

The Pulse

Paramedics: Trusted – Professional

Saskatchewan College of Paramedics • Newsletter #2, May 2010

SCoP AGM sees broad membership participation



Committee members are recognized for their contributions at 2010 AGM

A total of 54 members representing every health region, every license level and every sector in the province, took part in SCoP's 2010 AGM, held in Meadow Lake on April 16, 2010. While there was good representation from urban communities, the majority of participants came from rural locations.

"I am very pleased that we had such a great cross section of our members at this event. It really shows that SCoP is evolving into a strong organization," said Lily Stonehouse, Executive Director of SCoP.

At the AGM, two new members were elected to Council – for the first time ever EMTs are represented by a Council member. For more information on SCoP's new Council, see page 6.

Ten out of 13 proposed resolutions were passed (see page 2) and members were given a presentation on the future directions of SCoP. Anyone interested in reading reports on the past year or in viewing the presentations made at the AGM is encouraged to visit the AGM section of the SCoP website at <http://www.collegeofparamedics.sk.ca/news-and-events/agm.php>.

The AGM was hosted by the Prairie North Regional Health Authority (PNRHA). Cliff Orriss, Director of Emergency Health Services with PNRHA, praised SCoP for its progress.

"They've had a tremendous task they've had to achieve in a short time. The increased level of professionalism and the level of accountability they are bringing to the industry – it's a really good thing for the profession."

He also commended SCoP for hosting the AGM in Meadow Lake.

"It really gave our folks an opportunity to participate. I think that's what they need to do is move it around the province – I think by doing this they show they're listening to members and making the organization accessible – which is really important," he said.

The decision is in ... SCoP's newsletter has a name!

In March, SCoP asked members for suggestions or feedback on a proposed name for its newsletter. Over the past two months, members were consulted. More than 18 names were suggested – eventually an e-survey was created and sent to all members who had provided an e-mail address to the College. More than 230 members voiced their opinions in the survey. The winning name, "The Pulse," received 20% of the votes. The successful name was proposed by a member anonymously during the recent AGM. We'd like to thank that member for the great suggestion. Also thanks to all who participated.

SCoP celebrates EMS Week

EMS Week runs May 16 - 22. SCoP is joining with others in celebrating the work of Saskatchewan's many EMS members. EMS members play a critical role in Saskatchewan's health sector, delivering health services and saving lives on a daily basis. EMS members have historically worked largely from ambulances, but today they work in many other sectors. More than 70% of SCoP's members work in the ambulance sector, about 21% work in the fire sector, with the remainder working in industrial, educational, and facility-based settings.

Send us your feedback!

This is the second edition of the SCoP newsletter. We'd love to know what you think about it. Send us your feedback, good or bad, and any great story ideas you have. We'll try to incorporate suggestions into future newsletters.



**SASKATCHEWAN
COLLEGE OF
PARAMEDICS**

Resolutions from the 2010 SCoP AGM

SCoP's 2010 Annual General Meeting took place in Meadow Lake on April 16th. Fifty-four members took in the event, which generated 13 resolutions. Ten were approved and three were defeated. Resolutions approved at the AGM include:

1. REGISTRATION FEES

1.1 Registration Fees – Initial Processing Fee

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Council amendment to *Administrative Bylaws, June, 2010* Section 27 be confirmed as follows:

27. Initial Processing Fee

27.1 The processing fee payable for an initial application for registration as a member is:

27.1.1 \$50, in the case of an applicant who has completed the relevant education program to be licensed as an EMR, EMT, EMT-A or EMT-P in Canada.

1.2 Registration Fees – Non-Practising Registration Fee

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Council amendment to *Administrative Bylaws, June, 2010* Section 28 be confirmed as follows:

28.2 The fee payable for an annual non-practising license is \$50.

2. COMMITTEES

2.1 Committees – Composition of the Discipline Committee

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Council seek the approval of the Minister of Health to amend the *Regulatory Bylaws* to enable the Council to appoint a panel of three, including a public representative from Council and a Chair, to hear each discipline case. The panel is to be selected from a larger committee of up to 10 trained members and public representatives.

