

The Pulse

Paramedics: Trusted – Professional

Saskatchewan College of Paramedics • Newsletter #10, March 2013

Seven categories identified as critical in the PCP scope of practice change

More than 1,200 PCP and EMTs will be obliged to upgrade their skills over the next few years to meet the requirements of the 2011 NOCP (National Occupational Competency Profile) standards. The 2011 NOCP guidelines are national guidelines which outline the skills required by paramedics at all levels.

Moving to the 2011 NOCP guidelines will ensure Saskatchewan paramedics are at the same level as their counterparts in other provinces.

“It’s actually going to allow PCPs to provide a higher level of patient care, which will have a big impact on the rural areas. It also enhances their opportunities to move inter-provincially if they want to, because our scope of practice will be aligned with the other provinces,” said Jon Antal, Chair, SCoP Education Committee.

SCoP’s Education Committee has recommended that as part of the PCP scope of practice change, core training requirements be developed for PCP training in seven critical categories.

These seven categories are:

- 4.5(n) – Obtain 12 lead electrocardiogram and interpret findings
- 5.1(f) – Utilize airway devices not requiring visualization of vocal cords and not introduced endotracheally
- 5.5(d) – Conduct peripheral intravenous cannulation
- 5.8(b) – Follow safe processes for responsible medication administration
- 5.8(i) – Administer medication via the buccal route
- 5.8(n) – Administer medication via intranasal route
- 5.8(o) – Provide patient assist according to provincial list of medications

The committee has also recommended that PCPs and EMTs be able to sign a declaration identifying how they have met any of the additionally identified

continued on page 2

Come voice your opinions!



SCoP’s Annual General Meeting takes place in Saskatoon on April 19. All members are encouraged to come out and play a role in setting the organization’s direction in 2013-14.

“This really is an important meeting to attend,” said Sheri Hupp, SCoP’s Executive Director/Registrar. “This is where members can voice their opinions, help set and even change the organization’s direction,” she said.

Dave Bykowsky, Assistant Chief, Staff Development & Safety, Saskatoon Fire & Protective Services, is pleased Saskatoon is hosting the event.

continued on page 7

Exciting session with renowned EMS educator

Renowned international EMS educator and communicator Chris Le Baudour will host an exciting CME session as part of SCoP’s AGM in Saskatoon on April 19. The session will take place at the Saskatoon Inn and will get underway after the AGM begins at 10:00 a.m.



Chris Le Baudour

Le Baudour will focus the session on the importance of values and ethics to a self-regulating organization, and will talk about why there are higher expectations of professionalism with a self-regulating profession than with a non-self-regulating profession.

“We’re extremely excited to be able to bring in a speaker of Mr. Le Baudour’s calibre. We’re encouraging all members to consider coming out to the AGM to participate,” said Dale Backlin, Investigations and Research Coordinator, SCoP. Members attending the entire day are eligible to receive 10 CME credits.



**SASKATCHEWAN
COLLEGE OF
PARAMEDICS**

From page 1: **Seven categories identified**

competencies, explaining how they've done so and agreeing that they have read and understood the 2011 NOCPs.

Members requiring intravenous initiation will need to complete core training requirements and will need to demonstrate that they can competently start an I.V. in a clinical setting, by having at least two independent health practitioners sign off on their I.V. starts.

The training program has been created so that PCPs will be able to take the required training while on the job at their regular workplace.

"We are trying to keep the training as simple as possible while balancing the need of the public, and enhancing education of the paramedic," said Antal.

According to Antal, the training could assist PCPs in playing an important role in the new collaborative emergency centres which the government has announced it will be introducing as a new primary health care model in the province.

"It's going to give them some new opportunities to not just typically work in an ambulance. It opens the door for them to work in a non-traditional role as a paramedic," said Antal.

The committee has set June 30, 2019, as the date by which all upgrade training must be completed. Any members who have not completed their training by this date will be licensed at the EMR level.

The proposed PCP scope of practice change core training plan must still be approved through the Provincial Emergency Services Practice Committee (PESPC) in April

and the College of Physicians and Surgeons in June. Because SCoP has been consulting with both organizations throughout the development process, it is anticipated that all approvals will be achieved and the detailed plan will roll out this summer.



Training the trainers

ITLS Saskatchewan is offering a special day-long workshop for educators, featuring well-known EMS trainer Chris Le Baudour. The day-long workshop includes sessions on successful approaches to teaching, the use of scenarios in teaching, and the use of multi media in educating. The workshop takes place Saturday, April 20, at the Kelsey Campus. The workshop fee is \$50. For more information, contact Tim Hillier at t.hillier@mdambulance.com.

