



NEWS RELEASE

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BC Ambulance Service

TRAINING NEW PARAMEDICS IN THE EAST KOOTENAYS

GOLDEN – A BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) sponsored Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) course will be completed on February 2, 2008. Twelve students have taken the course and will be writing their exams later in the month. Seven of the students are new applicants to the BCAS who currently live in either Golden or Field. Five of the students are current BCAS paramedics who have taken the course to update their training and bring a higher level of care to the area.

“This is a good example of the BC Ambulance Service working to support the needs of rural and remote communities,” said Bill Bennett MLA East Kootenay, “Recruiting health-care professionals in rural and remote communities is a challenge in British Columbia and across Canada, and so these community training opportunities play a vital role in engaging the community in the work of the ambulance service.”

The EMR training provides students with the basic knowledge and skills to be able to manage medical and trauma related emergencies, including how to administer life saving CPR.

The Golden ambulance station is a rural station where paramedics work on standby at the station, in Field which is a remote station paramedics respond by pager to calls in their community. Paramedics who work in rural and remote communities are hired on a part-time basis and because paramedic work is flexible, individuals can work for another employer as well as BC Ambulance Service. Paramedics on standby receive \$10 per hour and paramedics working in remote stations are paid \$2 per hour to carry a pager. When called out, they receive a minimum of four hours pay at their hourly paramedic rate.

“This community EMR course has had a direct benefit to BC Ambulance Service with seven new applications to work for BC Ambulance Service which will no doubt translate into an increase in the number of part-time paramedics working in these communities. The course has also benefited staff and the community by providing better trained paramedics,” said BCAS Superintendent Dave Brooks.

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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