



# Ambulance Paramedics

**Community  
Solutions  
in Rural Communities**



## BC Paramedics & Dispatchers

**A key part of BC's healthcare and public safety system and a valuable resource to your community.**

- ➡ **The Problem:** Rural communities face staffing retention issues. As demand increases, resources are in decline.
- ➡ **The Challenges:** Restrained budgets and more healthcare regionalization leave rural communities under serviced and left behind.
- ➡ **The Solution:** A staffing model that provides sustainable employment and 24/7 emergency coverage; expanded roles for Paramedics create jobs and provide essential services.

### Did you know?

The entry to practice levels of paramedicine are changing. By 2025 the entry to practice vision is that all paramedics will be at a degree level.

Paramedicine has advanced to a point that is requiring increased education and responsibility. The baccalaureate entry to practice is a step towards further integration into the health care system.

Ask us for more details.



# Today's Challenges for Rural Communities

Many small to medium sized British Columbia communities are facing serious Paramedic recruitment and retention problems. The current on-call staffing model means there is a lack of family-supporting paramedic jobs in rural areas. Also, the withdrawal of locally funded paramedic training has resulted in a steep decline of applicants in these communities. Today, we face critical staffing shortages in rural communities across the province.

This staffing shortage leaves many communities facing long periods of time with reduced or no ambulance service at all. With an aging population and increase in demand, it is even more important that all British Columbians have an active and reliable ambulance service in their community.

Along with staffing shortages, the regionalization of more and more healthcare services means patients face longer and longer travel times to receive the care they need.

The BC Emergency Health Services must respond to these challenges and ensure 24/7 emergency coverage in rural and remote British Columbia with fully staffed ambulances by offering sustainable employment opportunities that meet the service needs of local communities.

## Roadblocks to Finding Solutions

Healthcare costs continue to grow and the need to find efficiencies within existing budgets is becoming more and more important. In order to maximize efficiencies, new healthcare delivery models need to be considered on a community-by-community basis.

Addressing paramedic and ambulance service delivery requires continued consultation and collaboration between government, BCEHS, paramedics, dispatchers, and municipalities. Although our communities and healthcare systems have faced extraordinary challenges this past year with the pandemic, opioid crisis, and more recently the heat dome and devastating wildfires, it is imperative that paramedic and ambulance service delivery be made a priority – it cannot safely be delayed any longer.

No two communities have the same ambulance and healthcare problems, so solutions must be found which fit each specific area's need. BC Paramedics are a key part of BC's healthcare team and can be part of those solutions. Deployment advancements and expansion of rural Community Paramedics are examples of how the BCEHS, the Ministry of Health and the Paramedics union can work collaboratively to find unique solutions.





# Paramedics – The right resource for patients, in the right amount of time



BC Paramedics are multifaceted medical experts in the pre-hospital setting. Their extensive education positions them well to tackle health care gaps in your community.

APBC supports an evidenced based approach to delivering paramedic services. It is time that paramedic and ambulance service delivery be made a priority in rural and remote communities throughout our Province. We must attract and retain qualified, highly educated, and experienced paramedics in all BC communities to ensure public access to the highest level of care for all patients. That means reliable and sustainable career opportunities that will ensure timely access to paramedics and 24/7 emergency coverage in communities.

## **Community Based Care – Community Paramedicine**

Rural communities have benefited from the expansion of Community Paramedics (CP) into this setting. The success of this program in over 90 BC communities so far has meant better patient care and more stable career opportunities for 100 community paramedics.

## **Getting Involved in the Solution**

Municipal representatives have a critical role in the decisions being made about healthcare services in your community. You know the needs of your community better than anyone else. We welcome the opportunity to discuss your community's specific healthcare needs, gaps and paramedic services. Contact us by email: [info@apbc.ca](mailto:info@apbc.ca). We ask that you write both the Health Minister and Health Critic to advocate for enhanced paramedic services and healthcare in your community.

We ask that you highlight:

- ➡ Your support for a better rural and remote paramedic staffing model
- ➡ Your support for enhanced service delivery
- ➡ Share this with other community leaders

**Want To Know More?** If you'd like to learn more about these programs, please visit [www.apbc.ca](http://www.apbc.ca)