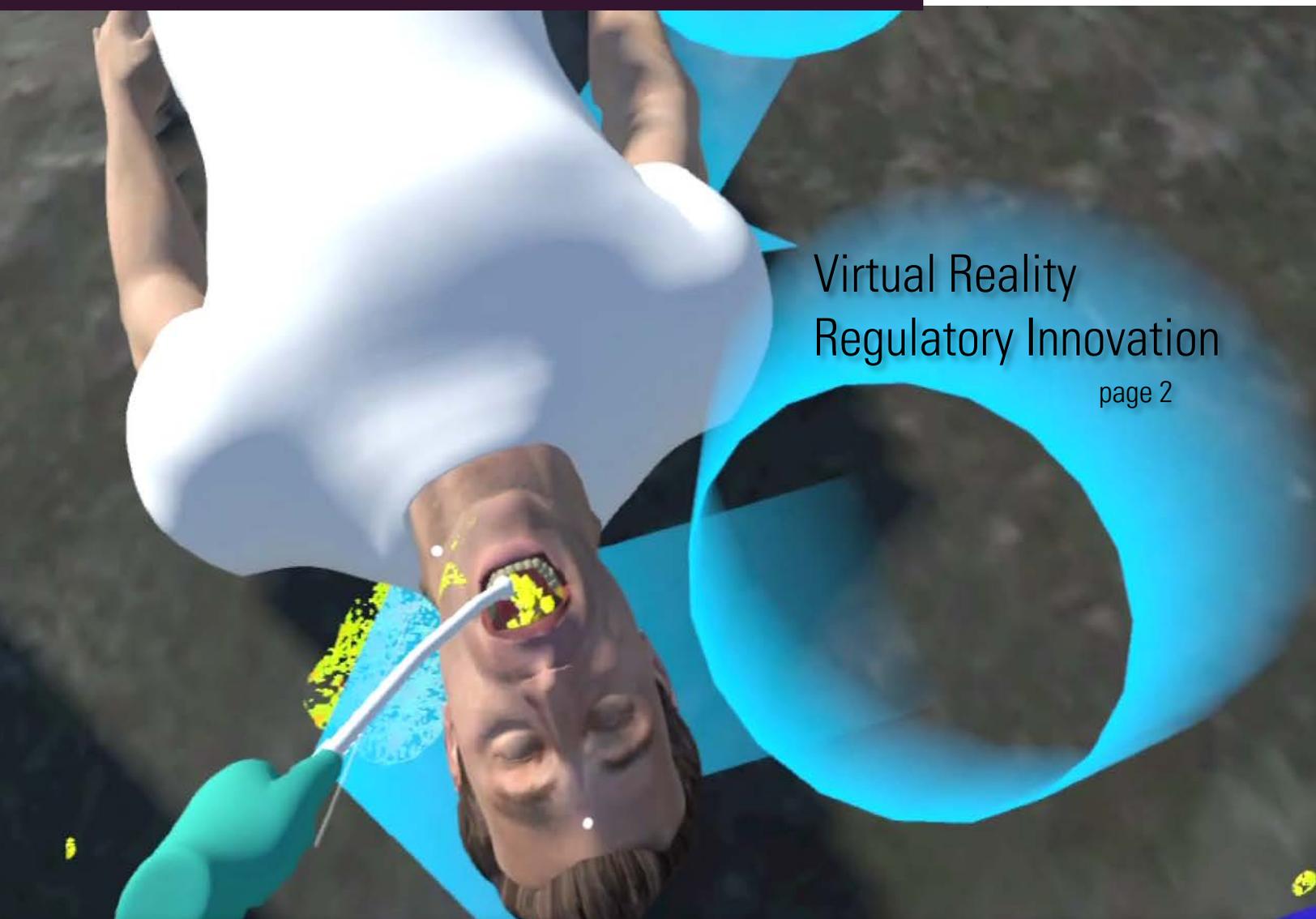


The Pulse

by SCoP

Saskatchewan College of Paramedics newsletter

Feb/March
2021

A 3D-rendered scene from a virtual reality simulation. A character with a beard and brown hair is lying on their back on a blue surface. A hand in a green glove is using a white dental probe to examine the character's teeth. The character's mouth is open, and there are yellow particles around the teeth. The background is a dark, textured surface with blue circular patterns.

