

May 15, 2007

Mr. Eric Glass, Chairman  
Paramedic Association of Manitoba  
2nd Floor - 1111 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 0S8

Dear Mr. Glass:

Thank you for your recent questionnaire requesting our Party's position on a number of issues important to emergency medical services personnel in Manitoba, and for sharing with me a copy of your discussion paper.

I am pleased to provide the following responses on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba.

**1. Will a Conservative Government commit to increasing government funding for emergency medical services to at least 1.8% of provincial health care expenditures to address the need for system development and sustainability?**

A Progressive Conservative government is committed to restoring the front lines of health care by reducing bureaucratic spending and redirecting these funds to front line care. We will work with paramedics and other stakeholders to ensure that emergency medical services are appropriately funded. Our plan to improve emergency services in Manitoba includes working with paramedics to develop solutions to many of the problems that currently exist in emergency care. For example, we will expand scopes of practice for paramedics, grant self-regulation to the profession, and address ambulance offload delays.

**2. Will a Conservative Government ensure that paramedics are recognized as health care providers and endorse the need for advanced education and credentials similar to other allied health professionals?**

A Progressive Conservative government would work to ensure paramedics are recognized as a critical part of our front line health care system. We would grant self-regulation to paramedics and work with paramedics to establish a College of Paramedics, which would act as the regulatory body for all paramedics in Manitoba. Paramedics could then set their own standards for education and credentials while continuing to provide high quality front line health care to Manitobans.

**3. Red River College is currently working on development of a Primary Care Paramedic education program within their Health Sciences faculty. Will a Conservative Government commit to assisting with development and delivery of paramedic education programs at Red River College?**

A Progressive Conservative government would give serious consideration to any proposal put forward for the development of paramedic education programs. Appropriate and sustainable training programs are essential to resolving health human resources shortages throughout the system.

**4. Will a Conservative Government take measures to implement operational and administrative changes to ambulance and paramedic services to improve the level of pre-hospital emergency health care available to Manitobans and eliminate regional disparities?**

If elected, a Progressive Conservative government would expand scopes of practice for paramedics, particularly related to the use of “treat-not-transfer” protocols for patients who can safely be treated at the scene by highly qualified paramedics and do not require follow-up care in an emergency room. Expanding these protocols will ease the strain on many over-burdened emergency rooms and will represent a significant benefit in rural Manitoba. In addition, a Progressive Conservative government will take steps to address ambulance offload delays, where ambulances are “stacked” at emergency rooms because the facility is unable to accept the patient.

**5. Will a Conservative Government ensure that paramedics are recognized in legislation as health care professionals and work with the Paramedic Association of Manitoba to establish a self regulating “College” for Paramedics in this province?**

Yes. In recognition of the expertise that exists within the profession and the critical role paramedics play in emergency care, a Progressive Conservative government would be pleased to grant self-regulation to the profession of paramedicine. We would work with your organization to establish a “College” to act as the regulatory and disciplinary body for Manitoba paramedics.

Once again, thank you for sharing your questionnaire with us. I appreciate the opportunity to comment on these important issues.

Yours truly,

Hugh McFadyen  
Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba