



## Community Paramedic Endorsement

### **Overview:**

The Community Paramedic (CP) licence endorsement is intended to enhance current community paramedicine practice. If you are currently working in this area and wish to practice at the CP full scope of practice, additional training and/or proof of competency will be required.

### **Use of Title “Community Paramedic”**

Only paramedics that hold the Community Paramedic Endorsement may identify themselves as “Community Paramedics”. Members who represent themselves as Community Paramedics but do not hold the CP endorsement may be referred to the Professional Conduct Committee for evaluation.

There is no restriction on practicing in the community without the CP endorsement, however you may only practice within the limits of your current licence level scope of practice. Paramedics working within the community must not use the title “Community Paramedic”; these practitioners should be described as Primary Care/Intermediate Care/Advanced Care Paramedics.

Paramedics and other health care professionals in Saskatchewan and around the world face diverse health care challenges: an aging population, increased rates of chronic diseases, and rising health care costs. The current medical landscape of longer wait times in emergency departments (ED), increased call volumes of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), decreased recruitment and retention rates of health care professionals, and limited access to health care services in rural and remote areas, reinforces the need for innovations in health care services that are more patient and community-driven within a fiscally sustainable delivery model. Keeping patients close to home or in their community is important, as are strong health promotion and prevention programs.

The development of a formalized community paramedicine program in Saskatchewan supports more readily available patient care, including the potential for home visiting.

From an operational perspective, these programs also open opportunities for improvements in the delivery of paramedic services, education, and medical services to the residents of the province. A defined community paramedicine program can build additional credibility and reliability surrounding the care delivered within a community setting.

The Saskatchewan College of Paramedics (SCoP) believes that community paramedicine can (and does) have a significant positive impact in supporting solutions to manage these challenges. The CP program is a new and evolving model of collaborative community-based health care provided in different jurisdictions in Canada and beyond.



***The Competency Profile:***

The Community Paramedic competency profile builds upon the current competency profiles of Primary Care (PCP), Intermediate Care (ICP), Advanced Care Paramedics (ACP), and Critical Care Paramedics (CCP).

Community Paramedics must have initially graduated from an approved paramedic program (any level) or have met equivalent requirements and passed any mandatory registration exam(s). In combination with their previous education and licensing requirements, these practitioners are required to undergo supplementary education through an approved (Community Paramedicine) program to deepen their understanding of the unique needs of the chronically ill patients and their role in the delivery of primary health care services.

While much of the scope of a Community Paramedic exists within the current skills of the paramedic, the Community Paramedic has specialized knowledge and skills to provide care to chronically ill patients in a variety of unique practice environments.

***The Role:***

As professionals, all Paramedics are committed to the health and well-being of individuals and society through ethical practice, professional regulation, and high personal standards of behaviour. The paramedic role is guided by a code of conduct and commitment to clinical competence, embracing the appropriate attitudes and behaviours, integrity, altruism, personal wellbeing, and the promotion of public good within each (licence level) scope of practice.

Paramedics recognize the need to be continually learning and model this for others through their scholarly activities; they contribute to the creation, dissemination, application, and translation of clinical knowledge.

Community Paramedics take these core and fundamental competencies of paramedicine and enhance their abilities through additional specialized education. As professionals, they are part of an interdisciplinary and patient and family-centered health care team. They are accountable to their patients, to SCoP and to their employer. The CP endorsement competency profile describes the knowledge and skills that community paramedics can provide.

***Scope of Practice:***

There are differences between the procedures and medications a PCP/ICP can provide and that of the ACP and CCP. The Community Paramedic competency profile development took into consideration the differences in the initial education between the PCP, ICP, ACP and the CCP.

The Community Paramedic scope of practice may only be used by those who possess the specific licence endorsement. Similarly, skills found in the CP competency profile may only be used by a CP (unless previously approved to do so). The College acknowledges that some of the CP competencies overlap with current PCP, ACP and/or CCP competencies, however this document is intended to capture the CP scope "as a whole".



With the introduction of a Community Paramedic licence endorsement, SCoP will only define scope of practice and will not be creating specific clinical protocols. This approach will define maximum allowable practice instead of a mandatory clinical process.

Use of scope of practice by the College is consistent with that of other Canadian jurisdictions and regulated health professions. It will permit an employer to define how much of the total available scope of practice they will allow their employees to adopt. The Paramedic will then be able to apply their knowledge, skills, and judgement to determine the appropriate approach to treatment within that scope.

Ambulance services, facilities, or employers providing Community Paramedic care, will be responsible for developing the policies, procedures, and protocols as necessary to narrow and clarify the practice of the Community Paramedic.

Only the knowledge or skills described in this endorsement and/or the competency profile of the paramedic (at their licence level) can be performed. Please be aware that it is not essential that every skill and/or medication be included in a Community Paramedic program. The decision regarding whether to include the skill/medication should be based on the needs of the community.

***Advanced Training and Education:***

The minimum mandatory educational requirements as approved by the Education Committee for the Community Paramedic endorsement will include the competencies listed in the following areas:

- Professionalism
- Communication
- Documentation
- Assessment
- Pharmacology
- Follow up care
- Community services

Other areas of education will be based on the practice area of the paramedic. The paramedic shall be able to provide documentation if asked for to show proof of education in any of the remaining areas of the profile based on their practice environment.

***Renewal Requirements***

Currently CP practitioners do not have mandated continuing education requirements specific to CP. Employers and paramedics are required to ensure competency in those areas as needed within their practice areas. The only exception to this policy currently, is suturing for ACP and CCPs. If this skill is performed within a CP practice area, these paramedics shall be required to provide proof of skill competency annually.



All paramedics will be required to declare that they are continuing to work within a Community Paramedic role at the annual renewal to maintain the endorsement.

The Saskatchewan College of Paramedics would like to acknowledge the working group members who were responsible for the work on this project. We would also like to thank Alberta Health Services for permission to use their Community Paramedic Occupational Profile. The College is committed to continually building the capacity of our membership to take on this role. Thank you to the following individuals for your contribution to this competency profile:

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