Virtual Reality
Regulatory Innovation

page 2

IN THIS ISSUE:

SCoP Leads Nation with Virtual Reality Regulatory Innovation	..... 2	NEW! SCoP Award for Photography	..... 6
Call for Resolutions	..... 4	Professional Conduct Committee update	..... 4
Licence Renewal 2021 and 2022	..... 5	MedCast 360	..... 7
		SCoP is on Linked In	..... 7

SCoP Leads Nation with Virtual Reality Regulatory Innovation

By Virginia Wilkinson

The Saskatchewan College of Paramedics (SCoP) is playing an innovative and industry leading role in its intriguing new approach to the assessment of paramedic competencies.

With the support of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Immigration and Career Training, SCoP is in the process of developing an immersive technology/virtual reality tool that can be used to assess paramedic competencies, virtually. The tool will enable SCoP to assess the competencies of internationally trained paramedics interested in working in Canada, from their home countries. It will also enable paramedics working in rural and remote regions across Saskatchewan to update their required competencies without leaving their home communities.

It all started in 2015, as a result of a discussion between Jacquie Messer-Lepage, Executive Director and Registrar of the Saskatchewan College of Paramedics, and an official at the then Ministry of the Economy (now the Ministry of Immigration and Career Training) about the need for paramedics in Saskatchewan, and the availability of international candidates.

The Ministry agreed to fund a SCoP-led project focused on facilitating access to international paramedicine applicants.

“We developed standards and policies for international applicants and then we developed a web portal, so international folks could log into the web portal to do a self - assessment, download all the forms they needed, and send it back to us,” said Messer-Lepage.

A few years later when Messer-Lepage happened upon a presentation about virtual reality by

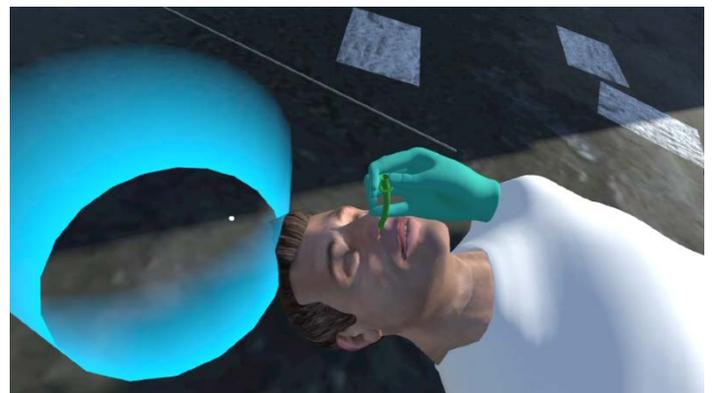
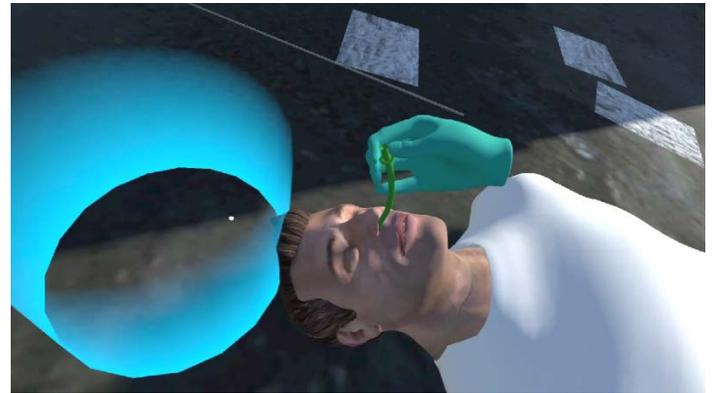
Dr. Mike Wesolowski, Co-founder and CEO of Luxsonic Technologies Inc., who was presenting at a Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation conference, it clicked.

“It kind of triggered something for me, virtual reality has been out there for decades, but regulators haven’t used it as a mechanism to access competency in a regulatory environment, so I thought it was an interesting opportunity to expand on the work we were doing with the web portal,” said Messer-Lepage.

Excited by the potential identified in the Luxsonic presentation, in 2018 SCoP applied for additional funding from the Ministry of Immigration and Career Training to undertake a virtual reality project.

“We told them we were interested in setting up a pilot in which we’d like to take one competency from the National Occupational Competency Profile (NOCP) and break it down into sub competencies, and then develop a virtual reality tool to assess those sub-competencies. We believed such a tool could be used to help assess the skills of potential SCoP applicants and members, from a distance,” Messer-Lepage said.

