

## DIVERSITY In Paramedicine The Patient. The Provider. The Profession.

Did You Know.

- There are over 30,000 licensed paramedics in Canada; 172,000 in the United States.
- Latest data suggests just over 40% of paramedics are female.
- The most comon ethinicity of paramedics is white (~70%).
- The paramedic profession has the highest proportion of LGQ registrants at 8% (as declared).

## **Diversity Qualities**

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion
- Political Beliefs
- Culture
- Language
- Socioeconomioc Background
- Education
- Physical Abilities/Disabilities



Equity is about recognizing and accommodating people's differences to ensure that every individual has what they need to thrive. In the background to its policy on equity and diversity in medicine, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) says equity is achieved when "every person has the opportunity, with their own identity, culture, and characteristics, to create and sustain a career as, or receive care from, a medical professional without discrimination or any other cultural or characteristic-related negative bias or barrier."

Consider the countless patients paramedics encounter when they call 911 looking for help. They will include people from every race, creed, gender, age, etc. Research has shown that if diverse patients see themselves within the healthcare workforce, they are more likely to trust their healthcare provider. They are also better able to communicate their condition, understand it and follow their prescribed treatment, and ultimately more satisfied with their overall healthcare experience.

Understanding patients and providers, and how they interact for all parties benefit cannot be successful in isolation, it must be done TOGETHER with goals of respect, dignity and care. Diversity in the paramedic provider is important, and growing increasingly more impactful to how care can be provided. It means more than may be realized if the patient is interacting with a paramedic that understands through their own lived experiences what is occurring; a much bigger trust relationship is created. And if individuals cannot directly relate due to differences, we can still offer emapthy and ask questions to better understand the needs of indiviauls.

Diversity in Paramedicine—The Provider

Diversity is not limited only to the qualities that may contribute to defining it, it's limitless potential to educate all providers in developing tolerance, acceptance, and genuine integrations into the practices of how care is delivered as well as where paramedics work.

## What Can WE (paramedic professionals) do...

- Start an introspective review of your place of employment, is there any diversity within the organization you are a part of?
- Challenge recruiters and recruitment strategies to target increasing diversity in the paramedic workforce.
- Engage with training institutions to understand the demographics of students enrolling and graduating.
- Seek or develop programs that support education in diversity for paramedics; we need to understand eachother.
- Start small; small steps matter.
- Ask the uncomfortable questions of leadership.
- Seek out leaderships that support and encourage diversity opportunities for paramedics and patients.

Paramedic Services Week May 21-27, 2023 – Diversity in Paramedicine