

# Regional Emergency Department Physician Coverage Policy

## 1. Introduction

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (“VCH”) and Providence Health Care (“PHC”) seek to ensure emergency departments (“EDs”) within the region are appropriately staffed by emergency physicians (“EPs”) in order to provide high quality and timely patient care.

### 1.1 Purpose

This policy sets out an expedited process to facilitate staffing at VCH EDs under urgent circumstances such as (but not limited to): unexpected staffing shortages, wildfires, pandemic coverage, CST implementation.

Establishing a regional pool for a group of EPs who are already credentialed and privileged and in good standing at a VCH or PHC site will enable VCH to provide a more timely response to individual site needs and reduce the administrative work for the medical leader and the EP.

### 1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all EPs who are credentialed and privileged in the “Active” staff category at a VCH or PHC hospital site.

## 2. Policy

### 2.1 ED Regional Pool Membership

The Regional Pool of EPs are those EPs who are able to work at any VCH ED on request without further administrative requirements such as interim privileges.

#### *Process for VCH Privileged EPs*

Once an EP moves from the Provisional medical staff category to the Active medical staff category at a VCH site, they will automatically be added to the regional pool in the “Temporary” medical staff category.

The Regional Department Head, Emergency Medicine will review and provide approval for all EPs moving into the Regional Pool.

Letters of appointment and reappointment to the Active category of medical staff will clearly delineate the physician's addition to the Regional Emergency Medicine pool as "Temporary" medical staff.

The physician's primary site will continue to be the site where they are in the Active Medical staff category.

For clarity, this process also applies to EPs whose primary site is at PHC but who are already cross-appointed to a VCH site.

### ***Process for PHC Privileged EPs***

Once an EP (who is not already cross-appointed to a VCH site) moves from the Provisional medical staff category to the Active medical staff category at a PHC site, they will be invited to apply for cross-appointment to VCH medical staff in the Regional Emergency Medicine pool in the "Temporary" medical staff category.

The PHC EP will be emailed an Acknowledgement and Consent form allowing VCH to collect their person information for the purposes of appointing them to the Regional EP Pool. The PHC EP is expected to sign and return this form by email.

The PHC EP's most recent appointment or reappointment package will be accepted by VCH. A Letter of Good Standing for the EP will be provided by the Regional Department Head, Emergency Medicine to support the privileging process at the VCH HAMAC and Board.

Such EPs will receive letters of appointment and reappointment from VCH that specify the physician's addition to the Regional Emergency Medicine pool as "Temporary" medical staff.

The physician's primary site will continue to be the site where they are in the Active Medical staff category.

## **2.2 Regional ED Pool Requirements**

In order to be added to the Regional Pool and to remain within the Regional Pool, the EP must have Active ED privileges at a VCH or PHC site, and must remain in good standing.

In situations where an EP has been flagged for a disciplinary issue (behavioural or clinical) or where there is an ongoing investigation, the EP will automatically be temporarily removed from the Regional Pool upon notice of the disciplinary issue or concern.

If an EP is on a leave of absence from their primary site, they will be temporarily removed from the Regional Pool. In specific circumstances and on a case-by-case basis, the Regional Head of Emergency may exercise discretion to allow an EP to remain in the Regional Pool even if they are on a leave of absence from their primary site.

### **2.3 Engaging EPs in Regional Pool**

The decision to engage an EP from the Regional Pool at an additional site will be at the discretion of the site's Emergency Department Head or Local Medical Director with agreement from the EP.

The invitation will clearly delineate which shifts, or which specific time period, the EP is invited to cover. The EP is only permitted to use their temporary privileges and provide health care at the site during for the periods outlined in the invitation.

A central SharePoint site will be set up to house a regularly updated list of EPs in the Regional Pool. Access to this list will be limited to the Regional Department Head, Emergency Medicine, VCH Emergency Department Heads and site credentialing coordinators.

### **2.4 Limitations & Restrictions of Regional Pool Privileges**

Membership in the Regional Pool creates no entitlement to work at any VCH site and no obligation to accept shifts at any VCH site, aside from an EP's primary site.

No member of the Regional Pool may use their temporary privileges Regional Pool privileges at any VCH site without invitation and permission from the site's Emergency Department Head or Local Medical Director.