The Ministry saw the potential for the project and agreed to help fund it. SCoP was given enough money to



create a tool which would assess half of the sub-competencies under competency 5.1 -- Airways.

“Our intent was to create an assessment tool which we could attach to the portal, so that we could use virtual reality and pre-screen tools, to help bring international applicants to the country,” said Messer-Lepage.

Working with the team at Luxsonic, SCoP began the development of the tool.

“Doing an assessment from a distance, on the skills of a paramedic who is looking to move to Saskatchewan, is something we have not been able to do before. This new process will allow us to send a headset, that will then

connect to our virtual assessment software from anywhere in the world. The paramedic who is being assessed would put the headset on, and his or her skills would be objectively assessed in this virtualized environment,” said Dr. Mike Wesolowski, Co-founder and CEO, Luxsonic Technologies Inc.

When that initial project wrapped up, a discussion with the Ministry of Immigration and Career Training led to another funding application by SCoP to expand the tool and include the remainder of the sub competencies under competency 5.1. The funding was again approved, and SCoP’s second project was initiated in October 2020.

“They were looking for options to bring international medical school graduates into paramedicine, and they were looking for regulators to support that activity, so I put in another proposal saying if they could help us get a little bit more money to finish up this particular competency, it could form part of a larger package that we would develop to assess international medical school graduates as well as paramedic graduates,” said Messer-Lepage.

According to Messer-Lepage, the ability to reach an international pool of paramedics offers significant benefits to the province.

“We have a system that needs more paramedics, especially advanced care paramedics. The educational institutions are putting out as many as they can, but it’s still not enough. This tool has the potential to help us attract the number of practitioners we will need in the future,” she said.

Looking to expand the project, in late 2019 SCoP submitted an application

to Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to build a virtual reality tool which would include all NOCP competencies.

“This tool will allow us to send VR headsets out to individuals who are working in remote areas and are unable to get into an OR to get signed off on a skill. The tool itself,

and we jointly applied for funding from the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation. The funding enabled us to create immersive VR “refresher” videos for paramedics which focused on: the proper “Donning and Doffing” PPE; and the safe collection of nasal and oral swabs. The COVID support videos are now available at no charge for all

paramedics in the province on the Luxsonic MedCast360 platform,” said Wesolowski.

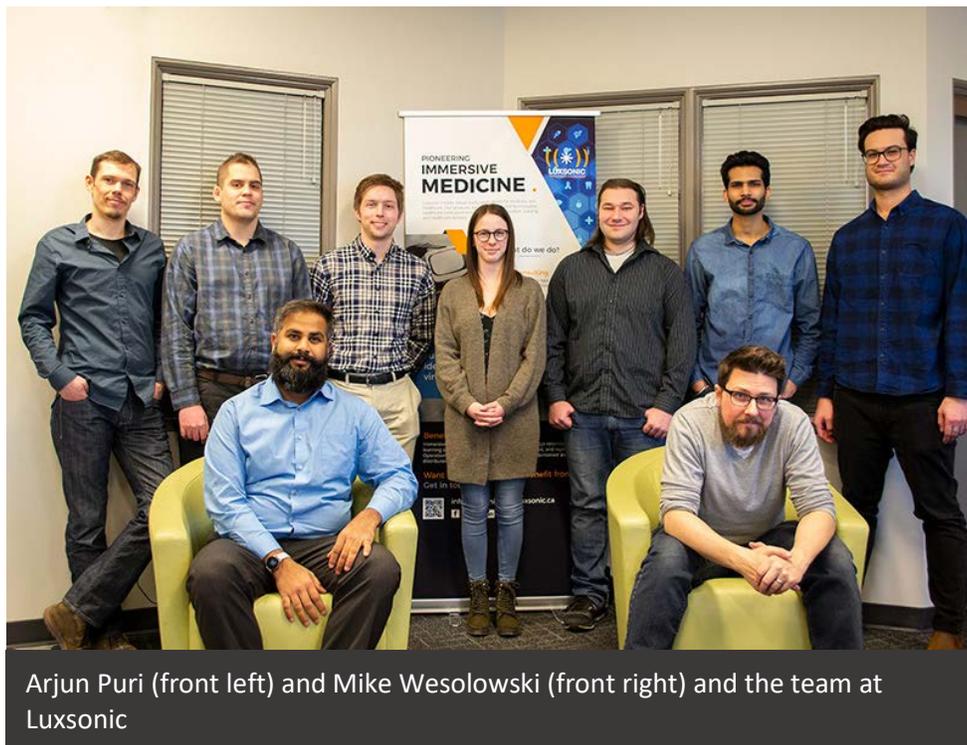
Luxsonic believes immersive technology will play a critical role in training in the future.

