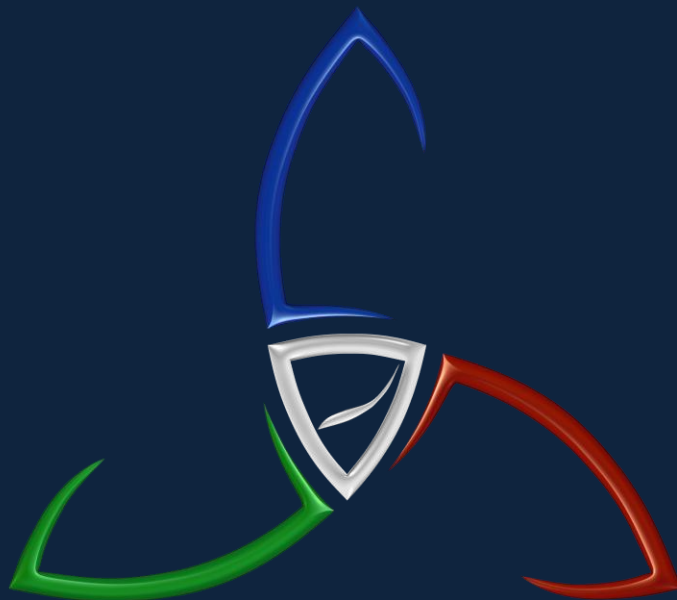


2011



INTERNATIONAL  
PARAMEDIC

*Cooperation. Coordination. Communication.*

*Collaboration*

Initiation Document

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## **FOREWARD**

July 27, 2011

As individuals with the awesome opportunity to participate in EMS policy in multiple countries we have seen some really good things happening to EMS globally in the last decade. While progress is consistent, it has been uncoordinated, duplication of effort outpaces replication of innovation, research is lacking and unfocused toward a specific end, and leadership of our profession is inadequately served by institutions with expertise.

We felt that it is time for leaders of paramedic services to start thinking bigger than their individual borders and to plot a specific course for the future. A course that respects history, rewards innovation, proves value and continually increases the quality of care paramedics provide to patients and the value they provide to communities. To that end, we convened a meeting in April 2011 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, of seventeen paramedics that we believe had the ability to create a common vision in a short amount of time. The 17 participants represented five nations. We fondly called the group the "Paramedic G5."

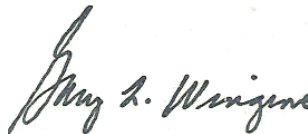
The following pages of this document represent the collective work of those 17 participants from an in person two-day meeting and countless subsequent hours of drafting and redrafting this document. Our collective vision is to create a virtual organization of paramedic leaders that will organize and analyze data, create a worldwide vision and strategic plan, work simultaneously to implement the vision around the globe, and to be a resource to nations and organizations of nations. We envision this organization changing shape and potentially course over the next several years as more paramedics join the virtual community. The vision that lies ahead in this document is merely a starting point from which to grow.

We hope we pique your interest in becoming part of a global paramedic leadership community. We look forward to exchanging messages electronically and periodically meeting you face to face. We look forward to you becoming a full participant in our work and assuming a leadership role when the fit is right. Thank you for the work you do every day for patients and thank you for taking the time to read this document.

Sincerely,



**Michael Nolan**  
Chief, Paramedic Service  
Director, Emergency Services, County of Renfrew  
Pembroke, Ontario, CAN



**Gary Wingrove**  
Director, Strategic Affairs  
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## Overview

Consider for a moment the current state of 'healthcare' in your country. Does it represent a system based in wellness, prevention, and primary care, or is it principally based upon acute care? Are there enough providers to ensure that the population has the necessary access to health care? Are all providers operating at their fullest capacity and extent of their capability? Is there a high level of coordination and communication between providers at all levels and access points to ensure that patients are provided the timeliest, most efficient and effective interventions based on their full medical presentation? Is the future of this system solely dependent upon resources within your country? Finally, how do paramedics and other emergency medical providers integrate into the healthcare system and contribute to the health of your nation and the global community?

Now consider the future of healthcare. What role should paramedics and emergency medical responders play? Should they be recognized as medical professionals? Is there a need and desire to create a global collaborative to ensure that our future meets the ever changing and growing needs of the public and of providers?

The provision of emergency medical care is going through continuous transformation in countries all around the world. Patient and healthcare system needs are becoming more and more complex and paramedics and other emergency medical responders are being called on to meet these needs and in innovative ways. There are exciting and highly effective models where paramedics are serving as liaisons to primary care and responding to medical needs before a crisis occurs. Universities are building advanced curricula for the future education of emergency medical providers, researchers are investigating these models, and patients are demanding the highest levels of quality service from their healthcare delivery system.

