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PROP & TIL Leave the Nest

We are delighted to announce that on April 1st 2006 PROP and TIL began operating under their own newly established society, The BC Association of Individualized Technology and Supports for People with Disabilities (BCITS). Since we moved to the BC Paraplegic Association (BCPA) in 2001 with our sister program Technology for Independent Living (TIL), we always knew that one day we would leave the nest to build a home of our own.

A Big Thank You to BCPA for Supporting PROP and TIL

BCPA has truly been an amazing parent to PROP and TIL. We are all extremely grateful for BCPA's support and leadership during our "growing-up" phase. We have a great affinity with all the BCPA staff and will maintain our great working relationship with everyone there.

BCPA Executive Director Melanie Crombie and the BCPA Board have been an enormous help in assisting us to form our new society. They recognized PROP and TIL's need to flourish and grow under their own speed. And, as Melanie says, we will continue to be partners in the community. "BCPA is proud of the work we have done in developing and



"We're pleased to introduce our new organization, The BC Association of Individualized Technology and Supports for People with Disabilities."

WHAT'S IN THIS EDITION

As you will see in our lead article, we have some very exciting news about a new society that just became the governing body for PROP and TIL. We want to say a big thank you to the BC Paraplegic Association for taking us under their wing for the last few years.

Over the next few months, we will be featuring members of the new society's Board. In this PROPNEWS we introduce you to Ken Kramer.

And, as promised in the last edition, Norm Smith is back with his useful tips for travelling with a BiPAP. The days are growing warmer and longer and soon we'll be thinking about vacations. Norm's tips are here just in time!

Finally, when you are contacting us, please remember to use our full 11-digit number: 1.866.326.1245.

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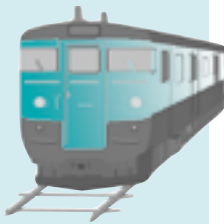
Norm Smith's tips for travelling with a BiPAP

We all like traveling, but dragging along a BiPAP can be a downer. Over the past year I've travelled a lot. Here are some tips I'd like to share that will make travelling much easier on you and your machine.



Carry BiPAP documentation with you

□ Because of increased security at airports and bus terminals it's wise to carry documentation in case you're questioned about your machine. I always carry a letter from PROP detailing my respiratory condition and my need for a BiPAP. The letter includes my doctor's name, address, phone number and my BiPAP's make and model. I pack one labeled copy of the letter on top of my BiPAP so baggage crews have access to it. Another copy goes in my carry-on bag so if security personnel ask me about my BiPAP I can produce the letter immediately.



□ The other document I always carry, actually I carry two, is one listing my doctor's name and address, and PROP's address, phone number, and e-mail address. I tape one to my machine and carry a small version in my wallet that I printed and laminated myself. You never know when you might have to phone someone for help. Also on this document are my BiPAP's settings.

□ I also find it useful to carry a description, taken from the Internet, of my BiPAP and what it does. Security/check-in personnel can look at the machine, read the description, and compare the BiPAP with the picture.

Pack your BiPAP securely

□ Packing your BiPAP properly is extremely important: proper packing helps ensure it arrives in good working order. I use a large sports bag with a zippered D-shaped opening and large zippered side pockets. First into the bag is the power cord. It sits flat on the bottom. Next in is a 3-metre extension cord with a 3-pronged outlet, followed by a large bath towel and the BiPAP. I pack clothing around the ends and sides of the machine for cushioning. On top of the BiPAP I put the hose, another large towel, the documentation and 2 spare filters in a neat folder. In a small side pocket I throw in a 2-prong to 3-prong adaptor. If you stay somewhere with older wiring the extension cord and adapter can be life savers.

Because of increased security at airports and bus terminals it's wise to carry documentation in case you're questioned about your machine.

□ Masks are odd-shaped so packing them can be a problem. I partially disassemble mine by taking out the front elbow and placing it inside the mask with the keeper. I place this in a large zip-loc bag and partially fill it with air before sealing. The air acts as a cushion if the bag is even slightly compressed: the trick is to only partially fill it with air so it doesn't burst. This bag goes in the front pocket of the sports bag. Small items can be packed around it for more cushioning. I attach my self-made, laminated "Medical Equipment" tag to the bag.

When you fly

□ Know in advance if the airline allows medical equipment (most do) and if it's considered part of your baggage allotment. This makes a difference to how you pack. Unfortunately you will usually have to check-in your BiPAP as it's too big to be carry-on.

□ Tell the airline when you make your reservation that you will be travelling with medical equipment. I like to include the words "absolutely necessary to health," "very sensitive" and "very expensive" when I do this. They appreciate this information and can be prepared when you check-in. Make sure your BiPAP bag is tagged properly with your name, address, phone number, a "FRAGILE" tag, the homemade "Medical Equipment" tag and destination tag.

□ Try to arrange to pick up your bag at an airline pick-up point in the terminal rather than have it come down the carousel. This can be a rough ride.

When you take the bus

□ Once again, ensure your BiPAP bag is tagged properly. When you give your bag to the loader/driver, explain what it is and ask that it be packed safely in the bus cargo hold. If you leave it out on the platform it will rarely get the attention it needs as employees are usually in a hurry. If possible, ask if there's a place inside the bus you can store it. Some buses have overhead racks that will accommodate the bag. If not, there might be somewhere else to store it. (On the bus line I frequently take, drivers reserve the seat right behind them for their personal effects and will quite often let me store my BiPAP there— it fits nicely on the floor in front of the seat).

I hope these suggestions help. Travel is good for all of us and if we can ease our minds about the care and safety of our machines then it's even more enjoyable. Happy traveling. □



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all about us

PROP is funded by the Ministry of Health through Vancouver Coastal Health.



Board Member Ken Kramer

Ken Kramer is a lawyer who specializes in estate litigation and planning. He also advises not-for-profits on planned giving. Ken was called to the Bar in 1996 and worked for 4 years in BC's Justice Department. He now owns a busy law firm—KMK Law Corporation. Ken is the Chair of Muscular Dystrophy Canada and is on the Board of the Lions Society for Children with Disabilities. He's also participated on a number of Law Society of BC committees and works to improve accessibility for lawyers with disabilities.

Ken's clearly a very busy man and we are very lucky he has agreed to join the Board of The BC Association for Individualized Technology and Supports for People with Disabilities. "I'm very excited about sitting on this brand new Board. Technology for Independent Living (TIL) and particularly Simon Cox and Kyle Ho have helped me enormously with the technological supports I need to live independently in my apartment and it's great to have the opportunity to put something back." Ken currently lives downtown but is

busy redesigning a condo he recently bought in Burnaby.

It's not all work for Ken: he loves travelling. His current favourite destination is Hawaii but he wants to travel to Australia, Hong Kong and Southeast Asia. Ken's also a huge Vancouver Canucks fan. Welcome to the Board Ken! □

PROP & TIL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

supporting PROP and TIL. We look forward to continuing our close association with them."

No Change for PROP and TIL Clients

Although PROP is now governed a bit differently, this will not make any difference to the service we provide. There will be no change unless, of course, we find ways to improve. All the program staff will remain in their positions with PROP and TIL and will continue to serve you. PROP and TIL will stay at the same location with the same phone number. PROP will still be PROP and TIL will still be TIL. It's just that now we will operate from our own nest. □

Ken's clearly a very busy man and we are very lucky he has agreed to join the Board of The BC Association for Individualized Technology and Supports for People with Disabilities.



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