“Immersive technologies have these ‘super-powers’, that enable institutions and organizations to cut down on things like travel time to in-person training, and instead offer more interactive, distributable, on-

demand training that engages learners, enables better knowledge retention, and leads to better training outcomes,” said Arjun Puri, CTO & Co-founder, Luxsonic Technologies Inc.

Puri says that the appeal of immersive technology is that it allows the trainee to be placed in a new environment.

“As an example, you can expose your learner to a virtual clinical scenario that in the real world could be very dangerous, like the scene of a car accident. Within the virtual world the learner remains safe and can prepare and train for those scenarios. We can provide this type of training with just a VR headset and controllers, providing the practitioner with intensive training opportunities, and saving the health system on operational costs and capital expenses,” said Wesolowski.



Arjun Puri (front left) and Mike Wesolowski (front right) and the team at Luxsonic

using the online platform, will video capture the decisions made by the practitioner, which we can then review. There are decision points within the immersive video itself, so that if the practitioner makes the wrong decision the video will follow through and will do something different than if the individual had made the correct decision,” said Messer-Lepage.

Wesolowski says the beauty of this tool is that once developed as an assessment tool, it can also be easily used for teaching, enabling training from any location.

In fact, SCoP and Luxsonic used immersive technology to create a series of COVID support videos for paramedics in the spring of 2020.

“When things started to lock down in March, we felt passionately about using our technology to help the province, so we reached out to SCoP

What makes this technology so important, according to Wesolowski, is that solves some of the health system's really important access problems.

"I think that once it is up and running, this technology will create opportunities for other practitioners and educational institutions. As an example, if nurses are working on intubation, they may be able to use that particular video section or that particular competency, so I see this as having the potential for a lot of spread. The sky is kind of the limit as

far as what the learnings are going to be from it," said Messer-Lepage.

SCoP is now hoping to partner with colleges in Saskatchewan, as well as Australia and the UK to pilot the new tool.

"We want to test our tool internationally because both of those countries have education programs that most closely match the standards we use, and we want their students to apply to come and work in Canada," she said.

Like SCoP, the team at Luxsonic believes the potential for the project is significant, and they are looking forward to the work ahead.

"Being able to work with end users like Jacquie and her colleagues to create a purpose-built product from the ground up has been such a rewarding experience. It's been an amazing journey so far and I can't wait to see what the future holds for this project", said Puri.

Call for Resolutions

Deadline: April 6

Get ready for the 2021 Annual General Meeting.

This is our annual call for resolutions to be discussed at the 2021 AGM.

Members should use resolutions to raise issues for consideration by Council. Council may take the action, may request other agencies to take a particular action, enter into discussion about a particular issue with another agency, or may not take any action.

Resolutions can relate to any area of practice, education, administration, research, role of the College, or role of paramedics within healthcare. The subject of a resolution must be within the scope of the legislated authority of the College, and align with the vision, mission and strategic priorities of the College.

Issues addressed as resolutions should be those that warrant discussion by the general membership. Otherwise, the issue may be submitted to the Executive Director or the President at any time throughout the year.

Resolutions must follow the template found on our website.

Resolutions not received before the deadline can still be considered at

the AGM as a motion from the floor. A motion from the floor needs a two-thirds majority vote to be considered.

Resolutions must be submitted in writing and can be emailed to:

office@collegeofparamedics.sk.ca

Deadline for resolutions: April 6, 2021.

Top reasons why Public Safety Personnel like PSPNET

Internet-delivered Cognitive Behaviour Therapy for Public Safety Personnel



Do-It-Yourself Information and Exercises



Supplementary Readings and Skills



Stories and Examples



Content of Course



Format of Course



Therapist Assistance



Flexibility

For more information visit:
www.pspnet.ca



Licence Renewal 2021 and 2022

2,041 individuals renewed their SCoP licences for 2021. Thank you! Receipts for payment and your licence certificate are in your Member Account.

In May 2020, SCoP implemented a new membership database with features specific to the regulatory industry. With extra challenges as staff began working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic last March, we thank you for your patience as login information was reset and we all worked to learn this new system.