Faced with these demands and opportunities, an international group representing broadly diverse systems and with a global perspective on emergency medical response systems proposes a platform for discussing, developing, and promoting education and practice standards. The group worked to articulate a vision of achieving the advancement of emergency medical care, a goal that will benefit all participants. The group envisions achieving a valued presence within organizations such as the United Nations, the World Health Organization and other global organizations to collaborate on a wide range of issues. This is the concept behind International Paramedic, an organization designed to build synergies among current and future emergency medical responders and existing interest groups in order to become an effective and trusted global voice of the profession of paramedic practice, never forgetting the people we serve.

## Background

### *Paramedic G5 Meeting*

In April of 2011 a small but resolute group of visionary and passionate leaders from Australia, Canada, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates and the United States gathered in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada to openly discuss the potential future of paramedics and emergency medical responder personnel, systems and practice. The group consisted of managers, academics, and providers, and dubbed themselves the "Paramedic G5." By the end of the inaugural session everyone agreed that the design, delivery and application of systems that utilize paramedics and other emergency medical providers must become a shared global expedition in order to meet the current and future needs of the populations which they serve.

By identifying globally shared challenges the Paramedic G5 brought into focus a unique perspective that allowed all participants to get past some of the intrinsic and learned barriers to thinking well into the future. It was universally agreed that the profession was being harmed by internal divisions and a lack of clarity related to nomenclature; who was the professional and what is their profession called. Following the leadership of Canadian Paramedic Association, Paramedics Australasia, the International Roundtable on Community Paramedicine (IRCP) and others, it was determined that the group should advocate for the adoption and common use of following terms:

- The **Paramedic** is the professional practitioner
- A **Paramedic Service** is the provider of emergency medical services staffed by paramedics; and
- **Paramedicine** is the discipline and the area of medical study and knowledge.

In order to initiate the adoption of these terms it was agreed that the term "Paramedic" must come to include of all practitioners from basic to advanced life support responders as a starting point from which *all* providers can be educated to meet their expected role in the delivery of healthcare and to give the public one name associated with the profession. Similarly, Paramedic Services must be differentiated from the other components of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) systems which rightfully include public-safety communications practitioners to emergency room nurses and physicians. Finally, the study and understanding of Paramedicine must continue to be explored vigorously to understand the true impact, value and utility it has on the lives of the people we serve.

We anticipate that these terms will spur debate among the readers of the document. Readers must understand that it was no easy task to come to this decision. The ultimate goal of professional identity and growth outweighed the arguments for the retention of

historically-based, sometime conflicting, and potentially divisive labeling of various practitioners. In order for emergency medical providers, regardless of name, to ever establish a profession capable of meeting the ever changing needs of the global community, one easily identified and understood name, like “Doctor” or “Nurse” is essential. To that end, the Paramedic G5 also adopted the naming convention espoused by the International Roundtable of Community Paramedicine<sup>1</sup> that includes definitions for: primary care paramedic (Basic Life Support or BLS level), intermediate care paramedic (Advanced Life Support or ALS level), advanced care paramedic (ALS level), critical care paramedic, community paramedic (BLS or ALS level integrated with community health) and paramedic service.

The Paramedic G5 identified a wide variety of issues and opportunities to improve and evolve the provision of paramedic services, to advance the field of paramedicine, and support the paramedic profession. The need for a collaborative community of sharing, partnership and learning on the global stage is clear. The concept of initiating International Paramedic was sketched out and presented as a possible course of action following the Paramedic G5 meeting.

## **Purpose of this Document**

The purpose of this document is to encourage formal discussion of the format and function of a worldwide discussion of our future. International Paramedic seeks to advocate for the profession convening global leaders and paramedic and medical responder organizations and associations. The intention of the authors of this document is not to prescribe or mandate a structure, but rather to provide a broad vision and general guidelines to initiate meaningful discussions as to how we can build International Paramedic for the utilization of as many interested and willing participants as possible.

Specifically the goals of this document are:

- To initiate discussion amongst international communities, teaching institutions and associations for emergency medical services, paramedic and paramedic services, of the potential for international collaboration;
- To garner the collective voice, enthusiasm and commitment from individual paramedics and medical responders, professional associations,

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<sup>1</sup> [www.ircp.info](http://www.ircp.info)

- leadership/management associations, research organizations, teaching institutions and the like, in order to construct an international community of paramedic professionals;
- To create an international communications network for this international community of paramedic and medical responder professionals from around the world to collaborate, learn and share best-practices;
  - To provide a forum where best practices and standards can be accessed and shared in the hopes of moving toward mutual, evidenced-based design, deployment and care of paramedic services around the world;
  - To provide a unifying platform that an international community of practitioners could use to promote and develop the profession; and,
  - To promote the vision of an international resource for the United Nations (UN) and its membership, including the World Health Organization (WHO), governments, relief organizations and others to rely on for paramedic service planning, development, enhancement or medical response information or support when in need, similar to International Search and Rescue Advisory Group<sup>2</sup> or the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials – International.<sup>3</sup>

