



Who is a **PARAMEDIC**



A paramedic is a medical professional who specializes in emergency treatment. They are not doctors or nurses .

The word paramedic is a combination of two terms. “Para” means next to, and “medic” means doctor. So it means that paramedics work alongside doctors, though not always physically.

EMTs have the skills to use basic equipment in an ambulance. but they aren't allowed to give treatments that break the skin.

Paramedics have more training and learn how to start intravenous lines (IVs) and manage compromised airways. Paramedics provide advanced emergency medical care. They use advanced equipment on ambulances.

Paramedics work in emergency rooms and ambulances where they treat people with urgent problems. They may also work in specific settings, such as:



- **On cruise ships**
- **On oil-drilling platforms**
- **In air rescue transport**
- **On ocean rescue teams**
- **At special events like music festivals**
- **On S.W.A.T. teams**



PARAMEDIC

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

TO START **PARAMEDIC TRAINING**, ONE HAS TO HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENT. IN SOME INSTANCES, ONE MAY NEED AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE TO START PARAMEDIC TRAINING.

SOME **PARAMEDIC TRAINING PROGRAMS** REQUIRE ONE TO HAVE EMT CERTIFICATION. EACH PROGRAM IS DIFFERENT, AND EACH STATE ALSO HAS DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS FOR BECOMING A PARAMEDIC.

PARAMEDICS CAN GET AT LEAST 1,200 HOURS OF TRAINING. SOME PROGRAMS GO UP TO 1,800 HOURS.

AFTER COMPLETING TRAINING, ONE TAKES AN EXAM REQUIRED BY YOUR STATE. THIS MAY BE THE NATIONAL REGISTRY OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS (NREMT) PARAMEDIC EXAM. SOME STATES HAVE THEIR OWN PARAMEDIC EXAM. UPON PASSING THE EXAM ONE MUST THEN APPLY FOR CERTIFICATION WITHIN TWO YEARS OF PASSING THE EXAM.



WHAT DOES A PARAMEDIC

DO



PARAMEDICS WORK ON TEAMS THAT RESPOND TO MEDICAL EMERGENCIES. THEY WORK UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF A DOCTOR, THOUGH THE DOCTOR IS USUALLY NOT ON SITE. THEY MAY COMMUNICATE WITH A DOCTOR VIA PHONE, RADIO, OR PRE-WRITTEN ORDERS (CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES).

PARAMEDICS ALSO MAKE SOME DECISIONS ABOUT PATIENT CARE

PARAMEDICS MAY:

- DO CPR
- USE A DEFIBRILLATOR
- GIVE IV MEDICATION
- CLEAR AIRWAYS
- GIVE A TRACHEOTOMY
- USE MECHANICAL BREATHING DEVICES
- DO BASIC MEDICAL TESTS
- INTERPRET THE RESULTS OF THE TESTS
- GIVE ANTIDOTES TO DRUG OVERDOSE OR POISONING
- MONITOR THE PERSON WHO IS ILL DURING THE TRIP TO THE HOSPITAL OR TO THE DOCTOR
- INTERPRET PATIENT DATA ON MONITORING EQUIPMENT
- COMMUNICATE WITH SUPERVISING DOCTOR
- PROVIDE A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE PERSON'S CONDITION TO THE DOCTOR, UPON ARRIVAL AT THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT.



PARAMEDIC PRACTITIONERS IN Australia

How are Paramedic Practitioners qualified

To practise, Paramedic Practitioners, and all paramedics with advanced primary care skills, must meet the following criteria:

QUALIFICATION LEVELS INCLUDE:

- **Extended Care Paramedics – Short courses**
 - **Community Paramedics – Graduate Certificate**
 - **Primary Care Paramedics – Graduate Diploma**
 - **Paramedic Practitioners – Masters**
- Meet national AHPRA registration standards established by the Paramedicine Board of Australia
 - Have front line industry experience
 - Completed additional studies, approved by the Australasian College of Paramedic Practitioners
 - Complete at least 30 hours of continuing professional development each year.

All paramedics can respond to emergencies. In addition to emergency healthcare skills, many Paramedics have additional primary care capabilities. These specialist paramedics can treat a wider range of health conditions. Paramedics with additional primary care skills are “generalists” and work alongside Doctors. They also work collaboratively and in team-based arrangements with other allied health professionals. With advanced capabilities, these specialist paramedics can assess, diagnose, and treat a broad range of patients. Paramedic Practitioner is the top tier of paramedics with additional primary care capabilities.





Where do **PARAMEDIC** Practitioners Practise?

Paramedics, with additional primary care skills, work in a wide range of public and private settings including GP surgeries, community health centres, public and private hospitals, aged care facilities, people's homes, education facilities, mental health settings, drug and alcohol services, non-government organisations, in military, corporate and industrial settings and also ambulance services.

What services do **PARAMEDIC** Practitioners Provide?

Paramedics, with additional primary care skills, assess, treat, and where necessary, refer patients with a broad range of health conditions. This includes advice and treatment for:

- Health promotion, disease prevention and early identification
- Lifestyle advice and modification
- Assessment, treatment and, where necessary, referral for acute health conditions
- Assessment, treatment and, where necessary, referral for chronic health conditions
- As a member of a multidisciplinary team

PARAMEDIC in United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, the regional ambulance services, most often are under the authority of the National Health Service and there is now a significant standardization of training and skills. The UK model has three levels of ambulance staff. In increasing order of clinical skills, these are: emergency care assistants, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics.

