

Dear Health Care Provider,

I am a person with a disability and I require the presence of an essential support person(s) with me in health care settings. My support person can advise on the areas where I need support if I am unable to do so directly.

The Government of Canada published “**COVID-19 and people with disabilities in Canada**” on May 7, 2020, which says that hospitals, clinics, medical facilities and any organization that provide health care and supportive services to people with disabilities should provide permission for essential support person(s) to accompany people with disabilities at all stages of care in the health care environment.

The presence of my essential support person(s) is a necessary accommodation for my disability. The law protects my right to accommodations when accessing health care services.

The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** guarantees people with disabilities the right to the support I need to communicate and make decisions (Article 12).

The **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms** guarantees my right to life and my choices about health care (section 7). It also guarantees equality, which includes my right to accommodation I need because of a physical or mental disability (Section 15).

The British Columbia **Human Rights Code** says that people with disabilities have the right to accommodation when using public services like health care (Section 8).

The British Columbia **Health Care (Consent) and Care Facility (Admission) Act** says that health care providers must get consent before giving me health care. If I need help with communication or making decisions, I have the right to help from a Representative named under the **Representation Agreement Act**, or a family member or close friend.

For further guidance, please contact the BC Patient Quality Review Boards:

Vancouver Coastal Health 1-877-993-9199	Island Health 1-877-977-5797	Interior Health 1-877-442-2001
Fraser Health 1-877-880-8823	Northern Health 1-877-677-7715	

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.