

Procedure:	Academic Certification: Quality Assurance and Investigation Process	
Owner of Policy:	Manager, Quality and Business Systems	
Department/Program:	Southwest Centre for Prehospital Medicine	
Endorsed By:	Director, Southwest Centre for Prehospital Medicine	Endorsement Date: May 2025
Original Effective Date:	January 2016	Date Reviewed: May 2026

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the objective quality assurance (QA) and investigation processes applied to paramedic students who are academically certified by the Southwest Centre for Prehospital Medicine (SWCPM) to perform controlled acts and advanced medical procedures. The policy supports patient safety through system modification, promotes paramedic student accountability within a supervised educational environment, and ensures compliance with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) Professional Obligations: Delegation of Controlled Acts, recognizing the Medical Director's ongoing accountability for care provided through delegation.

POLICY

Paramedic students enrolled in a Paramedic Program delivered at a College in Ontario may be academically certified by the Medical Director to perform controlled acts and advanced medical procedures for the purpose of supervised clinical learning and preparation for clinical placement. All delegated controlled acts and advanced medical procedures performed by paramedic students are subject to ongoing quality assurance. Where a variance from the [Advanced Life Support Patient Care Standards \(ALS PCS\)](#) is identified, the case will enter the QA Ambulance Call Review Process to determine contributing factors, inform remediation, support system improvement, and assess the ongoing appropriateness of delegation.

PROCEDURE

1. QUALITY ASSURANCE AMBULANCE CALL REVIEW PROCEDURE

- 1.1. The College and/or Employer will ensure that each paramedic student performing controlled acts is identified on the Ambulance Call Report (ACR). In cases where the ACR is electronic, the Employer will be required to use a unique identifier for the paramedic student in its software program. Unique identifiers for each paramedic student will be documented on the ACR and communicated to the SWCPM so that the paramedic student can be easily identified.
- 1.2. The College will ensure that each paramedic student has a valid email address.
- 1.3. The College will provide the e-mail address(es) of College contacts/Supervisors whom they designate to be copied on all communication from the SWCPM to the paramedic student.
- 1.4. The designated College contact will be notified anytime the RBHP or SWCPM communicates with their paramedic student related to the inquiry process.

Each controlled act and advanced medical procedure is subjected to audit using a computer algorithm and/or human review. In cases where the paramedic student was present, it will be determined through the preceptor and/or partner whether the paramedic student was involved in the care that may have contributed to a variation from the [ALS PCS](#).

- 1.5. An ambulance call review can occur as a result of:
 - 1.5.1. A possible omission or commission as identified through the electronic auditing process.
 - 1.5.2. Receipt of an inquiry to the SWORBHP Communication Hotline, Cares app, or the Online SWORBHP Communication Form appropriate for their Paramedic Service. Inquiries may include a self-report of an actual or potential variance, a Paramedic Service or patient inquiry or complaint, a patch failure, or the identification of excellent performance (i.e., "good job").

- 1.5.3. An RBHP or SWCPM staff member being made aware of a case or observation during a field audit or ride-out.
- 1.5.4. Any other means by which the RBHP or SWCPM is made aware of the need to conduct a QA Ambulance Call Review.
- 1.6. When a possible variance has been identified, an inquiry will be sent to the paramedic student and the designated College contact. Instructions on responding to the feedback request will be outlined within the email. The paramedic student will only be contacted if it is determined through the ambulance call review that the paramedic student's actions may have contributed to the variance from the [ALS PCS](#). If this is the case, the paramedic student will be entered into the ambulance call review process.
- 1.7. If, after one week, the paramedic student has not yet provided a written or verbal response to a request by the RBHP/SWCPM for more information, the paramedic student's academic certification to perform controlled acts may be deactivated pending completion of the ambulance call review.
- 1.8. After the response to the inquiry is received, the Prehospital Care Specialist (PHCS) and Medical Director will meet to determine next steps. If no further follow-up is required, a final level of variance will be assigned accordingly.
- 1.9. Upon completion of the QA Ambulance Call Review Process, the PHCS, in collaboration with the Medical Director, will issue a closure response for all major or critical variances with a summary of the findings to the Paramedic and Employer, and when relevant to the paramedic student and College.

2. INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

- 2.1. Where it is identified that there is a clinically significant variance from the [ALS PCS](#), the ambulance call will enter the investigation process, which will include a review by the PHCS and Medical Director. The paramedic student will be asked to provide further information. The College will be involved in correspondence between the RBHP/SWCPM and the paramedic student.
- 2.2. Where possible, a collaborative approach between the RBHP/SWCPM, the paramedic student, and the College will occur.
- 2.3. Further information may be required, which could include, but is not limited to, the online medical control log, patch tape, or a statement from the preceptor and partner and/or other care providers.
- 2.4. Upon completion of the investigation, the PHCS, in collaboration with the Medical Director, will issue a closure response for all major or critical variances with a summary of the findings to the paramedic and Employer, and when relevant to the paramedic student and College.
- 2.5. The College will facilitate access to the paramedic student for the purpose of the investigation (to obtain verbal or written statements or other evidence as required).
- 2.6. In cases where there are educational needs arising from the investigation, the College will be notified and will provide the SWCPM with the follow-up educational plan for approval. The College will deliver the approved education plan.
- 2.7. Upon completion of the investigation, the Medical Director will issue an investigation report to the paramedic student and the College where the paramedic student's care is central to the investigation, but not in cases where the paramedic student is a witness to the event. As College documents are accessible to the public through the senate appeals process, specific patient information or identifiers and any patient chart information will not be included; rather, a summary of findings will be shared to enable proper QA, remediation, education, College action, and paramedic students' College appeals. The Medical Director will send a closure letter to the College contact for dissemination to the paramedic student.
- 2.8. **Deactivation:**
 - 2.8.1. May result when the Medical Director believes a temporary interruption in the paramedic student's certification to perform controlled acts and advanced medical procedures is warranted (e.g., patient care concerns, to allow for further investigation, repeated minor variances from the [ALS PCS](#), failure to respond to an inquiry, etc.).

- 2.8.2. In the event of a temporary interruption in the paramedic student's certification to perform controlled acts and advanced medical procedures (deactivation), the paramedic student and the College will be notified in writing of the deactivation and reactivation.
- 2.8.3. The paramedic student's academic certification to perform controlled acts and advanced medical procedures will be revoked immediately after the RBHP has been notified by the College that there is a change in the paramedic student's academic enrollment.
- 2.8.4. When the Medical Director believes permanent removal of the paramedic student's academic certification to perform controlled acts and advanced medical procedure is warranted (i.e., serious breach of the [ALS PCS](#), repeated breaches of [ALS PCS](#), or loss of the Medical Director's confidence/trust in the paramedic student's capacity for delegation, etc.), the paramedic student's academic certification will be revoked.

REFERENCES

[Advance Life Support Patient Care Standards Version 5.4](#)

Emergency Health Services Branch, Ministry of Health

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) Professional Obligations: Delegation of Controlled Acts

SWORBHP Quality Assurance and Investigation Policy