Today, university qualifications are expected for paramedics, with the current entry level being a **Bachelor of Science Degree in Pre-Hospital Care or Paramedic Science**. As the title "Paramedic" is legally protected, those utilising must be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), and in order to qualify for registration you must meet the standards for registration, which include having a degree obtained through an approved course. The change of entry requirements does not affect currently registered Paramedics, some of whom will still only have their entry qualification, but it is common for Paramedics to continue to progress through "top up" courses, for instance, to work towards a Bachelors of Science degree. This has led to Paramedics holding a wide range of qualifications, with some qualifications (such as **master's degrees in Advanced or Paramedic Practice**) being a pre-requisite for paramedic prescribing.

Paramedics work in various settings including NHS and Independent Ambulance Providers, Air Ambulances, Emergency Departments and other alternative settings. Some paramedics have gone on to become **Paramedic Practitioners**, a role that practices independently in the pre-hospital environment in a capacity similar to that of a nurse practitioner. This is a fully autonomous role, and such senior paramedics are now working in hospitals, community teams such as rapid response teams, and also in increasing numbers in general practice, where their role includes acute presentations, complex chronic care and end of life management. They work as part of the **allied health professional team** including Doctors, Nurses, physician Associates, Physiotherapists, Associate Physicians, Health Care Assistants and Clinical Pharmacists. Paramedic Practitioners also undertake examinations modelled upon the MRCGP (a combination of applied knowledge exams, clinical skills and work place based assessment) in order to use the title "specialist". There are also now a growing number of these advanced paramedics who are independent and supplementary prescribers. There are also '**Critical Care Paramedics**' who specialise in acute emergency incidents. In 2018, the UK government changed legislation allowing Paramedics to independently prescribe, which will open new pathways to Paramedics to progress into. This came into force on 1 April 2018, but did not immediately affect practice as guidance was still being written.



PARAMEDIC PRACTICE IN CANADA

While the evolution of paramedicine described is focused largely on the US, many other countries followed a similar pattern, although often with significant variations. Canada, for example, attempted a pilot paramedic training program at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, in 1972. The program, which intended to upgrade the then mandatory 160 hours of training was found to be too costly and premature, and it was more than a decade before the legislative authority for its graduates to practice was put into place. An alternative program which provided 1,400 hours of training at the community college level prior to commencing employment was then tried, and made mandatory in 1977, with formal certification examinations being introduced in 1978.

Similar programs occurred at roughly the same time in Alberta and British Columbia, with other Canadian provinces gradually following, but with their own education and certification requirements.

Advanced Care Paramedics were not introduced until 1984, when Toronto trained its first group internally, before the process spread across the country. By 2010 the Ontario system involved a two-year community college based program, including both hospital and field clinical components, prior to designation as a Primary Care Paramedic, although it is starting to head towards a university degree-based program. The province of Ontario announced that by September 2021, the entry level primary care paramedic post-secondary program would be enhanced from a two-year diploma to a three-year advanced diploma in primary care paramedicine. Resultantly, advanced care paramedics in Ontario will require a minimum of four years of post-secondary education and critical care paramedics will require five years of post-secondary education.



PARAMEDIC PRACTICE IN UNITED STATES

In the United States, the minimum standards for paramedic training is considered vocational, but many colleges offer paramedic associate degree or bachelor's degree options. Paramedic education programs typically follow the U.S. NHTSA EMS Curriculum, DOT or National Registry of EMTs. While many regionally accredited community colleges offer paramedic programs and two-year associate degrees, a handful of universities also offer a four-year bachelor's degree component.

The national standard course minimum requires didactic and clinical hours for a paramedic program of 1,500 or more hours of classroom training and 500+ clinical hours to be accredited and nationally recognized, excluding degree options, EMT training, work experience, and prerequisites. Prior to starting paramedic training it is required to be a certified Emergency Medical Technician. Entry requirements vary, but many paramedic programs also have prerequisites such as one year required work experience as an emergency medical technician, or anatomy and physiology courses from an accredited college or university. Paramedics in some states must attend up to 50+ hours of ongoing education, plus maintain Pediatric Advanced Life Support and Advanced Cardiac Life Support. National Registry requires 70 + hours to maintain its certification or one may re-certify through completing the written computer based adaptive testing again, every two years.

Paramedicine continues to grow and evolve into a formal profession in its own right, complete with its own standards and body of knowledge, and in many locations paramedics have formed their own professional bodies.



MEDICOLEGAL AUTHORITY PARAMEDIC IN PRACTICE

The medicolegal framework for paramedics is highly dependent on the overall structure of emergency medical services in the territory where they are working.

In many localities, paramedics operate as a direct extension of a physician medical director and practice as an extension of the medical director's license. In the United States, a physician delegates authority under an individual state's Medical Practice Act. This gives a paramedic the ability to practice within limited scope of practice in law, along with state DOH guidelines and medical control oversight. The authority to practice in this manner is granted in the form of standing orders (protocols) and direct physician consultation via phone or radio. Under this paradigm, paramedics effectively assume the role of out-of-hospital field agents to regional emergency physicians, with independent clinical decision.

In places where paramedics are recognised health care professionals registered with an appropriate body, they can conduct all procedures authorised for their profession, including the administration of prescription medication, and are personally answerable to a regulator. For example, in the United Kingdom, the Health and Care Professions Council regulates paramedics and can censure or strike a paramedic from the register.

In some cases paramedics may gain further qualifications to extend their status to that of a Paramedic Practitioner or advanced paramedic, which may allow them to administer a wider range of drugs and use a wider range of clinical skills.

In some areas, paramedics are only permitted to practice many advanced skills while assisting a physician who is physically present, except for immediately life-threatening emergencies.

