



Special Patient Program

Information for patients receiving palliative care

About the Special Patient Program (SPP)

The SPP was developed to maintain the quality of life for people with rare conditions, unique care needs, or those who are receiving palliative care. The program ensures that paramedics know about the patient's special needs – so when EHS is called to help, our paramedics will have quick access to the information they need about you or your loved one.

Paramedic care follows the clinical policies developed by the Provincial Medical Director of Emergency Health Services (EHS). In some cases, patients may need special care that is not included in EHS practice. The SPP allows you and your health care provider to create an EHS care plan that is right for you. Your health care provider will send your SPP request to EHS.

How do I register for the SPP?

You and your health care provider will develop your care plan together. Your health care provider will submit this to EHS. Once you are approved by EHS you will receive a SPP card and magnet in the mail which will include your unique Special Patient Number. Please keep your SPP card and magnet in a safe place.



←..... Your Special Patient Number

When paramedics come to your home they will have and follow the SPP care plan developed by you in collaboration with your health care provider/team.

Should your care wishes change, please discuss this with the health care provider who submitted your SPP Enrollment Form. They will have to re-submit a new form describing the change.

Benefits of the SPP

- Provides special care and support for people with rare conditions, unique care needs, or those who are receiving palliative care
- Respects patients' wishes
- Improves patients' quality of life
- Reduces stress on patients and families
- As with any ambulance response, you will only be billed if you are transported to hospital

Patients receiving palliative care

Paramedics have been trained to provide palliative care and support for patients in their homes. EHS and your health care team are working together with you and your family to provide individualized care in the best setting possible.

If you want to go to the Emergency Department even though the paramedics are able to care for you at home, please tell the paramedics. In some cases, the paramedics may tell you that it would be best to take you to the Emergency Department.




Ambulance *lights and sirens*

Patients receiving palliative care, and their families, may want the ambulance to come with the lights and sirens off. A *lights and sirens* response can be frightening or disruptive for patients receiving palliative care and their families.

When you call 911 and are transferred to Ambulance Dispatch, you will be asked a series of questions that will determine whether or not this will be a *lights and siren* response. Tell them if the reason you are calling for was expected. This helps the Ambulance Dispatch Officer decide if the ambulance can come without *lights and sirens*. If the change is not expected or if it is something not related to the patient's SPP, it may be best to have the lights and sirens on.

Calling **9-1-1** as a Special Patient

If you or a member of your family needs emergency care:

- 1**  Call **9-1-1**
- 2**  When transferred to Ambulance Dispatch, tell them you or a member of your family is enrolled with the SPP
- 3**  Give your Special Patient Number (located on your SPP Card)

After the emergency

Paramedics will leave a *Record of Visit* form at your home. This will describe why they were called and the support they provided. Please take this form to follow up appointments with your care team.


NOVA SCOTIA

EHS
Emergency Health Services

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