Additional features will be rolled out in the coming months.

For licence renewal 2021, member renewal applications were automatically approved based on mandatory document uploads and

member declarations. Members renewing as non-practicing and applications that met practicing requirements were approved by the system within seconds. With the 2021 renewal cycle, the College adopted an auditing process to ensure that submissions and declarations were consistent with the mandatory renewal requirements. Sample auditing of member submissions was initiated and involved a detailed review of each submission for accuracy.

Members that submitted renewal documents that were incomplete and/or inaccurate will be contacted by the College and will be given 24 hours to provide accurate documentation based on the information provided at renewal (ie: dates must match declared dates). This approach assumes that all member declarations are truthful and uploading errors can occur.

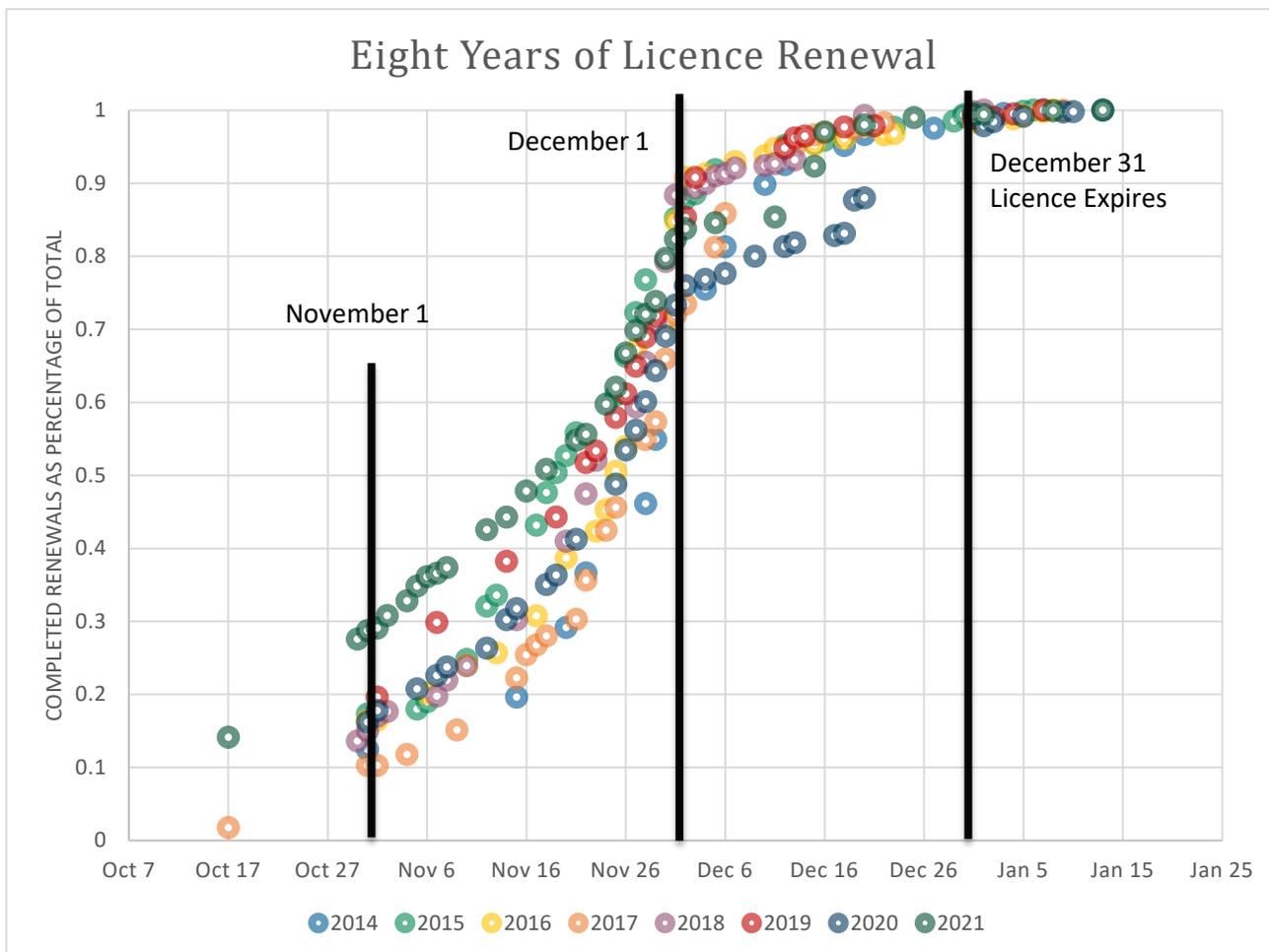
If a member is unable (or unwilling) to provide the missing

documentation, a Registrar's letter of warning will be sent. Renewal auditing is a common approach among regulatory bodies that manage large volumes of documentation and allows for timely processing of standard renewal applications. Of note, prior to 2021 the College would open each and every document received (~50,000 per cycle).

