



Paramedic Association of Manitoba

MEDIA RELEASE

Provincial Party Leaders Presented With Paramedic White Paper

Leaders asked to comment on paramedic recommendations for emergency care reform

For Immediate Release

2007/05/14 – The Paramedic Association of Manitoba has asked each of the province’s three main political party leaders to weigh in on recommendations for pre-hospital emergency health care reform outlined in a report released by the Association late last week. NDP leader Gary Doer, Conservative leader Hugh McFadyen and Liberal leader Jon Gerrard all received copies of the paramedic White Paper entitled *Emergency Medical Services – Manitoba’s Quiet Crisis* four days before it was released publicly. Each party has been asked to provide written comment to the Paramedic Association of Manitoba by Tuesday, May 15th outlining their positions on each of the five recommendations contained in the document.

Eric Glass, Chairman of the Paramedic Association of Manitoba, says he’s surprised there hasn’t been any mention of pre-hospital emergency care in provincial election platforms to date. “Although we just released our White Paper last week, the concepts and concerns outlined in that document are ones we’ve been talking to our elected officials about for some time now. The NDP has promised ‘better care sooner and closer to home’, Mr. McFadyen says a PC government ‘would support expanded scopes of practice for health professionals’ and Dr. Gerrard promises ‘timely access to quality care’. Yet none have addressed the very real need for improvements in our ambulance and paramedic services, or the community health benefits associated with a high performance emergency medical services system.”

Many other Canadian jurisdictions have recognized that paramedics play a very important role in health care reform. Alberta not only uses paramedics in many non-traditional community health and wellness programs, but also to alleviate the strain on emergency rooms through alternative patient care and referral programs. Nova Scotia is utilizing paramedics in many primary health care programs and in support of health services in rural and remote communities. And paramedics in Saskatchewan are being used to provide patient care in hospital intensive care units. “Manitoba needs the vision to recognize benefits associated with high performance emergency medical services and the leadership to make that happen,” adds Glass.

The Paramedic Association of Manitoba makes five recommendations necessary to address current system deficits and enhance patient care:

- Increase operational funding;
- Recognize paramedics as health care professionals;
- Educate paramedics in a post-secondary health sciences faculty;
- Address inadequate and inconsistent pre-hospital care across the province;
- Improve credentialing and enhance public safety through paramedic self-regulation.

Emergency Medical Services – Manitoba’s Quiet Crisis is available for viewing online at www.paramedicsofmanitoba.ca

The Paramedic Association of Manitoba is the professional association for paramedics licensed to practice in Manitoba, promoting excellence in pre-hospital emergency medical care.

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