2.2 Committees – Public Representation on the Professional Conduct Committee

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Council seek the approval of the Minister of Health to amend the *Regulatory Bylaws* to require Council to appoint a member of the public to each Professional Conduct Committee.

2.3 Committees – Establishing an Executive Committee

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Council amendment to *Administrative Bylaws, June, 2010* Section 36 be confirmed as follows:

36. Executive Committee

36.1 The membership of the executive committee shall be:



Jon Antal bringing forth a resolution

36.1.1 the president who shall be the chairperson;

36.1.2 the vice-president who in the absence of the president shall perform the duties of the chairperson; and

36.1.3 one member at large of the Council appointed by the Council.

36.2 The duties of the executive committee shall be:

36.2.1 to make necessary decisions between scheduled council meetings;

36.2.2 subject to the bylaws, appoint as required a professional conduct committee to investigate a complaint;

36.2.3 subject to the bylaws, appoint as required a discipline committee to hear a formal complaint contained in a written report of the professional conduct committee;

36.2.4 to carry out any other powers or duties that council may delegate to it pursuant to section 13 of *The Paramedics Act*.

3. REGISTRATION

3.1 Registration – Initial Registration Requirements

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Council seek the approval of the Minister of Health to replace the Regulatory Bylaw Section 2(1)(d) with “submit evidence of good character, a satisfactory criminal record check and a satisfactory report regarding any prior professional conduct or professional competence investigation or referral to discipline by any regulatory body.”

3.2 Registration – Renewal Requirements

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Council seek the approval of the Minister of Health to amend the Regulatory Bylaw Section 4 to read:

2010 AGM resolutions – continued

4 Licenses

- (1) A member may be issued a full licence to practice as an EMR, EMT, EMT-A or EMT-P upon proof of:
- completion of the application forms required by Council;
 - payment** of the fees set by the College;
 - for new members, meeting the requirements for registration in section 2;
 - for existing members,
 - meeting** the continuing medical education requirements in section 7;
 - filing a satisfactory report regarding any criminal convictions and any outstanding charges since initial registration or the issuance of the previous licence;**
 - filing a satisfactory report regarding whether a licence has been cancelled, suspended, restricted or subject to individual terms and conditions by a regulatory authority or health profession in any jurisdiction since initial registration or the issuance of the previous licence.**

(Note: bolded words are changes from the existing bylaw)

4. CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

4.1 CME – Saskatchewan College of Paramedics CME Policy

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: whatever policies and procedures are in place at October 31st, pertaining to the Saskatchewan College of Paramedics Continuing Medical Education process, remain in place for the next twelve months.



Members at work at AGM

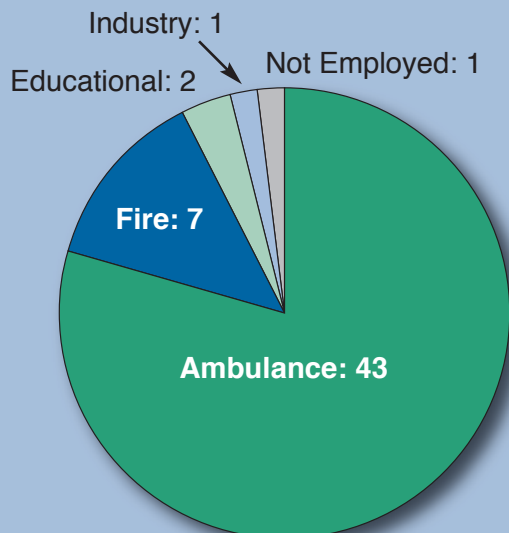
5. ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

