

Paramedicine

What is Paramedicine?

Paramedics are skilled emergency professionals who perform life-saving techniques, administer drugs and transfer critically ill patients safely and quickly. As a member of a larger, integrated emergency response and health care team, they are instrumental in the delivery of medical care to patients in emergency situations.

Paramedicine is a dynamic career that incorporates a broad knowledge of patient care, human anatomy and pathophysiology, pharmacology, crisis intervention and communications. Paramedics are regularly faced with new challenges and opportunities to expand their knowledge and perfect their skills.

What do Paramedics do?

Paramedics are often the first responders to medical or traumatic emergencies and are responsible for assessing the scene, delivering appropriate patient care, and transporting patients to a medical facility. They must lift patients and equipment, frequently within confined or challenging spaces, while ensuring patient safety and work effectively with all members of the emergency response team.

Where do Paramedics work?

The "office" of a paramedic may include the ambulance, a house, workplace, farm, sporting event, nursing home, or the side of the road. The unpredictable nature of the work showcases the creativity and resourcefulness of paramedics and ability to continuously adapt.

Education and Preparation

In order to work as a Primary Care Paramedic (PCP) in Ontario, you must complete training in a two-year Paramedic Program at an accredited college or university. All students entering this program generally have some post-secondary education and physical fitness is essential.

To become a Licensed PCP in Canada, various criteria must be met.

Licensure

Upon completion of a Paramedic Program at an accredited college or university, to work as a PCP you must:

- Write and pass the Advanced Emergency Medical Care Assistant (A-EMCA) exam delivered by the Ontario Ministry of Health
- A-EMCA certification is a requirement to work as a paramedic in Ontario
- Paramedics must be certified to deliver medications and perform defibrillation under standing orders from Base Hospital
- Have a valid CPR 'HCP' and first aid certificates, a valid Class F Driver's license
- Must maintain all certifications required under the Ambulance Act of Ontario

Professional Associations

The Canadian Paramedic Association (CPA)

The Ontario Paramedic Association (OPA) (www.ontarioparamedic.ca)