

The Pulse

by SCoP

Saskatchewan College of Paramedics newsletter

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Who is your patient?
Providing quality care to
newcomer and refugee
communities

page 2

IN THIS ISSUE:

Providing quality care to newcomer and refugee communities 2	Sask Health Information Resources Program 6
Renewal Requirements for 2024 4	PSPNET 6
Professional Conduct Committee Update 5	Call for Resolutions 7

Who is Your Patient? Providing quality care to newcomer and refugee communities

By Virginia Wilkinson

The College of Paramedics is proud of the care paramedics provide to the patients of this province and is pleased to support practitioners with information that can improve the patient experience and outcomes.

In the second in a series of articles on the unique care needs of different communities across Saskatchewan, in this issue we explore the perspectives of refugees and newcomers to Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan's newcomers and refugees come from a wide range of cultural and religious backgrounds. Many speak limited or no English and some are very committed observers of their cultural and religious traditions. This means it's important to approach interactions with newcomers or refugees with an awareness that there may be interpretation challenges, and cultural practices or norms which, if not recognized, could impact the paramedic's ability to provide appropriate care.

"The most important thing is making sure paramedics can communicate with the client," said Lori Steward, Finance and Operations Manager, Global Gathering Place (Saskatoon).

She points out that many newcomers or refugees with health issues have information they could provide health care providers to assist in their care if they are able to communicate it to the health care provider.

Steward says often family members, friends or neighbors are relied upon to translate for the patient. She points out that this isn't appropriate unless no other option is available.

"You could imagine talking about personal feminine problems with your son or a neighbor as the interpreter, it's just not OK. Very often we find when working with newcomers those kinds of common-

sense rules, that we just take for granted when everyone speaks the same language, are thrown out the window."

Steward urges paramedics to consider accessing interpreters or interpreter services such as **911 Interpreters**, which offers immediate services in 200 languages and is used by the Saskatchewan Health Authority.

"It's really important for people to understand what is happening to them when someone is treating them. Having a person talk to you in your own language to calm you down really matters," said Steward.

Victoria Flores, Communications and

Marketing Manager at Regina Open Door Society, who is originally from Bolivia and came to Canada as a newcomer 19 years ago, agrees.

Flores says many settlement agencies across the province such as the Regina Open Door Society have interpreters that can be accessed in non-emergent situations. She also urges health care providers to consider using interpreter services such as **911 Interpreters** or **CanTalk (Canada)** in emergent situations.

According to Steward and Flores, the gender boundaries followed by their cultures can also impact how some patients respond to care.



Lori Steward registering clients for a COVID clinic, Global Gathering Place

“A female patient may not be comfortable with a male health provider talking to her or touching her. If it’s a call where only male paramedics are available, it might be important to check to see if there is a family member who could be on hand to support the patient and to be with them,” said Flores.

Flores says often in that type of a cultural setting there might be a brother, husband or son who would support the female patient. She says there also may be times when a man is concerned about being touched by a female health provider.

“For example, they may have a situation where the patient might not be cooperating or not telling them as much information as they would like. The patient might not want to tell the paramedic that they are in pain, or

might be scared to share the symptoms, especially if it’s something a little bit more private. It might be because they are not comfortable talking with someone of the opposite gender,” said Flores.

Flores urges paramedics when it is possible, to take time to clearly explain the process that will be followed. She points out that making sure the patient understands what the paramedic is or will be doing is very important to reducing the patient’s anxiety.

According to Steward, in an emergency the entire process can be extremely frightening for a newcomer or refugee.

“It can bring back so much trauma from past experiences. People in uniforms can sometimes be very frightening because of experiences in their home country,” she said.

Flores points out that as well, many refugees who have fled their home countries as a result of war or persecution suffer from PTSD. There can be different events that could trigger fear and anxiety in these individuals, based on the trauma they have experienced. Being unable to communicate with the paramedic often increases the patient’s stress and anxiety levels in an emergent situation. She urges paramedics to remember that these individuals may be traumatized and fearful, and she stresses the importance of taking time to help the patient understand what is happening, to help reduce that stress and anxiety.

“It’s important to let these patients know that they are going to the hospital, to remind them to bring their health card, and that their care at the hospital is free of charge with their health card,” she said.

In many countries, health care is not accessible but rather patients pay for their care.

This means some patients may attempt to refuse care here because they worry about how they’ll pay for time spent in the hospital.

One approach she suggests to help reduce anxiety and build trust with the patient is to ask how to pronounce the patient’s name, and then pronounce it correctly while delivering care. She says this can really help to build trust between the paramedic and the patient as it helps the patient to feel seen, respected, and safe.

Flores believes that to help paramedics in delivering care effectively to newcomers and refugees, it is important that they take cultural awareness training. She believes it can play a critically important role in the interaction between the patient and the health care provider, especially in an emergency situation. Many settlement agencies across the province offer cultural awareness training including the Global Gathering Place in Saskatoon. The Regina Open Door Society offers both in-person and virtual cultural awareness training at no charge to Saskatchewan organizations.