Membership sets SCoP fees

The fees members pay to SCoP each year fund registration and licensing, setting educational standards, the discipline process and the ongoing operation of the organization.

The rate of member fees is set not by Council but by members. The fee structure is set out in the organization's *Administrative Bylaws* (section 28.1.2), which can only be changed with the approval of SCoP members.

Fees are set out and tied to the rate of inflation, based on the bylaw which states: "The fee payable for an annual practicing license for 2011 and each subsequent year shall be increased from \$425 by the annual rate of inflation rounded up to the nearest \$5." Policy 2.5 states that the

rate of inflation is determined by Canada's Consumer Price Index (CPI) each September.

At the 2010 SCoP AGM, a motion was introduced suggesting that the existing bylaw be replaced with: "increases in membership dues be done based on necessity and that the Saskatchewan College of Paramedics must prove that an increase in fees is needed to maintain the operations of the College." The majority of members at the 2010 AGM voted against the proposed motion and in favour of the existing bylaw around fee rate increases.

As a result, all SCoP members fee increases are governed by the bylaw and cannot be set or changed by the organization itself.



Five members run for two Council positions

Five SCoP members have put their names forward to run for the two member-at-large positions currently open on the SCoP Council. Voting will take place in March and the winning candidates will be announced at and following the SCoP AGM on April 19. Please watch your e-mail for more information on the electoral process. The five member-at-large candidates are:

Cari Evenson-Carleton



An ICP (EMT-A), Cari is also an EMO coordinator and a first aid/CPR instructor. She has been employed in EMS for seven years,

three years as the Manager of Frontier EMS. Cari is running for a number of reasons. She would like to continue to represent the rural EMS sector. She feels she has gained valuable knowledge and experience during her three years on Council and would like the opportunity to continue working with Council.

Doris Robertson



An EMT/PCP, Doris has been employed with Frontier EMS for one year and Cypress Health Region for

the previous three years. She has a Bachelor of Religious Studies, has served on several different committees over the past years; some involved overseeing the hiring of pastoral and support staff, social event planning for charity functions, focusing on the homeless population in our society. She has been involved

in revising screening policy and procedures for volunteers working with vulnerable people. She was involved with SCoP's work around content development and editing of the EMR exam. She is running for Council because she wants to be a voice for rural EMS. She is excited about how far SCoP has come in the past years. She would like to be a part of its future growth, helping to find solutions to the many issues SCoP will face in the next years.

Warren Swaney



An EMT, Warren has been employed with Tisdale Ambulance Care for the past 13 years and was employed with

Kelvington Ambulance for a previous nine years. He is a member of the local EMO Committee involved in emergency planning for Tisdale and area. He has been a member of the Kelvington Safe House Committee, was the Canadian Red Cross Local Emergency Services chairperson, and a member of the Tisdale Museum Board. He is running to bring rural perspectives and concerns to the College, as well as concerns and perspectives of members not directly involved in the ambulance industry.

Alexander Tetoff



Alexander has been a PCP for two years. He was employed with Duck Mountain Ambulance for a year before moving to

RQHR EMS. He currently works for RQHR EMS and works on a casual

basis for Duck Mountain Ambulance. He was trained in and is currently licensed in Alberta. He is a trained and experienced firefighter. He has been a member of many internal committees with the Kamsack Fire Department. He has been a volunteer with the Kamsack Fire Department since 2007. He is running because he would like to help promote the expansion of the EMT scope and would like to play a role in the direction taken by the profession in Saskatchewan.

Jason Trask



An ACP with critical care training and a Bachelor of Applied Business: Emergency Services Degree, Jason has been

employed with MD Ambulance for the past 14 years. Prior to working with MD Ambulance, he worked for Cudworth Ambulance and Spiritwood Ambulance. Jason is running for the member-at-large position because he is interested in becoming involved with the profession at the highest level. He believes he has the knowledge and education to help lead the profession into the future. He would like to see the College pursue the development of a CCP level for Saskatchewan and the advancement of the PCP, ICP and ACP skill set. He also supports the diversification of EMS into community medicine and furthering partnerships with health facilities. He is currently an elected director with the Saskatoon Adult Soccer Board (SAS), is on the SAS Discipline (chair) and HR Committees, and is the acting employee co-chair of the MD Ambulance OH&S Committee. Jason is also employed at STARS and SIAST.

Online registration – a major success

SCoP's new online registration system, which went live in the summer of 2011, was found to be hugely successful in the 2013 member licensing process.

