

NATIONAL BRIGADE PATIENT CARE COMPETITIONS

GENERAL

1. First aid competitions were first introduced in England in 1880, and have been a St. John Ambulance tradition ever since. St. John Ambulance in Canada has been holding national competitions on a triennial basis since 1983.
2. Competitors experience patient care challenges in natural environmental settings. They are under time limitations to help determine their ability to provide competent and effective treatment in order to save a life. All scenarios reflect an integration of the knowledge and skills of first aid and health care, which are part of the Brigade Training System.

OBJECTIVES

3. Medals and trophies are of secondary importance to the real objectives of the competitions, which are:
 - a. to improve the efficiency of Brigade members;
 - b. to promote the confidence of Brigade members by presenting a variety of surroundings in which to work, and an opportunity to work in full view of an audience;
 - c. to maintain and increase interest in total patient care;
 - d. to stimulate excellence in patient care performed at the scene of an incident;
 - e. to present an opportunity for Brigade members to develop camaraderie with their counterparts across the country, and to feel proud to be part of the larger St. John team; and
 - f. to create interest among the general public.

COMPETITION RULES

4. Teams competing at the national level have normally placed first in their category at the provincial/territorial level. The selection of team members is at the discretion of each Provincial/Territorial Commissioner. A maximum of one team may be entered by each province or territory in each of the three categories.
5. There are no restrictions on gender or on the number of Instructors or Brigade officers in any category. The three competition categories are:
 - a. Junior – for members less than 16 years of age and qualified to a minimum level of Emergency First Aid. Junior competition challenges reflect the full

- scope of the Cadet program, with a balance of patient care, team work, problem solving, leadership skills and personal initiative.
- b. Senior – for members qualified to BTS Level 1, but not professional health care workers. Senior competition challenges reflect the training components of BTS Level 1.
 - c. Open – for members qualified to BTS Level 1 or higher, but without restriction on their professional level. Open competition challenges reflect the knowledge and skill level of BTS Level 3.
6. If the status of an individual is in doubt, the National Competitions Chairperson must be asked for a ruling, in advance of registration, in order to avoid disappointment or disqualification.
 7. Teams will consist of four members and a coach/chaperon. Teams are encouraged to have an optional spare, designated by the team in advance, as a safeguard against a last-minute withdrawal of a team member due to injury or illness. Spares do not participate in the regular competition unless required. There is a separate set of limited challenges developed specifically for spares to compete for a separate prize.
 8. Within the regular competition, participants will be selected randomly from the four team members to compete in challenges involving individuals, pairs or full teams.

HOSTING THE COMPETITIONS

9. Councils are encouraged to indicate their intent to host the national competitions up to three years before the event. Submissions should be in writing to the National Commissioner. The following criteria should form the framework for submissions from interested councils:
 - a. *location*
 - access to air and land transportation systems and community resources (eg. military, police, fire, business, government)
 - b. *facilities*
 - accommodation for up to 350 people, and food services for up to 500 people
 - functional rooms (large holding room, control room with outside access, simulation area, reception room, briefing room, registration area, etc.)
 - a variety of potential challenge sites where scenarios can be created in natural settings in reasonably close proximity to each other and to the central facility

- c. *personnel*
 - designation of one or two personnel to act in a leadership and coordinating role with the national competition committee
 - increasing requirements as the time of the competition draws closer – a total of more than 100 people.
 - some bilingual capability of judges and casualties
 - ability to sustain the planning, preparation and execution process without undue strain on normal local operations

(Note: any personnel requirements may be supplemented by out-of-province resources)
 - d. *logistics*
 - provision of off-site and on-site transportation
 - radio and cell phone communications
 - props, materials and equipment for several sites simultaneously
 - e. *finances*
 - basic funding for the competitions is the responsibility of National Headquarters
 - potential expenses to the host council include staff time and general participation costs for teams (see paragraph 19).
 - f. *expertise*
 - some experience in conducting large-scale competitions or other similar events is an asset but not a necessity if all other aspects are in place.
 - g. *attitude*
 - a belief in the value of national competitions and their general objectives and a willingness to work cooperatively with the national competitions committee.
10. National Headquarters is responsible for the actual competitions, including the challenges, the scenarios, registration, awards and the budget. National Brigade Officers are responsible for the following tasks, but are not precluded from taking on other roles within the Competitions if they show expertise in a specific area:

National Commissioner	External Relations, Public Relations
Deputy National Commissioner	Monitoring and Evaluations
National Training Officer	Chief Judge
National Nursing Officer	Professional Advisor
National Medical Officer	Professional Advisor
National Cadet Officer	Youth Activities
National Staff Officer (appointed)	Competitions Chairperson

11. Other national positions, to be filled according to expertise and at the invitation of the Competitions Chairperson, include:
 - Scenario Writer and Adjudicator
 - Control Room Coordinator
 - Holding Room Supervisor
 - Tabulators
12. The host council is responsible for effective logistical coordinations for the competitions and for hospitality. In some cases, such as the awards banquet, there may be overlapping responsibility.
13. It is imperative that the specific division of labour between National Headquarters and the host council be reviewed and agreed upon at the first planning meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

14. All correspondence and rules relating to the national competitions will emanate from National Headquarters. Each participating Council will be requested to provide the name of their Competitions Officer, who will be responsible for accurate distribution of all competitions correspondence within their Council. The Competitions Officer may be a staff member, a Provincial / Territorial Officer or another volunteer.
15. Once teams have registered for the national competitions, National Headquarters will communicate directly with the team's contact person, as well as the Council Competitions Officer.
16. In the event of conflicting information or rules, the Joining Instructions issued for each national competition will constitute the final ruling.

FUNDING

17. A National Headquarters budget is developed and approved by Priory Council to pay for most expenses related to the national competitions, including
 - a. all on-site accommodation, meals and banquet for teams, volunteers and the organizing committee
 - b. transportation for the organizing committee
 - c. expenses for planning meetings
 - d. awards
 - e. equipment and supplies
 - f. printing
 - g. miscellaneous (e.g. entertainment, signage, photography, shipping)

18. The host council is responsible for all aspects of the pre-Competitions social activity for all participants, including planning, implementation and funding. The host council is also responsible for seeking sponsorship to help reduce overall expenses or to augment the national budget.
19. Teams, or their councils are responsible for arranging and paying for their own travel to and from the national competitions, based on an equalization of travel expenses for all competing teams. The specific rules for equalization of travel are outlined in the Joining Instructions. Teams, or their councils are also responsible for ensuring all team members have appropriate competition clothing (ie. suitable for all weather conditions, easily identified as members of the same team).
20. Individuals are responsible for any other expenses of a personal nature.
21. Spectators are responsible for all their own expenses.