

Do future community paramedics need a professional education?

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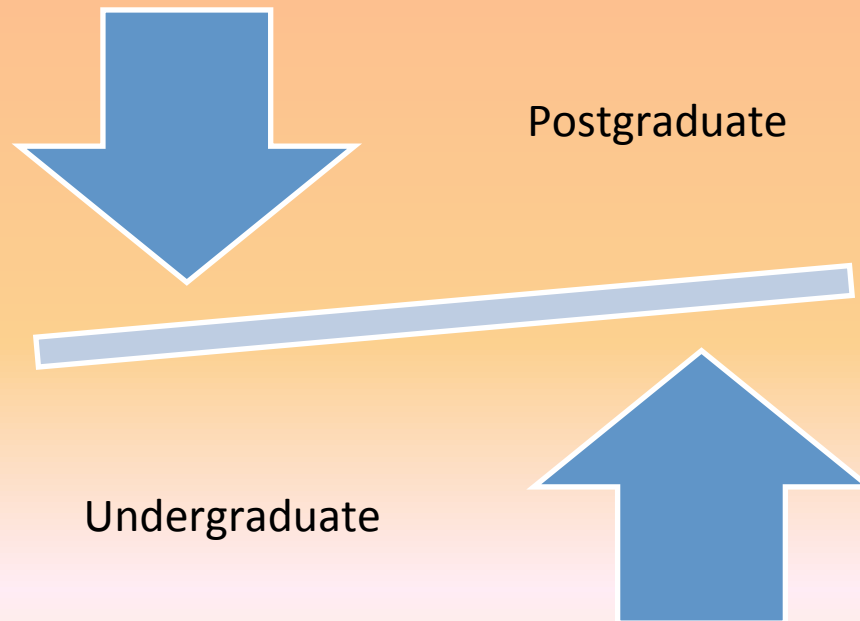
Background

The emergence of community paramedics throughout the world is a response to changes in the demographic and epidemiological profile of communities.



Question

What is the appropriate education for these rapidly evolving and sometimes very specific paramedic roles?



Findings from a study in Canada

- Traditional paramedic education programs are narrowly focused on emergency response
- The need for a broader education was identified, particularly in those areas related to health promotion and prevention.

Findings from a study in Canada

- Curricula of current paramedic programs are already at full capacity with acute care topics and skills.
- Difficulty convincing predominately young students that the role of future paramedics is more about community primary care practice than emergency calls.

Educational Options

1. Take vocationally trained paramedics and offer short courses to bridge the gap from their traditional training.
2. Professionally educate entry-level paramedics with other health professionals.

Research Process

- The North Central Emergency Medical Service Institute (NCEMSI) community paramedic curriculum was compared to a four year university paramedic program in Australia to determine the degree of commonality in content and learning outcomes.
- Consideration was given to the relative advantages and disadvantages of integrating the required knowledge, skills and attitudes for community paramedics in entry-level paramedic programs offered in universities compared to offering short courses to vocationally trained paramedics.

CP Comparative Curriculum

NCEMSI Modules

1. Role in the Health Care System
2. Social Determinants
3. Public Health & Primary Care

University Curriculum

- Year 1
 - Introduction to Interprofessional Practice
 - Social Determinants of Health & Well-being
- Year 2
 - Principles of Public Health Practice
 - Health Education & Development
 - Law & Management in Health

CP Comparative Curriculum

NCEMSI Modules

4. Developing Cultural Competence
5. Role within the Community
6. Personal Safety & Wellness

University Curriculum

- Year 1
 - Individual Determinants of Health & Well-being
- Year 2
 - Counselling & Communication Skills
- Year 3
 - Rural Health
 - Health Promotion Planning & Evaluation
- Year 4
 - Death, Dying & Grief
 - Field Experience (Community)

CP Comparative Curriculum

NCEMSI Modules

7. Clinical Experience

- Patient history
- Physical examination
- Age-related differences
- Specimens & samples
- Speciality equipment
- Home health equipment
- Ports, lines, catheters
- Psychological First Aid
- End-of-life Issues
- Public Health & Collaborations
- Chronic conditions

University Curriculum

- Year 3
 - Gerontology & Special Needs
 - Clinical Placements in aged care and rural health facilities
- Year 4
 - Advanced Mental Health Practice
 - Paediatrics & Obstetrics for Paramedics
 - Death, Dying & Grief
 - Complex Clinical Management
 - Clinical Placements in community mental health facilities and EDs

Conclusions

- With few exceptions, this university paramedic program covers all of the topics included in the NCEMSI curriculum, with most taught in classes shared with students from nursing, allied health and public health disciplines.
- Feedback from students undertaking the university course is that they initially found it difficult to see the relevance of population and public health subjects.
- In spite of the emerging changes in paramedic roles, student paramedics continue to see themselves predominately responding to emergencies after graduation.

Discussion Point 1

- A closer match between the paramedic curriculum and the emerging roles of paramedics, whether they are community paramedics, extended care paramedics, or as yet unformed roles is urgently needed if paramedic services are to become a valued part of a health system.

Discussion Point 2

- The mismatch between the myth and reality of paramedic practice needs to be addressed through both an appropriate curriculum and the management of expectations.

Questions

Thank you



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<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/health/about/schools/la-trobe-rural-health-school>

Bachelor of Paramedic Practice / Bachelor of Public Health Promotion

- Year 1

Sem	Unit Code	Unit Title
1	HBS1HBA	Introduction to Human Biosciences A
1	HLT1IPP	Introduction to Interprofessional Practice
1	PHE1IDH	Individual Determinants of Health and Well-being
1		Selective
2	HBS1HBB	Introduction to Human Biosciences B
2	HLT1RAE	Research and Evidence for Health Sciences
2	PHE1SDH	Social Determinants of Health and Well-being
2		Selective



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Bachelor of Paramedic Practice / Bachelor of Public Health Promotion

- Year 2

Sem	Unit Code	Unit Title
1	PAR3IPP	Introduction to Paramedic Practice
1	PHE3COS	Counselling and Communication Skills
1	HLT2IEP	Integrating Evidence in Practice
1	PHE2PHP	Principles of Public Health Practice
2	HBS3PCY	Foundations of Pharmacology
2	PHE2HED	Health Education and Development
2	PAR3PMT	Paramedic Management - Trauma
2	PHE3LMH	Law and Management in Health



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Bachelor of Paramedic Practice / Bachelor of Public Health Promotion

- Year 3

Sem	Unit Code	Unit Title
1	PAR3PMA	Paramedic Management – Medical A
1	PAR3ATM	Advanced Trauma Management
1	PAR3PMB	Paramedic Management – Medical B
1	PHE3HPE	Health Promotion Planning and Evaluation
2	PHE3BRH	Rural Health
2	PAR3GSN	Gerontology & Special Needs
2	PAR3CMA	Paramedic Clinical Placement A
2	PAR3CMB	Paramedic Clinical Placement B

Bachelor of Paramedic Practice / Bachelor of Public Health Promotion

- Year 4

Sem	Unit Code	Unit Title
1	MMH5AMH	Advanced Mental Health Practice 2
1	PAR3CCM	Complex Clinical Management
1	PAR3POP	Paediatrics & Obstetrics for Paramedics
1	PHE3DDB	Death, Dying and Grief
2	PHE3FEB	Field Experience
2	PAR3PCL	Paramedic Clinical Leadership
2	PAR3CMC	Paramedic Clinical Placement C
2	PAR3CMD	Paramedic Clinical Placement D