5.1 Administrative – Membership in the Paramedics Association of Canada

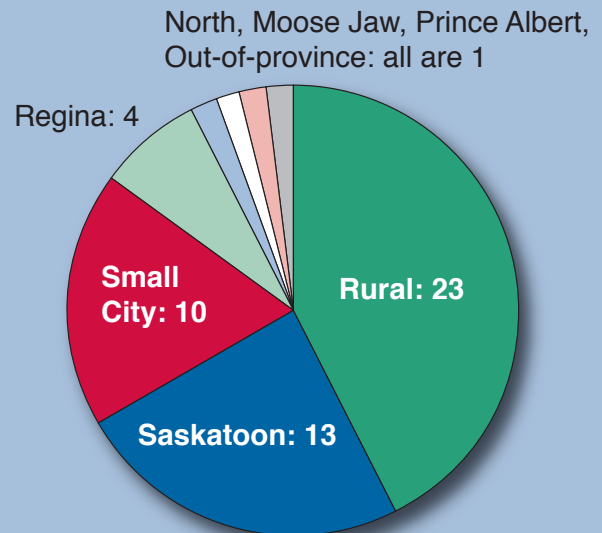
BE IT RESOLVED THAT: SCoP immediately terminate its membership in PAC.

Who attended the AGM?

By sector



By community



SCoP executive director announces retirement plans

SCoP's Executive Director, Lily Stonehouse, has announced that she will be resigning from her position in the fall of 2010.

Stonehouse was hired by SCoP in the fall of 2008 to help establish the College as a new regulatory body. She agreed to assist the organization in setting the new course, with the understanding that she would be retiring within a two to three-year time period.

"This has been a very exciting time to be involved with SCoP. I have enjoyed the role I have played within the organization. It is a solid organization with a strong Council. Now is the time for me to step aside and let a new CEO take over," Stonehouse said.

Stonehouse was a deputy minister and senior executive in numerous provincial government departments and agencies for nearly 15 years. She has also worked as a senior official in both the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) and the regional college system.

SCoP Chair Brent Stewart said Stonehouse will be missed.

"We have appreciated Lily's leadership and diligence in getting our systems and policies in order. We have made excellent progress and have a firm foundation for our organization. We wish Lily well in her retirement," he said.

Stonehouse has agreed to stay on until a new executive director has been hired. Stewart said the process of searching for a replacement has already begun.

"As an organization, we've developed a solid strategic plan that will enable us to move SCoP into the future. We are looking for a new executive director with the talent and skills to lead the College to a new level of efficient, transparent operations," said Stewart.

A search team has been created to assist with the recruitment process. It is made up of Council members and Stonehouse. The team will do a national search for a new leader, and is using an executive search firm to assist in identifying the best candidate for the executive director position. The team is hoping to have the new executive director in place by late fall.

Managing our own – the discipline process

SCoP has just taken on a new role that's critical to the future of the organization, but a bit controversial with members.



Courtesy Parkland Ambulance, PA

In the past, disciplining members for inappropriate behaviour was the responsibility of Saskatchewan Health. When SCoP became a self-regulating organization, the responsibility for member discipline was transferred over.

"It's not something any organization enjoys, but managing member discipline is really important in building public respect for the profession," said Discipline Committee Chair Don Brickner.

The College is working to resolve issues before they get to the discipline process. In fact, the discipline process is used only if the College and the member are not able to resolve the problem, or when the matter is too serious to allow a lower-level resolution.

To ensure a fair process, the five-person Discipline Committee is not provided with any information on the issue until it comes before them.

The process used in a discipline hearing is similar to a court process. It's a public process; one or both sides will often use lawyers to argue their cases and there is a final decision-making body. In this case, that body will be members of the Discipline Committee rather than a judge and jury. The committee's decision could include a range of corrective actions to be taken by the member involved. If the member is unhappy with the committee's decision, the decision can be appealed to Council.

Brickner says the committee will focus on ensuring a fair process.

