



# NB Trauma Program

## Programme de traumatologie du NB

Horizon Health Network  
Réseau de santé Horizon

Vitalité Health Network  
Réseau de santé Vitalité

Ambulance NB

New Brunswick Department of Health  
Ministère de la santé du Nouveau-Brunswick

### Changes to the Use of Long Backboards for Interfacility Trauma Transfers: What You Need to Know!

1. The medical evidence is clear: Using long backboards for the interfacility transfer of major trauma patients is **NO LONGER** indicated. This holds true even in the presence of suspected or actually diagnosed spinal cord injury. Leaving patients on a long spine board increases pain and the risk of pressure sores while failing to protect against further spinal injury, making this common practice obsolete. Although it does remain important to limit spinal motion during transport for patients who have not been definitively cleared of spinal injury, a long spine board is no longer indicated for this purpose.
2. Going forward, and following best practices, physicians, nurses and paramedics involved in any patient transfer of a trauma patient between facilities are strongly encouraged to remove the backboard prior to transfer. A cervical collar may be left in place to reduce lateral movement of the head during the transfer of trauma patients in whom:
  - The c-spine has not been cleared OR
  - Are intubated OR
  - Have suspected or actual brain injury
3. In the fall of 2015, Ambulance New Brunswick will be introducing a “scoop style” stretcher in all ambulances to facilitate the transfer of patients from the hospital stretcher to their ambulance cot. These stretchers will also be placed in every NB Trauma Centre emergency department to facilitate transfer between stretchers within the department if necessary. In the interim, the long spine board, slider or other such hospital product should be used to transfer patients (in whom the possibility of spinal injury exists) between stretchers.
4. Want more information? Check out the provincial Consensus Statement on prehospital and interhospital use of long spine boards, available at [www.NBTrauma.ca](http://www.NBTrauma.ca) , or call us at 506-648-8040.