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Dear Members,

With BCEHS' 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary approaching on July 1<sup>st</sup>, the Ambulance Paramedics of BC (APBC) would like to thank each one of their members for providing compassionate, skilled, and unwavering care to the 5.3 million British Columbians spread over 1 million square kilometres of this province.

Minister of Health Adrian Dix released a joint statement last week (found [HERE](#)), that details the many changes and investments that we have seen at BCEHS, and things that are also in progress. APBC is committed to working collaboratively with government and BCEHS to put the needs of our members and the patients we serve first. Our work and advocacy have never yielded more results, and we are hopeful that we can continue to bring innovative solutions to BCEHS and be a part of improving all aspects of our workplace and profession.

It's also more important now than ever to recognize how far we have come, as detailed below:

1. We have seen significant investment into paramedic services in this province, and renewed efforts to recruit and train more paramedics, dispatchers and call takers. We have added almost 1,000 new employees since 2021, but still have many fulltime positions that remain open.
2. Last year we worked to improve how we deliver care in many rural and remote communities in BC, with almost all the SOC spots converted to full time positions, and only a few on call or "kilo" cars left in the province. This allows us to offer meaningful employment to new paramedics and provides paid training in many circumstances to EMRs as they come into our workplace. Most importantly, it puts 24/7 coverage in many areas, and attracts our people to move to those municipalities and become important members of those communities.
3. The CISM Program has underwent many upgrades, as BCEHS now has access to a network of approximately 340 clinical counsellors and 6 fulltime CISM Coordinators to help manage mental health and wellness supports that directly impacts our members.
4. The linked and referral units (LARU) helped more than 8,200 patients find more appropriate and alternative healthcare pathways, which directly reduces ER waiting room wait times, and frees up paramedics and ambulances to take other high priority calls for service. This has the potential to fundamentally change how we deliver care to low acuity calls and can be a game changer to our service if implemented properly throughout the province.
5. Recently BCEHS has also expanded the Connect and Recover (CAR) program into Victoria, Nanaimo, Kamloops, Kelowna, and Prince George. This means more of our members will have access to meaningful work when injured, which will keep them connected to our workplace where they can still be an important part of our service.

6. We are also committing to improving Indigenous communities that we serve, and working to improve the inequities that they face in the healthcare system. We have new sections of our collective agreement that will help improve hiring in these areas and hope to have this rolled out soon. This aligns with the BC government's work to address Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination.

While historic investments into improving paramedic services have certainly taken place, there is much work to be done. The APBC is committed to continuing its lobbying, advocacy and collaborative work now and in the future, with hopes of improving the working conditions and support systems for our members, but also making sure that patients are put first throughout the province, and improvements are made where they are needed.

On behalf of your Provincial Executive Committee and Board, I want to thank you all again for the work you do, day in and day out, and know that the work of your union is not complete. We will continue to work for better compensation, benefits, wellness supports, and making our workplace safer and healthier for all our members.

In Solidarity,



Jason Jackson  
President  
Ambulance Paramedics of BC  
CUPE Local 873

JJ/sd/MoveUp