Members were encouraged to submit their applications early – SCoP even offered early registrants the opportunity to enter an iPad draw.

A total of 387 applications were submitted by the early bird deadline, significantly more than were submitted during the same period in 2012. In fact, the early submissions so significantly reduced the number of November and December submissions that SCoP was able to avoid hiring temporary staff to help deal with last minute submissions.

“We had to hire temporary staff to help us deal with the sheer volume of November and December submissions in the past. Having submissions come in early allowed us to provide more feedback to members who may not have filled out submissions correctly or may have forgotten to send in educational materials. When all submissions come in November and December, we just don't have the capacity to provide that type of feedback to members,” said Sheri Hupp, Executive Director/Registrar, SCoP.

Because of the new online system, for the first time ever this year, SCoP was able to send out reminder e-mails to members in mid-November and mid-December if they had not successfully registered. This meant that on November 16, 1,560 members received an e-mail indicating that they had not renewed yet and providing them with tips that would assist them. By December 11, nearly 1,200 of those members had renewed and just 340 of those who'd not renewed received a reminder e-mail.

Those members that renewed early were also able to receive their certificate and member cards early. SCoP stops printing cards and certificates the week before the submission deadline to focus efforts on processing last minute renewals.

“We want to remind members that renewing is their responsibility, so you need to check the website to be sure your name is on it. It's also important to watch your

e-mails, as we'll advise you electronically if there is a problem with your application,” said Hupp.

Hupp also warns that in submitting during the last week or two of November, members are risking late fees if for some reason their application is not complete. During the last week or two of November, SCoP staff are so busy answering member questions they have little or no time to review new applications until after the December 1 deadline. During the last two weeks of November, it is not unusual for the College telephone message mailbox to be completely full when the SCoP staff arrive to work each morning and the phone rings constantly throughout each day. This means that any incomplete applications will be assessed a late fee if they were partially submitted prior to December 1. Hupp says members can prevent this by getting renewals in early enough that SCoP employees have time to review and provide feedback.

SCoP also launched the electronic CME approval form and reporting process in November. Hupp said members began using the new tool almost immediately. With the new tool, members were able to submit missing educational documents and photos. SCoP is now encouraging

members to submit educational documentation, using eApplication, as soon as they have completed training, reducing the number of documents required for submission at year end.

SCoP also launched a second electronic feature in November. ePortfolio enables member to log in to see their personal information, as well as the status of their mandatory certificates, skills and CME status on file with the College. The system is available to members throughout the year to assist them in meeting their CME and licensing requirements.

“Getting all of the systems successfully launched meant the fall was challenging for SCoP, but we're already finding that each of the systems will make the entire renewal, reporting and licensing process so much simpler for members and SCoP employees, so the implementation of these tools was definitely worth it,” said Hupp.



Saskatoon EMT specializes in unique rescue skills

Randy Meginbir is an advanced care paramedic with a unique specialty. Meginbir works with the Saskatoon Fire Department and specializes in extrication and rescue. He's a member of a number of rescue teams, including the Saskatoon Urban Search and Rescue team, one of just six such rescue teams in Canada. The teams come together across the country to assist with large disasters.

He began his career as a volunteer firefighter in 1981, when he also took EMS training in Moose Jaw. He then worked full time for Wald Ambulance in Assiniboia and then MD Ambulance in Saskatoon. In 1987, he went to SIAST in Regina and was a member of the second class of students to go through the province's new advanced care paramedic program.

In 1994, he left MD Ambulance to work for the Saskatoon Fire Department, largely because of his interest in rescue work.

"Even when I worked with MD Ambulance, I was an extrication instructor, so I taught extrication throughout the province and into Alberta. The fire department was doing most of the extrication and rescue, so I decided that I'd go that route and be involved in something that I was interested in and still be able to do the EMS," said Meginbir.

Meginbir said he finds extrication and rescue interesting because there's always something new to learn.

"Vehicle technology has seen huge changes over the past few years, and much of the new technology in vehicles can be dangerous to rescuers," he said.

According to Meginbir, it's really important that rescue teams have an understanding of how to extricate passengers in a way that keeps both the passengers and the rescuers safe.

"There's a lot of things to think about when you get there. There's always somebody coming out with

new technologies that you have to keep up or it can bite you, so you have to really use your head to think about how you're going to get these people out of the vehicle safely in the least amount of time, because time is what's important in a trauma."

He uses software in the rescue vehicles that provides a list of technologies in each type of vehicle. Over the years, he's taken numerous courses in vehicle technologies. He uses chat lines, internet searches and has counterparts across the country and in the United States that he calls to gather information about new technologies. He says he's constantly updating his knowledge.

