

Over the last several years, paramedics have become a highly-skilled profession and Manitoba's emergency medical service (EMS) system has seen many improvements. The Paramedic Association of Manitoba wants to see further improvements to ensure Manitoba has a high performance EMS system with paramedics contributing using their full scope of practice. Accordingly, we request a response from your party regarding how you will address the issues PAM has identified below that we believe are key at achieving this goal.

There are four primary issues PAM believes need to be addressed to further improve Manitoba's EMS system and the paramedic profession:

- 1) **Education:** Manitoba needs an Advanced Care Paramedic (ACP) education program at a post-secondary education institution to train paramedics to work in the health care system of today and tomorrow.

Paramedics are playing a larger role in our health care system and this is expected to expand even further with an aging population, further sub-specialization of medicine, the trend to help seniors stay "at home" in their communities longer, and ever increasing EMS call volumes. This means paramedics need a much more advanced level of education to meet the needs of patients today and in the future.

ACP training is currently only available through the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service for Winnipeg paramedics, but an ACP program at a post-secondary institution will formalize advanced training and make it

accessible to paramedics across the province.

*What is your party's position on developing paramedic education?*

- 2) **Standardization:** Manitoba needs to see a more standardized and consistent EMS system across health regions.

Right now, there are 11 health regions each responsible for EMS delivery. While there is some level of standardization through provincial procurement and regulation, there is still a lot of disparity between regions in how EMS is organized and delivered and a lack of coordination.

Steps need to be taken to build a more standardized and consistent system so paramedics practicing in different regions can deliver the same level of service to patients.

*What steps would your party take to achieve a more standardized and consistent EMS system in Manitoba?*

- 3) **Self-Regulation: PAM believes Manitoba would benefit from the self-regulation of paramedics, consistent with other health professionals in Manitoba.**

Self-regulation acknowledges that a profession itself, having evolved over time and developed a specialized body of knowledge, is in the best position to determine standards for education and practice and to ensure that these standards are met. The Paramedic Association of

Manitoba promotes minimum standards for entry to practice consistent with nationally recognized competency profiles, continuous professional development and ethical practice and behaviour. As such, paramedics should be recognized, as most other allied health professions, through legislated self-regulation.

With the proclamation of the Regulated Health Professions Act, Manitoba now has a clear process in place for professions seeking self-regulation, similar to other provinces, and PAM is currently finalizing our application for consideration by the Health Professions Advisory Council.

*Will your party support moving forward with the self-regulation process for paramedics?*

- 4) **Community Paramedicine:** Paramedics now have the training to play a much larger role in the health care system, assessing and treating Manitobans who may not need an ambulance trip to the hospital.

A paramedic is now stationed at the Main Street Project in Winnipeg 24 hours a day/7 days a week, in a successful community paramedicine project that is providing needed care to patients and avoiding unnecessary transports to hospital. This is a model that can be expanded to other areas that will benefit patients and support our provincial health care system.

*Would your party sustain/expand community paramedicine in Manitoba? How so?*

Manitoba's EMS system has developed and matured over the last several years, with exciting developments like the addition of an ambulance helicopter and a post secondary PCP training program. PAM believes that addressing the four issues above will build on this strong foundation, expand the role of paramedics across Manitoba and improve the services Manitobans rely upon.

PAM looks forward to receiving your responses on these four issues and your plan for EMS in Manitoba, which we will share with our membership and post on our website.