“It’s really important for health care providers and human services providers who offer services to newcomers and refugees, to have an awareness of the differences, similarities and sensitivities that exist between different cultures. It will help them to better understand if a patient is reluctant in allowing the paramedic to help them,” she said.

The Regina Open Door Society also offers cultural training sessions which can be tailored to the needs of the organization. They are offered as either in-person or virtual sessions and are entirely free of charge. To access Regina Open Door cultural training workshop information, call (306) 352-3500 or visit CommunityConnection@rods.sk.ca. To access the Global Gathering Place call (306) 665-0268 or visit globalgatheringplace.com.



Changes to Renewal Requirements for 2024

Introducing the Professional Practice Program

The Education Committee has completed a review of the renewal requirements for all members. This review included information obtained from a survey that went out to the Saskatchewan College of Paramedics (SCoP) membership, and reviews of licence renewal requirements of other paramedic regulators across Canada and of other health care regulators in Saskatchewan.

Following this review, several changes have been made to our renewal requirements, now called the **Professional Practice Program**.

The changes to the Professional Practice Program came into effect on January 1, 2023, for the 2024 licence renewal. All revised forms are now available on the website at collegeofparamedics.sk.ca/licensing/renewal/

The core components of renewal: continuing education credits, skill assessments, mandatory certifications and the medication review have not changed. Changes have been made to each section to provide clarification and flexibility in expectation and requirements.

The changes to the Professional Practice Program include:

Skill Assessments:

- Clarification around who can assess skills
- Criteria is now included on the forms to describe what is to be assessed and how the skill should be assessed
- Bag Valve Mask (BVM) and Peak Expiratory End Pressure

(PEEP) were added to all levels (where included in the scope of practice)

- New Skills Reporting forms are now available at collegeofparamedics.sk.ca/licensing/renewal/

Continuing Education (CE) Credits:

- **20 credits** are still required per year
- Credits will be assigned to 2 credits per 1 hour of instruction
- Credits will be assigned for the actual time spent in an educational session. Examples:
 - An approved course up to 1 hour in length will receive 2 credits
 - An approved session from 0800 to 1600 with an hour off for lunch would be 7 hours of educational time, 14 credits would be awarded for the day of instruction
 - An approved 3-hour session would be 6 credits
- No partial credits will be assigned.
- Courses will need to align to an area of the competency profile. **A minimum of 10 credits must come from areas 4, 5, or 6 (see chart below)**, these areas relate directly to medical conditions and/or patient care
- The full National Occupational

Competency Profile (NOCP) can be accessed here:

paramedic.ca/competencies/

- Mandatory mental health credits will continue, a minimum of **2 mental health credits** per year. Mental health courses can relate to practitioner mental health and well-being or specific mental health illnesses and the related management and/or therapies
- SCoP Council/Committee members will continue to receive credits for their work, a maximum of 4 credits per year
- The **mandatory documentation course will be worth 2 credits**. It will be available in early 2023 and falls under NOCP area 2
- All courses where credits are requested will still be required to be pre-approved using the **Professional Practice Program Credit Course Approval Form**
- All courses approved in 2022 will have their credit values revised to align to this change for 2023

Summary of CE Required:

2 credits for mental health
 2 credits for documentation module (coming soon)
 10 credits from NOCP areas 4, 5, 6
 6 credits from any area
Total: 20 credits

Competency Profile Topic Areas for CE (examples in brackets, not a full list)
Area 1 – Professional Responsibilities (ex. leadership, professionalism, medico-legal)
Area 2 – Communication (ex. verbal, nonverbal, written)
Area 3 – Health and Safety (ex. mine safety, scene safety, paramedic mental health)
Area 4 – Assessment and Diagnostics (ex. 3 lead application/interpretation, EtC02)
Area 5 – Therapeutics (ex. trauma care, airway days, changes to scope of practice)
Area 6 – Integration (ex. scenarios)
Area 7 – Transportation (ex. driving, air medical)
Area 8 – Health Promotion and Public Safety (ex. incident command)

Course developers/instructors:

- The new **Professional Practice Program Credit Course Approval Form** is for those who develop/instruct courses. **They will receive the same number of credits as the course is worth.** This is in recognition for the work that goes into developing and/or instructing courses
- This applies to anyone who develops a course which is approved for continuing education credits
- This does not apply to the instructors in mandatory certifications. **Mandatory certification instructors will receive a maximum of 4 credits**

Medication Self-Review:

- No changes to the medication self-review. This will continue to be a self-review and declaration.

Additional information:

- All members are expected to complete their online renewal submission themselves.

Members should not be giving access to their member accounts and having others complete renewal on their behalf. Renewal includes several declarations that require completion by the member themselves

- The Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) and Medavie Health Services – West both have training available for all SCoP members, regardless of where they work. These programs are currently at no cost to all SCoP members
 - To set up an account with the SHA, please contact Noël Dunn at noel.dunn@saskhealthauthority.ca
 - To set up an account with Medavie Health Services – West, please contact Carla Roy at carla.roy@MedavieHS.com

The Education Committee would like to thank the members of the review working group for their work and contribution to the evaluation of our renewal program.

