S6 of Reporting of Notifiable diseases and Conditions Regulations]
- Should include the following information (if available) on the person with the notifiable disease or condition:
  - name, age, address, ethnicity, and gender
  - the name of the notifiable disease or condition that is being reported
  - clinical and epidemiological details that are pertinent to the diagnosis and follow-up
  - name, profession, and contact information for the reporting person, and other information required by a Medical Office Health for case management and prevention of transmission of the notifiable disease or condition or the illness [S8 of Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Conditions Regulations]

## What other information should health care administrators know?

- If a hospital is named in a court order as an isolation facility, then it is the responsibility of the administrator of the institution or the chief executive officer of the hospital or a person delegated by the CEO to designate a physician for the patient who is the subject of the order. [ S39(6)(a)]