"We are going to make it fair. There is no underlying reason why we wouldn't make it fair, and it needs to be fair to all sides. We are not interested in hiding anything from either the membership or the public. Ultimately, our goal is to make sure that we protect the public at all times," he said.

To date, there have been three issues referred to the Discipline Committee. One hearing has been completed, one is scheduled for the fall and the third has yet to be scheduled.

First discipline hearing holds SCoP member accountable

SCoP's Discipline Committee held its first hearing in March of 2010. Discipline Committee Chair Don Brickner said that the process worked well and will play an important role in ensuring the integrity of the paramedic profession.

"The hearing went pretty much as expected given the nature of it. It was a situation in which the individual in question agreed with the Professional Conduct Committee with regard to the charges that were brought forward. It was more or less a joint submission between the committee and the member," he said.

The hearing dealt with allegations that between January and July 2009, a SCoP member had stolen drugs from his employer to support his drug addiction. The member pled guilty to eight out of nine charges brought against him. The ninth charge was withdrawn by the Professional Conduct Committee.

Brickner said the list of corrective actions ordered, as a result of the hearing, were put forward, and generally agreed to by both the College and the member.

The corrective actions ordered included:

- ❑ suspending the individual from SCoP until satisfactory completion of an in-patient addictions treatment program;
- ❑ directing the individual to comply with a series of orders for two years after returning to work:
 - ◆ continue counselling and treatment for his addictions
 - ◆ provide written reports at prescribed intervals from his addictions counsellor concerning his compliance with his treatment plan
 - ◆ maintain an addictions counsellor approved by the SCoP
 - ◆ keep SCoP informed of any change in employment or any leave of absence greater than one month
 - ◆ take drug and alcohol screening tests by a SCoP approved company
- ❑ ordering that in the event of a test result indicating that the individual has used alcohol or

drugs, he will be immediately suspended from the College; and

- ❑ requiring the individual to pay \$1,000 toward the costs of the inquiry.

While the Discipline Committee plays a very important role in the operation of the College, Brickner encourages members to try to resolve issues before they reach the Discipline Committee level.

"It's to everyone's advantage that it doesn't get to the Discipline Committee level. One of the things that I don't think people really are aware of is the openness of the hearings. Once the issue appears before the Discipline Committee, it becomes public knowledge – prior to that it remains confidential within the College," he said.

There are currently two additional discipline hearings referred to be heard by SCoP's Discipline Committee. The first is scheduled to take place in the fall; the other is yet to be scheduled.

Member feedback

Andy Ortman is an EMT-A in Kindersley, who is speaking up on the impact he thinks SCoP is having on the profession.

Since SCoP took over I have never been more excited about my job, I have been working for about six to seven years now and I have never seen more progress in my career. For too long EMS has been looked at as the bottom dwellers and never been taken seriously or really thought about with any serious attitude, however I believe with the formation of SCoP (a professional body to represent all EMS), this attitude will and already has begun changing.

I think that a focus that we really have to look at is getting the title and scope of practices change to match with the level of education that is being constantly put out by SIAST. The new standards of paramedics is a fantastic and exciting level of training, capable of handling much more emergent and non-emergent situations and providing a higher level of care to our communities. In the cities this is not a major issue, as EMT-P's are in overabundance, however out here in the rural where a majority of your members sit, a major

percentage is EMT's or EMT-A's trained as ICP's or PCP's and our hands are tied.

Without a doubt it is SCoP's first priority to protect the public as with any professional organization such as the SRNA or College of Physicians and Surgeons, however to be able to ensure the highest level of care to our communities and at the very least to be able to allow those trained to work at the level they are trained at is an important step in changing public opinions about EMS personnel and member opinions about SCoP. It's a very clear representation to the members who think that it is SCoP vs. paramedics, that it is actually SCoP with paramedics.

