



**DID YOU KNOW** that we have a new Vice-Chancellor, Community Services?

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AN INFORMATION SHEET FOR ST. JOHN AMBULANCE MEMBERS

Recent changes to the structure of Priory Council will have an impact on Community Services. The newly created position of Vice Chancellor, Community Services will help ensure that the programs and products that St. John provides to the people we serve are of the highest quality and are in line with our mission statement.

As the person appointed to this position, I would like to bring you up to date with some of the initiatives that are currently underway and others that will be starting up in the near future.

### 1. **Rewrite of St. John Canada Instructions (StJCI) - Part 2 - Volunteers.**

This document has functioned as our main policy document related to volunteer community service delivery for a number of years. It is however, a cumbersome mixture of policies, procedures, history, volunteer information, etc. In order to make the document more user-friendly, a team is in the midst of updating and restructuring the material by associating it directly into the various programs to which the instructions apply. In essence, there will be a series of operational manuals containing the existing policies and procedures that apply specifically to the types of community services that we offer. Two of these manuals currently exist (the Youth Leader manual and guide as well as the Therapy Dog manual and guide). A new Adult Patient Care manual and a new Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Management manual will be created. Much of the information contained in the current StJCI relates to human resources issues such as screening, grievance and dismissal, annual performance evaluation, etc. This material will be incorporated into a Volunteer Human Resource policy document.

There appears to be much speculation surrounding the rewrite of St. John Canada Instructions. I wish to allay any fears out in the field that we are completely changing the organizational structure in which the volunteers function. It is not our intent to dictate to Councils how to structure their Community Services operations.. In fact, many have already made major revisions such as changing the title and role of the Provincial Commissioner on their own. With this in mind, we will be including an alternate structure for Councils to consider should they wish to look at modernization and reorganization. Again, however, I would like to stress that it will be **the responsibility of the Councils** to decide how they should best structure themselves in order to focus solely on provision of optimum, efficient and effective community service. Function is much more important than form.

With regard to the patient care uniform(s) - no changes are being considered at this time.



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One thing that will be readily apparent in the rewrite is a move away from the term “Brigade members” when referring to volunteers providing first aid coverage. The trend across the country is to focus on the term “patient care providers” which will no doubt help in recruiting efforts and general media coverage. You will also note the overall use of the term “Community Services” which is much more reflective of the health-related activities in which our volunteers are involved. The Youth Program will continue to be referred to as such and is also a part of Community Services along with other examples such as Therapy Dog Program volunteers, etc.

2. **Brigade Training System (BTS) and Brigade Assessment Process (BAP).**  
This system of patient care training and assessment has been in place since 1992 and is currently under review in order to maintain established standards of care. Most Councils have expressed interest in using the new St. John Ambulance Medical First Responder program as the basis to train/assess adult patient care volunteers. A discussion paper is being drafted that will be widely circulated for comment and review prior to making any changes to the BTS nationally.
3. **Professional Standards and Accreditation Committee.**  
This will be a newly-developed standing committee of Priory Council, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, Community Services. The members will consist of individuals with particular skills and subject matter expertise applicable to our organization and the work that we do. Members will include emergency medicine specialists (pre-hospital and in-hospital), disaster and emergency response experts, policy analysts and auditing specialists and a veterinarian, to name just a few. This committee will serve to make sure that our programs remain up to date and achieve the highest quality possible. There will also be an audit component to ensure that standards, policies and procedures are being adhered to across the country (a vital component of risk management). Finally, it will also be instrumental in putting in place a formal accreditation program which will allow our clients easily recognize our services as value-added and adhering to recognized professional standards.

In summary, I would like to assure you that St. John Ambulance is committed to our volunteers and the vital role they play in our organization and more importantly, in our communities. I believe that we are well on our way to ensuring that Community Services continues to flourish in these changing times and that we continue to play an important role in the many communities we serve.

Les Chipperfield