

# APPROVED CIRCUMSTANCES FOR POINT-OF-CARE ULTRASOUND





## About Practice Directions

The College of Paramedics of Manitoba (CPMB) has the legislated authority through the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA) to establish Council-approved practice directions.

Practice directions set out requirements related to specific aspects of the RHPA, regulations and paramedic practice. Practice Directions also explain, add, or guide paramedics with respect to the subject matter described in the regulation or any other matter relevant to the practice of paramedicine. Compliance with approved practice directions is required as described under section 86 of the RHPA..

Questions related to the information in the College practice directions or the application of the information can be directed in [info@collegeparamb.ca](mailto:info@collegeparamb.ca).

This Practice Direction was approved by the Transitional Council of the College of Paramedics of Manitoba on September 23, 2020



## Introduction

Recently, technology has advanced the potential for increased use of point-of-care ultrasound in prehospital and emergency care. Although new to paramedic practice environments, point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS) will be a tool whose use will expand over the coming years.

As the role of this emerging diagnostic will change, and because it is expected that the indications for POCUS will expand, the “approved circumstances” can be altered by CPMB Council in the future, as needed.

Reserved act 10(a) as stated in the College of Paramedics General Regulation, describes two situations where point of care ultrasound may be used. The first indication is related to IV cannulation. The second situation is “with additional training applying point of care ultrasound in approved circumstances”.


## Approved Circumstances for Use of POCUS by Critical Care Paramedics

Critical Care paramedics may apply point of care ultrasound for the purpose of assisting with the diagnosis and emergency treatment of:

- Intra-abdominal free fluid or blood
- Pericardial fluid or blood
- Organized cardiac contractile activity
- Abdominal aneurysm
- Pneumothorax
- Pleural fluid or blood
- Facilitating IV Cannulation

The approved circumstances are based on current programming and services in place at STARS. The point of care ultrasound would primarily be performed when the STARS teams is called to support stabilization of the patient, in an emergency department setting, prior to transport. Performance of point of care ultrasound in the described approved circumstances assists with further triage of the case; improves detection of and interventions for complications which arise during transport; provides important diagnostic information to help determine effective treatment for shock.

The additional training should meet the requirements for additional training as stated in the College Practice Direction on Additional Training.



A quality assurance program must be in place by the employer to ensure that point of care ultrasounds skills are maintained.

### Approved Circumstances for Point of Care Ultrasound by Advanced Care Paramedics

Advanced Care Paramedics may perform point of care ultrasound for IV cannulation. There are no other circumstances approved for point of care ultrasound by ACP's, at this time.

Additional training must be provided before the ACP can practice IV cannulation using POCUS. The additional training should meet the requirements for additional training as stated in the College Practice Direction on Additional Training.

### Factors for Consideration when Performing this Reserved Act

Prior to utilizing POCUS for any of the approved reasons, the CCP or ACP should ask themselves:

- How does this skill apply to the practice of paramedicine?
- Does this skill require a standing order?
- Has the additional training been provided?
- Do employer policies support the performance of the skill at this time?

The paramedic should also understand how the College Code of Ethics and the College Standards of Practice for the Paramedic, apply to this skill.

### Employer Sanctioning of Use

As stated in the *Registrant and Employer Responsibilities Practice Direction* and in the *Scope of Practice for Paramedics Practice Direction* (along with supporting legislative references) the employer has the right to set the SCOPE OF WORK of their employees.

Therefore, it is imperative that the paramedic understand when the use of POCUS is restricted by the employer. Employer restrictions may include, but are not limited to:

- Not allowing the use of POCUS for any reason
- Allowing only select ACP and CCP paramedics to use POCUS
- Restricting the circumstances where POCUS may be used by excluding some of the approved circumstances

- As with all equipment, ensuring that the equipment is in proper working condition supported by compliance with regular maintenance policies.