Once again, I am very excited about SCoP, the changes I have seen in the last year, about paramedics having their own professional body and the concept of the possibility that we may have the ability to regulate our own scope of practice instead of the College of Physicians and Surgeons doing it for us. This is an exciting time to be a paramedic in Saskatchewan and I have never been prouder to be a paramedic, keep up the good work.

SCoP's new Council for 2010



Brent Stewart – President

Three-year term, elected in 2009

Brent has more than 19 years of experience in the EMS service. He is an Advanced Care Paramedic who began his career in 1991 and who has since worked in Saskatoon at MD Ambulance. He currently heads SIAST's Emergency Health Care Program in Saskatoon, and continues to work casual at MD Ambulance. He has been the president of the SCoP Council since its inception in 2009. Brent became involved with the SCoP Council because he felt it was important for paramedics to be self-regulating and instead of criticizing everyone else involved in the journey to self-regulation be a part of that journey.



Derek Dagenais – Vice President

Three-year term, elected in 2009

Derek became an EMT in 1992, and has been working with the Humboldt EMS ever since. He completed his EMT Advanced in 1998, and then completed the EMT Paramedic program in 2000. He has also been heavily involved in instructing programs such as PCP and ICP, ITLS and ACLS. He became involved with the College of Paramedics in 2006, and has been a member of the executive ever since. He continues to be involved with SCoP because he believes the College has made great progress and will ensure high quality EMS in Saskatchewan into the future.



Robert Fenner – Member at Large (Health)

Two-year term, elected in 2009

Bob is an Advanced Care Paramedic with more than 20 years experience in EMS. He currently teaches the PCP and ICP programs at SIAST. He also teaches in the Medical Professional Development program at the University of Saskatchewan. He has been involved with the College of Paramedics Council ever since 2006. He is also currently the Chair of SCoP's Education Committee. Bob continues to be involved with SCoP because he believes it will play a very important role in the future of EMS in Saskatchewan.



Len Protz – Member at Large (Fire)

Two-year term, elected in 2009

Len has more than 25 years experience in EMS, 19 of those years working in the fire sector. He began his career as an EMT in 1985, and then became an EMT-P in 1989. He began working for the Saskatoon Fire Department in 1991, where he continues to work today. He worked as a Fire EMS Educator between 2002 and 2008, and has acted as a facilitator for EMS. He has served as the Chair of SCoP's Registration Committee.



Cari Evenson – Member at Large (Health)

Three-year term, elected in 2010

Cari is an EMT with four years experience in the field. She is currently employed by Frontier EMS, and by the Cypress Health Region as a casual EMT. She serves mainly rural communities. She is the EMO coordinator for Frontier's EMO Committee, acts as a facilitator for Frontier and is a First Aid and CPR instructor. She ran for Council because she would like to see more representation from rural members, she'd like to expand her role within EMS and she thinks it would be a great experience.

SCoP's new Council for 2010 – continued



Jon Antal – Member at Large (Health)
Three-year term, elected in 2010

Jon has worked as an EMT-P/ACP EMS with the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region for the past 15 years. Mr. Antal has served as a member at large on the Council for the Saskatchewan College of Paramedics. He has also served on both the Council's Executive Committee and Registration Committee. He is a part-time instructor at SIAST, teaching the ACLS, PALS and PEPP programs. He feels it is important to continue the work he has been doing with the Council. He believes he provides a solid understanding of the structure of the College, and enthusiasm for the work done by the College.



Karen Todd – Public Representative
Three-year term, appointed in 2009

Karen Todd is a Registered Psychologist who currently is the President Elect for the Saskatchewan College of Psychologists (SCP), and who has recently been awarded her Ph.D. in Psychology. She has a long history of involvement with self-regulated and professional associations, including the SCP and Psychological Society of Saskatchewan. She was appointed to the SCoP Council by Saskatchewan's Minister of Health in August of 2009. She also serves on the Nominations Committee. She agreed to become a member of Council having witnessed the benefit of public representatives on such councils in the past. She hopes to contribute an objective community voice to an important self-regulated professional body.



