

For Immediate Release
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BC Ambulance Service

BCAS ADDS SEVEN NEW PARAMEDICS IN ZEBALLOS

ZEBALLOS – The BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) has recruited seven new paramedics in the North Vancouver Island community of Zeballos.

Beginning in October 2007 the BCAS funded community members from Zeballos to take Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) training, the basic training necessary to consider working as a paramedic for the BCAS.

“Recruitment initiatives like the one in Zeballos adds skilled health care workers, engages the community in community health care, and brings awareness to the employment opportunities available with the ambulance service,” said Health Minister George Abbott. “Recruiting health-care professionals in rural and remote communities is a challenge in British Columbia and across Canada and the BC Ambulance Service should be proud of this achievement”.

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 program focuses on recruiting community members who want to learn more about emergency health care as well as give back to their community,” said Jason Twells Superintendent for North Vancouver Island.

In 2006/2007 the BC Ambulance Service trained over 120 community members in the Emergency Medical Responder training course and is continuing with this strategy as one way to improve service across all rural and remote communities in the province.

The Zeballos ambulance station is a remote station where paramedics respond by pager to calls in their community. 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. Responding by pager gives paramedics the flexibility to hold other jobs in communities where the call volume is low, while also providing valuable community service.

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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