In addition to his work with the Saskatoon Fire Department, Meginbir is currently working on rejuvenating and updating the ITLS Access course for first responders and medics which helps them deal with vehicle extrication. The course used to be available in the province but hasn't been offered for 10 - 15 years. He will be offering the updated course in conjunction with ITLS Saskatchewan. The course is intended to help bring paramedics and firefighters in smaller fire departments and ambulance services up to date on new technologies, and on how to deal with them in the absence of a fire department with hydraulic equipment.

Meginbir expects that the course will be available by spring and will be running in communities across the province by mid-summer. He said programs will be taken out to communities and will be tailored to meet the needs of the organizations involved. According to Meginbir, it's the importance of this type of work that keeps him engaged.

"We all want to come home at the end of the shift. That's what's important and what keeps me excited about what I do – passing the knowledge onto other paramedics and firefighters," he said.



Top: Randy Meginbir
Middle: Presenting to a class
Bottom: Randy and his wife, Carollyn, as Randy receives Saskatchewan Protective Services Medal from Lieutenant Governor Vaughn Solomon Schofield in 2012

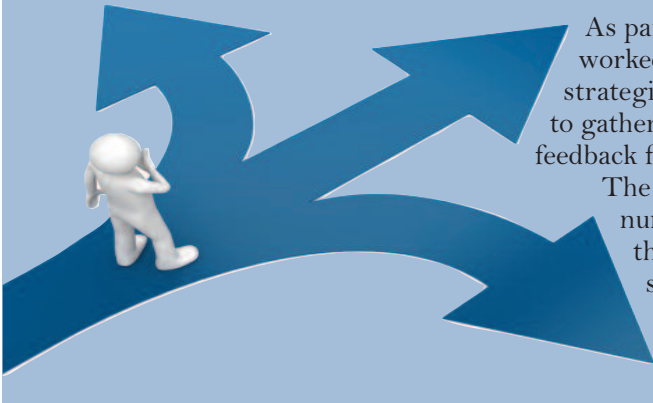
Reviewing our direction

SCoP's first three-year strategic plan, a roadmap for the College's growth and development, was created in

2010. The organization has now developed a new plan that will support the growth and development of the College until 2015.

a one-day planning session with Council and SCoP staff.

The research found that 63% of members are very interested in the PCP scope change plan currently in process; it identified that 76% of respondents thought e-mail was the best form of communication with members; and it discovered that 70% of members say the new registry system is better than the older version. The new strategic plan developed doesn't result in any major changes to the direction the College has taken since its inception in 2009.



As part of this process, SCoP worked with an independent strategic management company to gather information and feedback from key stakeholders.

The company interviewed a number of organizations that work with or receive services through SCoP, surveyed the membership, and held

Keeping national exams relevant

SCoP members are playing an important role in ensuring the new national PCP and ACP exams are continually updated and relevant to the requirements of the industry.

While Saskatchewan participated in the development of the first version of the exams, which came into use in June 2012, work on the exams hasn't stopped there. An exam working group has been struck, made up of two representatives from each of the provincial/territorial jurisdictions that register and license paramedics in Canada. One of the two representatives from each region is a primary care paramedic and the other is an advanced care paramedic.

Connie Wilson is Saskatchewan's PCP representative to the group. She said the group spends significant time writing and editing new exam questions. Each exam contains 200 questions. She believes the database now contains in excess of 600 questions. She said the working group is split into two separate groups. Each writes a block of 36 new exam questions every two months. The groups then spend the next two months editing each other's questions. The role of the working group is to build the database of questions, but also to ensure questions are changed as NOCPs are changed.

"It's a lot of work. When I first applied to it, I didn't really know what I was getting in to, but it's been a really good educational opportunity for me. It has given me some training on how to develop and edit questions," said Wilson.

Wilson believes she's personally written in excess of 200 questions since she became involved with the process. She said the group will continue to be focused on developing new questions over the next two years. She expects it will go into more of a maintenance phase after that.

The group meets twice annually to undertake standard setting and evaluate questions in relation to their level of difficulty. They also then make final decisions about whether certain questions should be pulled off the exam or re-edited.

The exam working group reports to the National COPR Exam Committee, which is chaired by SCoP Executive Director Sheri Hupp.



Your photos are wanted!

Your editors are always on the lookout for photos of SCoP members. They can be of individuals or groups, on the road, out and about or just having a cup on a break. Let's see those pearly whites!

