NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health
BC Ambulance Service

PARAMEDIC RECRUITMENT DRIVE SUCCESSFUL

QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS – A targeted recruitment effort by the BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) attracted 10 additional paramedics to the Queen Charlotte Islands, Health Minister George Abbott announced today while visiting Queen Charlotte Islands General Hospital.

"The BC Ambulance Service has taken a strategic approach to hiring on the Queen Charlotte Islands and other northern communities this year, which has been very successful," said Abbott. "The new paramedics help ensure that local residents continue to receive timely, high quality emergency medical care."

Each targeted recruitment drive is tailored to the individual communities. Regional human resources staff work in partnership with the district superintendent and local paramedic unit chief to co-ordinate advertising, interviews and assist applicants with completing the necessary prerequisites.

Between Jan. 1 and June 25, 2007, the BCAS hired four paramedics in Masset, one in Queen Charlotte City, three in Sandspit and two in Port Clements for a total of 10 new paramedics on the Queen Charlotte Islands. By comparison, four new paramedics were hired in the Queen Charlotte Islands in all of 2005 and 2006.

"Recruiting health-care professionals in rural and remote communities is a challenge in British Columbia and across Canada," said Abbott. "This hiring approach has been well received and the BC Ambulance Service has plans to expand the campaign throughout the North."

In the coming months, recruitment drives are being scheduled for Dease Lake, Atlin, Chetwynd, Hudson's Hope, Tumbler Ridge, Burns Lake, Southside, Granisle, Wells, Bear Lake and Fraser Lake.

Paramedics who work in rural and remote communities are hired on a part-time basis and gain valuable knowledge and experience that benefits the community. Paramedic work is flexible, therefore individuals can work for another employer as well as BCAS.

For more information about becoming a paramedic, please visit the BCAS website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/bcas/careers/start/.

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