International Paramedic would bring nations together to take full opportunity of the collective experience, knowledge and vision in order to guide the provision of paramedic and other emergency medical responders into the future. The vision of International Paramedic is founded in-part on one of the core principles of the United Nations, *“To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.”*<sup>4</sup> The strength of International Paramedic will be this international co-operation between a diverse group of individual providers, administrators, researchers and educators. Every nation no matter how large or small is valued as a potential participant so long as they maintain a desire to improve how emergency care is designed and delivered in the respective countries.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/coordination-tools/insarag/overview>. Accessed July 27, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.apco911.org/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/preamble.shtml>. Accessed July 27, 2011

## **Proposed Initial Structure of International Paramedic**

### ***Overview***

International Paramedic will be a worldwide network with open opportunity for global participation. International Paramedic will not be an association or organization but an entity defined by its participants on an ongoing basis. The primary goal is to collectively work toward improving the profession and care provided through the connection of thought-leaders, spurring of insightful discussions, the documentation of ideas and concepts and the evolution of revolutionary ways to educate and deploy paramedics worldwide.

Meetings will be open to any member of the paramedic community, including but not limited to; individual paramedics and all other emergency medical responders, their professional and management associations, research organizations and teaching institutions from around the world. International Paramedic shall accomplish this goal through cooperative consensus-building amongst the participants who care to share their voice, time and energies to work toward these efforts in an ongoing, collaborative and constructive way.

### ***Organizational Details***

International Paramedic will not have a physical address or headquarters. It will exist solely as a virtual entity through conference calls, webinars and other methods of communication and through its website, [www.internationalparamedic.org](http://www.internationalparamedic.org). Any financial support necessary to maintain these functions will be donated by participants or by organizations that choose to support directly to a purchase or in-kind donations of services (web-hosting, conference call infrastructure, etc.).

There will be no formal organizational structure, staff, and hierarchy of participants or voting protocol. All discussions are open to those who chose to participate and follow the Roberts Rules of Order.<sup>5</sup> The time and date of all meetings will be posted on the website and an agenda will be generated by the Chair of that discussion, identified only by their interest and dedication to commit the time and energy to hosting and guiding the discussion.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.robertsrules.org/>

If there comes a time when the ability of International Paramedic to be effective convener and advocate of the collective voice requires a more formal management and/or membership structure, the participants will collectively agree upon all necessary matters.

### **Vision Statement:**

International Paramedic is recognized as the international point of contact for paramedic practitioners, leaders, educators and global partners that strive to advance paramedic care throughout the world by improving health and safety within the global community.

### **Mission Statement:**

The mission of International Paramedic is to serve the international community by providing:

- Unbiased information, direction and support to facilitate the best decisions regarding the provision of paramedic services and emergency medical responders;
- A singular voice promoting the paramedic and emergency medical responder capabilities and practice, education and research;
- Knowledge distribution in paramedic and emergency medical services, with a focus on promoting educational activities, scientific conferences and establishing and disseminating new medical knowledge through scientific publishing and peer collaboration.

### **Objectives of International Paramedic:**

- Act as a global convener of paramedics
- Serve as a singular voice for paramedic and medical responder practice to international governing bodies, health and relief organizations in order to positively influence global and domestic health policy and practice
- To provide a location where standards can be accessed and shared from services and nations around the world in the hopes of moving toward mutual, evidenced-based design, deployment and care of paramedic services around the world
- Contribute to advancement in paramedic and medical responder research throughout the world, including both fundamental professional research aimed at enhancing paramedic services and clinical care to improve clinical outcomes of mankind.

- Promote international cooperation to develop the profession as an accepted health and public safety profession by:
- Establish intra-professional committees to establish education, safety, professional and equipment standards that will benefit the international community.

### **Keys to Success**

- Acknowledgement and participation from individual paramedics and emergency medical responders, national paramedic, emergency medical service and paramedic service associations, management and leadership groups, academic organizations and groups of all kinds with the common goal of improving health care provided by paramedics and other emergency responders
- Development and maintenance of a robust internet-based communications platform
- Development of a communication strategy that connects with all related organizations as well as the individual paramedic and medical responder around the world to help them understand the significance and importance of the mission, vision, values and goals of International Paramedic
- Gather information that could be beneficial to global partners in making policy, practice and utilization decisions
- Communication with the United Nations and its councils including but not limited to, the World Health Organization and the International Search and Rescue Advisory Committee, to understand how International Paramedic can best serve this community

### **Next Steps**

You are invited to participate, to engage in the conversation, to assist in the building of the relationships and the development of the vast virtual resources necessary to achieve the vision. Individuals are encouraged to become engaged and through their participation will be considered advocates of the efforts described within this document. Organizations, associations, academic Institutions, research groups and any other body that see International Paramedic as an effort that could be beneficial are asked to become organizational advocates. There will be no obligation associated with this label and it can be withdrawn at any time. We ask only for advocacy within your organization and among your constituents and to permit listing the organizational advocates and their logos on the website to bring strength to the effort.