Send your photos, along with a short description, to: office@collegeofparamedics.sk.ca, with the subject line: Photos for *The Pulse*.

Deviation from protocol intended for rare circumstances

The Saskatchewan College of Paramedics, the Provincial Emergency Services Practice Committee (PESPC) and the College of Physicians and Surgeons have approved and implemented a new protocol which enables paramedics to deviate from the protocol manual in rare circumstances where following the existing protocol would jeopardize patient safety.

Protocol G25 came into effect in October 2012. It was implemented to address concerns that section 23 of *The Paramedics Act* made the protocol manual extremely prescriptive, to the point that in some circumstances it tied the hands of the paramedic and put the safety of the patient in jeopardy.

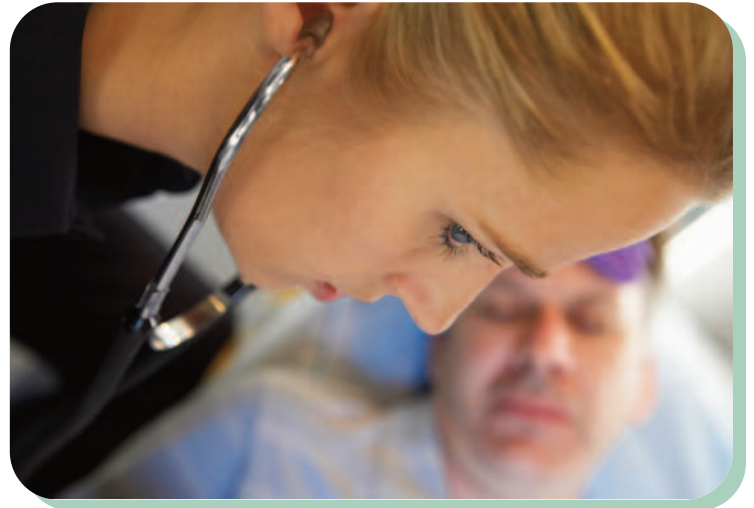
“The PESPC and SCoP recognize that it’s almost impossible for the protocol manual to identify every situation that a paramedic will encounter, and it’s important to ensure paramedics have some flexibility to address those rare and unique circumstances when they encounter them. But the key words here are ‘rare and unique,’” said Dale Backlin, Investigations and Research Coordinator, SCoP.

Backlin stresses that the protocol allowing deviation is intended to be used in extremely rare circumstances which are not covered in the protocol manual, and where it would be in the best interest of the patient to deviate.

He adds that any deviation must be clearly documented. The reasoning behind the deviation must be provided, along with proper clinical data validating the need to deviate and identifying how the deviation mitigated risk to the patient. As well, the deviation needs to be identified on the patient care report and made clear to the receiving physician.

The deviation also must be reported to SCoP within 30 days of the event and must go before the review committee. Backlin stresses that all information provided about the deviation must be evidence-based. He said SCoP is not looking for anecdotal evidence or expert opinions. The College will be wanting strong clinical evidence to show that the steps taken were appropriate for the situation.

“While we want to ensure paramedics have the flexibility to deviate from the protocol if required for patient safety, the new protocol is intended to ensure that that deviation only take place if it is critical,” he said.



The new protocol was developed based on about 30 different deviation protocols from across Canada, the UK and the USA. There is one major difference between these protocols and the one developed for Saskatchewan. In most of the other jurisdictions, physicians are able to direct a paramedic to deviate from the protocol. In Saskatchewan, because paramedics are self-regulating, no one can direct the paramedic to deviate; the decision to deviate from the manual must be made entirely by the attending paramedic, based on the need of the patient.

Backlin said the deviation protocol has been used in three circumstances since it was implemented in October 2012. All three deviations are currently under examination by SCoP’s review committee.

From page 1: **Come voice your opinions!**

“Saskatoon is such a great city. We’ve got so many wonderful attractions such as theatre, great night life, and the River Landing project, which people can take in while they’re here,” said Bykowsky.

He’s also really pleased that Saskatoon’s Fire and Protective Services is playing a role in hosting the event.

“Along with other specialties, each and every Saskatoon firefighter who maintains their designation as a primary care paramedic with SCoP assists us in our commitment to providing protective services to the residents of

Saskatoon. Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services was able to respond to over 4,600 emergency medical calls in 2012 because we have firefighters with the PCP designation,” he said.

SCoP is offering an exciting CME session with EMT educator/communicator Chris Le Baudour as part of the AGM. The AGM, including this session, takes place at the Saskatoon Inn. For more information on either and to locate a registration form, please visit our website at www.collegeofparamedics.sk.ca.