

**STAFF REPORT TO THE CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT
HEALTH FACILITIES PLANNING COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, JULY 20, 2005**

SUBJECT

AMENDMENT TO CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT BYLAW NO. 487, A BYLAW REGULATING TATTOO PREMISES.

BACKGROUND

The existing Tattoo Facilities Bylaw has not been amended since its enactment in 1978. The tattooing of minors has been an issue for the tattoo industry for some time. The majority of businesses do not wish to become involved in disputes regarding the appropriateness of tattooing minors. An age prohibition would assist businesses to avoid this potential conflict.

Tattooing poses a small increase in the risk of exposure to communicable disease; this is reflected in the fact that the Canadian Blood Services will not accept blood donations from anyone who has had a tattoo in the preceding 12 months. Accordingly an individual must make an educated risk assessment regarding being tattooed.

On a more practical level, the tattoo industry itself strongly encourages clients to discuss with the operator aspects of hygiene, sanitation and post-tattoo care which may impact disease and infection control.

Tattooing is considered a “permanent” body modification. A tattoo can lose its appeal as social trends change or the life of the recipient changes. In situations where the artwork is no longer desirable the options are limited. The removal of a tattoo by laser or other method is another dermatological treatment with its own risks.

Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) Health Protection and Environmental Services staff currently enforce this Bylaw and will continue to do so. The proposed amendments are in part a reflection of concerns that have been brought to our attention by both the industry and the public. The proposed changes will better reflect current health practices and address the issue of minors receiving tattoos.

DISCUSSION

The amendments to this Bylaw are as follows:

1. The removal of dated sections and utilization of the Provincial Guidelines.
2. Rewording and insertion of sections which better reflect current health practices.
3. Insertion of a new section requiring operators not to allow minors to receive tattooing.

It is felt that these matters require a level of consideration that cannot reasonably be expected of persons under the age of 16 years.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Health Facilities Committee recommend to the Capital Regional District Board, sitting as the Local Board of Health, approval of the proposed amendment to Capital Regional District Bylaw No. 487, a Bylaw Regulating Tattoo Premises.

Richard S. Stanwick, M.D., M.Sc., FRCPC, F.A.A.P.
Chief Medical Health Officer