



- How does your party intend to ensure sufficient paramedic staffing across the entire province?

First, we need to recognize the disastrous state of affairs left by successive PC and NDP governments that have led us to where we are today. In 2017, the PC government announced the closure of 18 ambulance stations across rural Manitoba, based off of a 2013 NDP plan. Allied Health Professionals went without a new contract for five years and this is simply unacceptable.

We have been getting warnings about issues with rural paramedics for years. The situation is especially dire because paramedics represent the first line of medical contact that many folks encounter.

Manitoba Liberals will always treat paramedics and first responders with respect – and this begins with showing that they are valued by paying them fairly and ensuring good benefits exist so we can retain their valuable services across the province.

As we rebuild our healthcare system, we will prioritize the respect of frontline workers by investing in their dignity and re-earning their trust. We will additionally provide thank-you bonuses to Healthcare Workers and Team Members and a separate bonus to health professionals who return to the public system. The bonuses will be pro-rated so that those who work casual or part-time are included.

Manitoba Liberals recognize that the system cannot function without a professional workforce of paramedics who are committed to providing excellent care and compassionate service. We are committed to honouring you by treating you as partners in the system.

- In what ways will your party contribute to enhancing and promoting paramedic education and training?

Successive PC and NDP governments ignored warning signs that Manitoba wasn't training enough healthcare workers, including paramedics to keep up with the demand in services.

Our post-secondary institutions are 'factories' of learning that will provide our industries with the workers of tomorrow. These 'factories' need investment to expand their capacity. We have announced targetted investments in facilities that have pressing labour shortages, including healthcare to increase seats and educators to provide for a seamless transition from school to the workplace.

- What strategies will your party implement to decrease instances of violence against first responders?

We heard from paramedics who were in life-threatening situations where they could get no back up or were severely assaulted, all the while dealing with traumatic and sometimes tragic situations.

Especially when dealing with mental health crises, we will establish non-police mental health and addictions crisis teams to work in tandem with law enforcement agencies across the province, with a focus on de-escalation and treatment. We will strengthen the capacity of police agencies and ensure these crisis teams are well-funded.

- How does your party plan to provide comprehensive support for the mental health of paramedics?

Manitoba Liberals have heard first-hand from paramedics in Winnipeg and across the province who've been facing their own stresses because workplace shortages are so bad.

Manitoba Liberals will always support and protect our first responders because they are always here to protect us. We know that not every insurance plan will adequately cover psychological services that some professions, like paramedics and first responders, may require more disproportionately than others. That's why under a Manitoba Liberal government we will make mental health care free under medicare so that you won't have to pay to access psychotherapy services. We will strengthen the current capacity of psychologists and ensure we are significantly training more psychologists and other therapists to ensure this promise happens. Additionally, we will review the Workers' Compensation Act to expand coverage for burnout benefits for all workers, and mental injuries.

Your commitment to improving the lives of paramedics is a commitment to the well-being of all Manitobans. We look forward to hearing your detailed proposals on how your party intends to secure a safer, healthier future for our province through better paramedic services.

Best regards,

Rebecca Clifton

Paramedic Association of Manitoba

Administrative Director

1 (204) 799-8835

rclifton@paramedicsofmanitoba.ca