- Carla Roy, ACP
- Noël Dunn, ACP
- Jessica Heathcote, ACP

Questions should be directed to the Director of Professional Practice and Research at jen.williams@collegeofparamedics.sk.ca

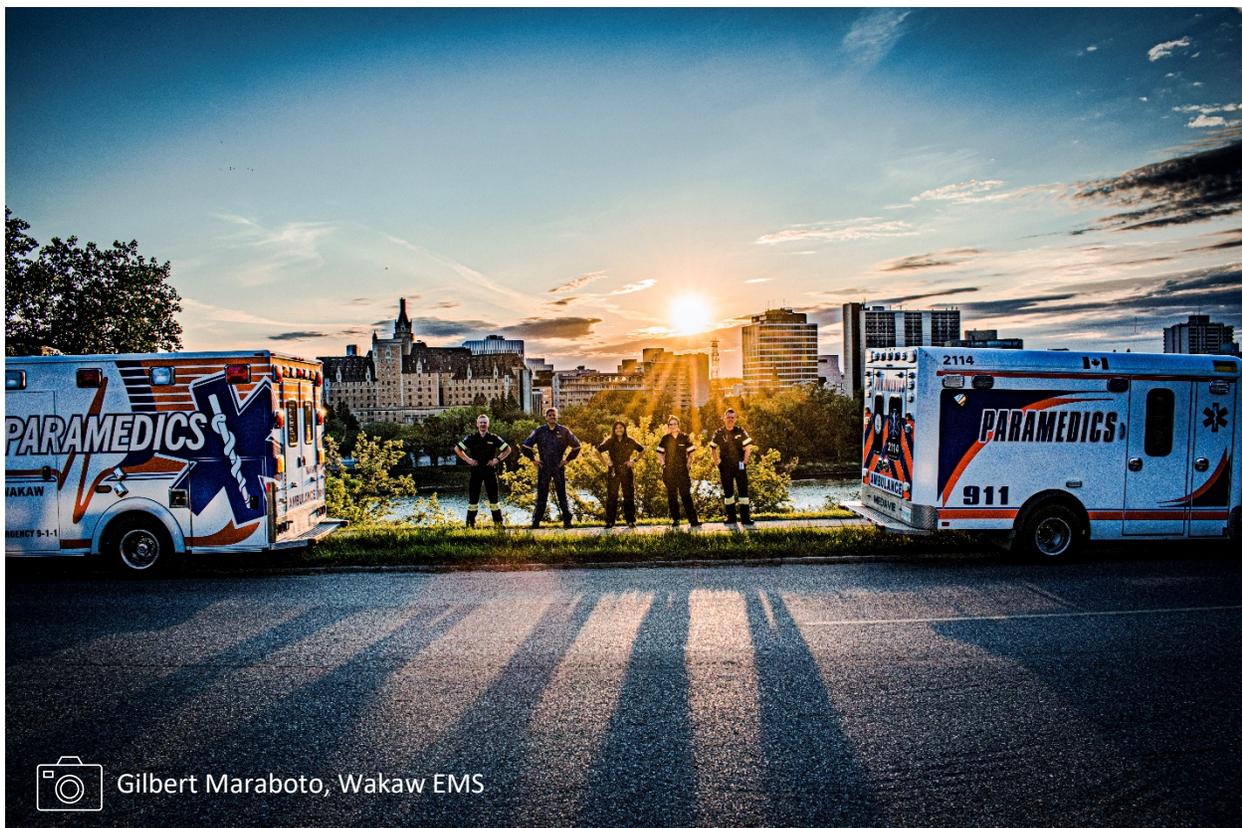
Professional Conduct Committee

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 received 7 new complaints this year.

Of these, 1 relates to professional misconduct, 4 relate to professional incompetence, and 2 were dismissed and not opened for investigation.



Gilbert Maraboto, Wakaw EMS



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Institut canadien de recherche et
de traitement en sécurité publique



Looking for ways to obtain necessary mental health credits?

Want to improve your own mental health and wellbeing at the same time?

PSPNET can help!!

Our courses are:

- ✓ Free
- ✓ Available online with 24/7 access
- ✓ Provide a certificate of completion upon request

- ✓ Approved for mental health credits by the Saskatchewan College of Paramedics

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Please check us out at - www.pspnet.ca

Call for Resolutions

This is our annual call for resolutions to be discussed at the 2023 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.

NEW: Resolutions must be received by the deadline to be considered at this AGM. Motions must be reviewed by the Legislation and Bylaws Committee and so it was agreed at the 2022 AGM that motions from the floor will not be considered.

Resolutions must follow the Resolution Template found on the SCoP website at collegeofparamedics.sk.ca/featured/c/all-for-resolutions/

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

Legislation & Bylaws Committee
Saskatchewan College of Paramedics
205 – 3775 Pasqua Street
Regina SK S4S 6W8

Email:
office@collegeofparamedics.sk.ca

Deadline: Thursday, April 6

The SCoP AGM will be held online on Thursday, May 4. More details to follow!



 Gregory Lowey, Kelvington MHS