As 2021 licence renewal coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, CME and mandatory certificate requirements were temporarily waived.

Applications which requested a restriction for incomplete skills assessments, or from applicants already restricted, were approved manually and within one day where possible.

Payment options improved this year for non-standard transactions. Payments made by employers, and not by the member directly, remain a challenge even with a system



purpose-built for regulatory licensing. The primary issue lies in attempting to reconcile a lump sum payment by the employer with the Ministry of Health payment portion and each member renewal submission.

Licence Renewal has now closed for 2021 and as noted above the College is auditing a selection of applications for accuracy. Submissions that are confirmed as having fraudulent documentation, or misrepresenting dates or credentials, will be addressed with a letter of warning and may also be referred to the Professional Conduct Committee for further consideration. Letters of warning will be retained on member files. All members are reminded that it is your professional responsibility to ensure that all documents and information submitted for your licence renewal is correct and legible.

Thank you for renewing early

Almost 30 percent of members renewed by November 1, which was double the average rate of previous years. 601 members were entered to win a \$250 VISA gift card. Congratulations to winners Colin Niebergall and Jenny Paton!

Licence Renewal deadline is December 1, but members can renew until the end of January. Looking at the accompanying chart, 70 to 85% of members renew each year by the deadline. Late fees are applied after December 1.

2022 Licence Renewal Requirements

Requirements for 2022 licence renewal will revert to the usual requirements as services have now had time to adapt.

All mandatory certificates must be valid and not expired at time of renewal, all skills must be assessed every 2 years except for CCP annual skills, and all members must complete 20 CME credits, 5 of which relate to mental health.

Skills Reporting forms have changed slightly, with date information removed so they can be used for any licence year. The new Skills Reporting forms (pdfs) are available for download from the College website.

SCoP Award for Photography

In our first ever photo contest, we are looking for your visual interpretation of strength in your profession. Strength can be physical, it can be mental, and it takes strength to be vulnerable too.

This competition is open to all members in good standing with the College, or students actively enrolled in a paramedic program.

Two awards of \$500 each are available. Winners will be chosen by professional photographer Peter Schouler. As a photographer, Peter is best known for his powerful family portraits, commercial work, and fine art prints. Peter's images have been published in major newspapers and magazines. He has photographed rock stars, models and babies, and the beautiful prairie people and landscape.

**Remember that patient confidentiality must be respected

How to Enter

Submit your images via email to collette.parks@collegeofparamedics.sk.ca. In the body of the email, please include: your name(s), contact telephone number, a caption detailing the subject of the image, and the location where it was taken.

Images should be submitted as .jpg files of up to 3 Mb in size and at least 80% quality, and you must be able to produce the image at a higher resolution upon request. Please note that by entering the competition, you give the Saskatchewan College of Paramedics non-exclusive permission to use the images, credited to you, in online and printed form.

All submissions must be received by Monday, April 19, 2021.

The winners will be announced at the SCoP AGM on Tuesday, May 4, 2021.



Moose Jaw & District EMS

Professional Conduct Committee update

The College is responsible for the protection of the public, and management of this responsibility is one of the most important roles that the College has.

It is our job to assure the public of the knowledge, skill, proficiency, and competency of members in the practice of emergency medical services.

Currently the professional conduct committee currently has 21 open files under investigation.

Of these, 13 relate to professional misconduct, and 8 relate to professional incompetence.

MedCast 360 immersive video

MedCast360 is a dedicated streaming platform for immersive medical videos, an approach that the College is exploring to ensure members remain informed on important issues.

Invites to this new website were sent out last year. To have yours resent, email collette.parks@collegeofparamedics.sk.ca

SCoP is on
Linked In



Follow us on Linked In!

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/askatchewan-college-of-paramedics/>

