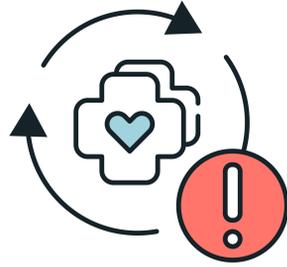


COMMUNITY PARAMEDICINE

WHAT IS IT?

WHY WOULD WE NEED COMMUNITY PARAMEDICINE?



Healthcare is ever changing and faces some serious challenges.

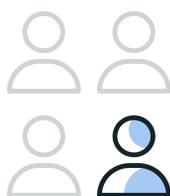
These challenges include



Rural areas
Structural workforce shortage, mostly doctors or GPs



Underserved populations
Access to good healthcare for vulnerable populations e.g. older people, Indigenous people, people with low SES



Use of resources
More health workers are not always possible or needed, so we need to look at how we can use current resources.



Community Paramedicine (CP)
This is an example of enhanced use of resources

WHAT IS CP?



CP is an evolving healthcare model. In CP, paramedics use their knowledge, skills, and often their well-kitted ambulance **beyond emergency health responses.**

Care focus



Prevention, rehabilitation, and hospital admission avoidance. The approach is less acute.

Goals



Improve access to care (e.g. rural, bushfires, palliative care, or indigenous communities)



Fill potential gaps in health care

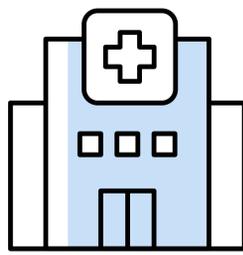
HOW DID IT START?

CP started across the world in areas with health workforce issues and underserved populations. There are some innovative examples in Canada:



Rural health workforce issue
A CP service started doing clinics and house visits in a remote location with no GP. At a later stage, a nurse practitioner joined the service. Together they have been providing good care for over 20 years.

Underserved population
In another large town, a substantial group of older people frequently ended up in Emergency Department (ED). And since the ED is not a good place for elderly, the idea was born to have regular CP visits to these frequent visitors in order to monitor their health and well-being and to prevent visits to ED.



WHAT DO THEY DO?



CPs generally make visits during the day to designated patients or hold regular clinics. This helps prevent build up of issues or sudden panic that may lead to an ED visit or hospitalisation. Their focus is to be a generalist rather than a specialist.

Key elements of their role



Assessment
Monitor patients' health, signaling issues, and treating at home where possible.



Referral
To other services in the community



Education
On patient's health and health management



Communication
Consult with a health care team and the patients physician.



The well equipped ambulance is an added bonus, and means they can deal with situations should they become more acute.

BENEFITS FOR PARAMEDICS



CP already operates and can be incorporated into Ambulance Services to offer an enhanced career pathway for paramedics and a wider scope of practice. It provides the opportunity to work with variety patients in the non-emergency environment.