



College of Paramedics of Manitoba		
Practice Direction Name: Attendant & Secondary Attendant Responsibilities	PD Number: PD-10	Total # of Pages: 4
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PURPOSE

This Practice Direction will broadly define the roles of paramedics as they migrate between various attendant roles as part of paramedic care. These roles may be more clearly defined by employer policies and directions.

It is an expectation of the College of Paramedics of Manitoba that all paramedics work as a cohesive/collaborative unit in the performance of their duties. Each paramedic has the responsibility to ensure the safety of all those on scene and to advocate for the best clinical care available.

The fluidity of care extends beyond the clinical aspect and includes emotional support and continuity of professional behaviours and responses. Each paramedic has an equal role and responsibility in supporting scene control, dealing with complexities, and assisting with patients and bystanders who are demonstrating an emotional response to the situation.

Specifically, this Practice Direction is to provide guidance related to Part 5 of the *College of Paramedics of Manitoba General Regulation* which includes s. 5.2 Patient-Centered Practice, and s. 5.3 Collaborative Care. Registrants are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with these sections, and all sections of the *General Regulations*.

Although this Practice Direction contains concepts that apply to all practice settings, it is most pertinent to those paramedics who are employed in the traditional role of paramedic practice in a land-based ambulance. All interactions between paramedics and patients should be considered in the context of a team environment where patient centered care is a common goal. Shared situational awareness and overall team dynamics play a significant role in patient outcomes and safety in the prehospital setting and beyond.

DEFINITIONS

ATTENDANT: The paramedic who takes the primary role in patient assessment, treatment and care, whether in an actual transporting ambulance, aircraft, responding on a fire apparatus, or any other practice environment.



SECONDARY ATTENDANT(S) (including the DRIVER): The paramedic(s) who is/are the vehicle operator during patient transport, and/or who provide a secondary role in patient assessment and care. This would be paramedic(s) other than the attendant on the call, including fire-fighter paramedics, aeromedical paramedics.

SCOPE OF PRACTICE: A paramedic's Scope of Practice is defined by the Reserved Acts of the Regulated Health Professions Act. Each sub-register (EMR, PCP, PCP with notation of PCP-IC, ACP, CCP) has designated Reserved Acts. ([See Delegation of Reserved Acts PD](#))

SCOPE OF WORK: Employers are responsible for identifying any specific skills within the Reserved Acts which may be performed by specific levels of paramedics in their employ and may limit specific skills performed by their paramedic employees. A Registrant may only apply the scope of work while providing care under an employment agreement (on duty).

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

While many paramedical partnerships have a pattern of rotation between the two attendant roles, it is imperative that appropriate patient-centered clinical care remains the priority. An agreed upon pattern of rotation between driving and attending should never supersede patient-centered care. There is no circumstance where the planned or agreed upon rotation between driving and attending would influence which paramedic attends to the patient during transport. The paramedic who is the most clinically qualified (within the scope of work) that can address the patient's needs at the time must be the paramedic who attends.

If the patient is stable or of a lower acuity, and the needs of the patient can be met by the least clinically qualified (within the scope of work), then that paramedic can most certainly serve as the main attendant. If at any time, the patient's condition changes, the most clinically qualified (within the scope of work) paramedic is required to provide patient care as the primary attendant. Therefore, attendant and secondary attendant roles must be interchangeable dependent on patient need.

ATTENDANT RESPONSIBILITIES

The attending paramedic is responsible for the overall care of the patient. However, the attending paramedic should be receptive to suggestions and or voiced observations made by the secondary paramedic(s) or other responders on scene. The attending paramedic may direct other on-duty CPMB registered paramedics to perform skills or functions within the secondary paramedic's scope of work. All information gathered by other paramedics on scene must be communicated to the attending paramedic.

It is the attending paramedic's responsibility to identify when it is necessary to call for assistance of paramedical care that exceeds their scope of work and is required to meet the needs of the patient. This can be in, but is not limited to, the form of:

- Requesting an ALS intercept



- Requesting a medical supervisor
- Calling for online medical support (OLMS or VECTORS)
- Recognizing when a delegation may be received from a qualifying individual. Please refer to Practice Direction: [Delegation of Reserved Acts](#)

Further, the attending paramedic must ensure communication with:

- On scene supports to assist where necessary
- The driver, regarding transport codes and destinations
- The driver, when it may be necessary to “pull over” to facilitate a specific treatment or circumstance or assume patient care.
- Any other communications that are relevant to the situation

The attending paramedic is primarily responsible to complete all documentation on the patient care report, however, the attendant may require information from the driver and/or others on scene. It is the responsibility of **both** paramedics to ensure documentation is complete and accurate. Refer to Practice Direction: [Registrant and Employer Responsibilities](#) and/or Practice Direction: [Documentation](#)

SECONDARY ATTENDANT RESPONSIBILITIES

Paramedics who are performing the function of driving the ambulance must always adhere to the Manitoba Highway Traffic Act, and any other pertinent legislation, the principles of safe driving, road conditions, and drive in a manner that takes patient, passenger(s) and attendant comfort and safety into account.

The secondary attendant who is driving, generally is the paramedic who communicates with dispatch, hospitals, and other paramedic units via established communication systems. This must be done with strict adherence to safety and employer policies.

While on scene, and whenever the attending paramedic requests the secondary attendant’s assistance with patient care, the secondary attendant will comply provided it is within their scope of work. In the course of administering patient care, there should be a collaborative approach with respect to delivering the highest level of appropriate patient centered care (within the scope of work) required in the current circumstance.

If the secondary attendant has the greatest scope of work, and the attendant requests that they switch roles, or the patient presentation changes such that a greater care level is required, the secondary attendant and attendant shall switch roles as soon as it is safely possible to do so.

If an additional secondary attendant is required during the transportation phase of the call, the additional secondary attendant shall assist and support the attendant in the activities of patient care in a collaborative and cooperative manner.



While the secondary attendant who is driving may or may not be aware of treatments and assessments completed during transport, the secondary attendant will have assisted on scene and will have knowledge that is pertinent to complete documentation. The secondary attendant will ensure that all such information has been communicated to the attendant, and it is required that the secondary attendant review the PCR (or equivalent documentation) prior to signing it. Refer to Practice Direction: [Registrant and Employer Responsibilities](#) and/or Practice Direction: [Documentation](#)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL PARAMEDICS ON SCENE

It is the responsibility of all paramedics to ensure that:

- Documentation is complete and accurate.
- They adhere to the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Paramedic Practice of the College of Paramedics of Manitoba and all other relevant CPMB practice directions and expectations.
- They adhere to organizational policies and procedures/care maps.
- Explain and communicate the paramedic plan of care to the patient and their support person. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Explaining the assessment and treatment processes
 - Provide paramedic advice regarding the need for transport based on patient assessment findings and clinical presentation.
 - When obtaining a patient refusal, clearly explain the actions to be taken should the patient feel the need to call for the ambulance again.
 - The plan of care during transport.
 - Transport destination, and the rationale for it if different than where the patient (or support person) wishes to go.