Karen Wallace – Public Representative
Three-year term, appointed in 2009

Karen Wallace, of White City, is a Regional Branch Compliance Manager with Credential Asset Management Inc. She has extensive volunteer experience, including White City Town Councillor, Zoning and Appeals Board, EMS Co-ordinator and First Responder. She was appointed to the SCoP Council by Saskatchewan's Minister of Health in June of 2009, and serves on both the Audit and Education Committees. She agreed to become a member of Council because it is an area of interest that complements her involvement with the First Responders and EMS.



James Struthers, QC – Public Representative
Three-year term, appointed in 2009

Jamie Struthers is a lawyer and Legal Director with Legal Aid Saskatchewan. He has extensive volunteer experience, including serving on the boards of the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada, the Cornwall Alternative School, and other local co-operatives. He has also worked with Amnesty International. He was appointed to the SCoP Council by Saskatchewan's Minister of Health in May of 2009, and serves on the Discipline and Legislation and Bylaws Committees. He agreed to become a member of Council to continue the work in self-governing health care professions, which he started as a public representative on the Board of Directors of the Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses in 2003.

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Building the reputation of paramedics ...

CME audits and program approvals help to strengthen skill development



Courtesy Parkland Ambulance, PA

SCoP has a new program that will help agencies meet the continuing medical education (CME) needs of its members. The organization is currently piloting a process of CME audits and program approvals. The new process is expected to be in effect provincially by 2011.

Paramedics in Saskatchewan are required to take regular continuing medical education programs to ensure they are up to date on current practices and technologies. With the evolution into a self-regulating body, SCoP is now responsible for ensuring that this programming is taking place, and that it is meeting the needs of members. In 2009, the College initiated a process for approval of agency CME programs. Now the College is moving to audit those agency programs.

We need your photos!

Send us photos of paramedics at work, and we may use them in upcoming editions of the newsletter or on the website (be sure you check that all involved in the picture have agreed to it being published by the College).

“Our industry is constantly changing. Equipment is changing and practices are changing. Staying on top of those practice and delivery changes is really, really important. It’s important to the quality of care that we deliver, that practitioners are up to date, and are practicing skills that they may not use all that often,” said Kyle Sereda, Chair of the Education Committee CME Audit Subcommittee.

SCoP is introducing a three-phased audit implementation process. In the first phase, the CME Audit Subcommittee will review all programs to ensure that they were actually delivered.

In the second phase, the CME Audit Subcommittee will be reviewing the quality of the programs to ensure they are meeting the needs of all levels of members. In the third phase, the committee will work to identify whether practitioners are benefiting from the programs and taking responsibility to track their own CME activity.

While some suggest auditors will police the process, Bob Fenner, Chair of the Education Committee said the audit is intended to support continuous improvement.

“It’s to ensure that the education is

done properly, so we can protect the public. When a paramedic comes in the door we want patients to think, ‘I can trust this guy. He’s well trained. He is going to give me the best care possible.’ That’s what we are striving for,” said Fenner.

The committee is piloting the audit process in three locations: an urban EMS location, a rural EMS, and an urban fire department. All three pilots will occur this spring. Following the pilots, the plan is to conduct six audits before year-end.

“We’re looking to help agencies do their job better – we can help them improve their CME program through the audit process. It’s a tool for them to enhance their individual agency education, as well as a tool for the industry – to look at what we are doing and identify how we can do it better,” said Sereda.

The College has been recruiting for audit team members, who will do spot checks with agencies over the coming year.

“We’ve pulled together a diverse pool of people with varied backgrounds to help us do this job,” said Sereda.

Fenner and Sereda hope to have the first audit underway by September 2010.



Spiritwood – Big River EMS SCoP members stand by at a football game