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Dear Members,

IMPORTANT UPDATE: Responses to APBC's political party questionnaire

In response to the provincial election call in early October, APBC sent a brief questionnaire to all B.C. political parties asking about three priorities for our members:

1. Service delivery: What would your party do to improve ambulance and dispatch services across B.C., including in metro, rural, remote and Indigenous communities?
2. Contracting out: Does your party support keeping ambulance, dispatch and support services publicly delivered by unionized BCEHS employees? Please briefly explain your position on contracting out this work.
3. Mental health: What would your party do to improve mental-health supports for paramedics, dispatchers and call-takers? Can you speak specifically to support services such as counselling, psychologists, and ongoing training?

The BC NDP and BC Greens responded. The BC Conservatives, One BC and Centre BC did not. We are sharing both responses in full so you can read what each party had to say.

BC NDP

The NDP reaffirmed its commitment to working with APBC and its support for ambulance services delivered by unionized BCEHS employees.

Its response points to more than 2,100 paramedic, dispatcher and emergency medical responder positions added since 2017, along with additional ground units and expanded air transport roles. It also recognizes the work done with our union to improve service models and address long-standing staffing challenges.

On mental health, the NDP highlights an expanded network of counsellors and psychologists and ongoing work with CUPE 873 to strengthen the Critical Incident Stress Management program. It also commits to continued investment in supports for paramedics, dispatchers and call-takers.

BC Greens

The Greens also support keeping ambulance, dispatch and associated support services publicly delivered by unionized BCEHS employees. They explicitly oppose contracting out to private, for-profit providers or replacing the current model with organizations from outside B.C.

Their response focuses on recruitment and retention, staffing in rural and remote communities, culturally safe care in Indigenous communities and better coordination with hospitals to reduce delays.

For mental health, the Greens propose better access to trauma-informed counselling, psychologists, peer support and ongoing training. They also identify a broader commitment to cover six mental health visits annually under MSP and require trauma-informed practice and Indigenous cultural safety training for 911 operators and first responders.

Our next steps:

APBC has a duty to protect, defend and advocate for what matters most to our members; your rights at work, your well-being and the public services we deliver across this province.

That responsibility includes looking carefully at what a change in government could mean for unionized workers, health care and public safety. Decisions about funding, staffing, collective bargaining and public delivery have real consequences for our members and the communities we serve. We need to understand where parties stand and what their policies could mean in practice.

Our role is to keep members informed, build productive relationships across parties and speak up when your interests are at stake. We will continue asking questions and pressing for commitments that address the challenges you face on the job.

Thank you to both parties for responding. We encourage members to read their full responses alongside our questionnaire and consider what these positions could mean for your work, your families and your communities.

In solidarity,



Jason Jackson
Provincial President
Ambulance Paramedics of British Columbia
CUPE Local 873

JJ/sd/MoveUp



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320 - 34 W 7th Avenue
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Sent via email

October 2026

Ambulance Paramedics of British Columbia - CUPE 873

Re: Letter & Questions from Ambulance Paramedics BC

Dear Jason Jackson and APBC,

Thank you for reaching out to us at the BC NDP. We appreciate the opportunity to respond by way of this letter, and hope that it provides your members with clarity during the election season.

Making sure that people in BC have access to timely, high-quality emergency health services is critical. Paramedics, call takers, and dispatchers are essential medical professionals, delivering frontline care and coordination across our health system and we are deeply grateful for the work that you do.

We are committed to maintaining our collaborative relationship with APBC and CUPE 873.

1. Service delivery: What would your party do to improve ambulance and dispatch services across BC, including in metro, rural, remote, and Indigenous communities?

Emergency health services are a priority for us at the BC NDP. In 2025, 6 ground Primary Care Paramedic units were permanently established across the province in response to concerns raised by APBC and an additional 15 PCP ground units were added as 2025 came to a close.

In 2026, BCEHS expanded their response capacity with two new specialized roles – Primary Care Flight Paramedic and Advanced Care flight Paramedic. The purpose of these new roles is to support lower or medium-complexity interfacility transfers and

free up critical care paramedics and Infant Transport Team resources for higher-acuity cases.

BCEHS continues to modernize patient care delivery through the Clinical Hub. We understand that the Low Acuity Patient Navigators and Link and Referral Paramedics (LARUs) have added capacity and reduced pressure within the system by providing care in situations that are not life threatening, which has significantly reduced the need to transport patients to an Emergency Department. As of 2025, 15 LARUS (plus 3 surge units) are now distributed throughout the province.

Since 2017, the BC NDP government has added 156 ambulance and 87 support vehicles, including the addition of 77 ground ambulances and 5 air ambulances since 2020.

There is so much at stake as we head to the polls. Our healthcare services would be uniquely at risk under the BC Conservatives.

We know what our healthcare system would look like with a conservative government because we've been here before. The last time they were in power, before rebranding as the BC Conservatives, they kept wages at rock bottom, relying heavily on a "scheduled on-call" model in rural and remote communities that paid paramedics around \$2/hour to carry a pager and be ready for dispatch. Understandably, this led to high turnover, chronic recruitment struggles, and unstaffed rural stations.

This year, they said that healthcare would "take the brunt" of their cuts. Their candidate in Nanaimo stated that privatized healthcare was the "only solution" to our healthcare challenges and their health critic, Anna Kindy, has openly championed a private, pay-for-care system. Doerkson has refused to rule her out as his preferred future Minister of Health. He has a \$5-billion hole in his platform and a caucus that believes people with money should skip to the front of the line.

We hope you agree that British Columbians can't afford to take that risk.

2. Contracting out: Does your party support keeping ambulance, dispatch and support services publicly delivered by unionized BCEHS employees? Do you support maintaining the current model or would you consider outside BC or 3rd party organizations?

We're proud to stand up for labour in every aspect of our work and we will continue to do so. Since 2017, the BC NDP government added over 2,100 paramedic, dispatcher and emergency medical responder positions. Between 2022 and 2024, we

worked with CUPE 873 to dramatically change the service model to address the challenges left behind by the previous government. We support ambulance services being delivered by unionized BCEHS employees.

We know that as the population grows and ages, dispatchers and call takers are responding to more people than ever. However, we know that conservative cuts are not the answer.

3. Mental health: What would your party do to improve mental health supports for paramedics, dispatchers, and call-takers? Can you speak specifically to support services such as counselling, psychologists, and ongoing training?

Since 2021, the BC NDP government has expanded the network of counsellors and psychologists who provide care to paramedics, dispatchers, other emergency health employees, and their families.

We know that providing emergency health care is extremely demanding work that involves exposure to distressing situations. BC Emergency Health Services has been working with CUPE 873 to strengthen its Critical Incident Stress Management program. CISM offers confidential support to all BCEHS employees, including new hires, and facilitates access to follow-up counselling through a network of trauma-informed, occupationally competent clinicians and psychologists, as needed.

If re-elected, we will continue investing to strengthen our health care system, including enhanced supports for paramedics, dispatchers, and call-takers.

-End-

1. Service delivery: What would your party do to improve ambulance and dispatch services across B.C., including in metro, rural, remote and Indigenous communities?

The BC Greens believe everyone in British Columbia should be able to count on timely emergency medical care, regardless of where they live. We would work with BCEHS, paramedics, dispatchers and their union to address staffing shortages, improve recruitment and retention, and strengthen ambulance and dispatch capacity. This includes continuing work to ensure that rural and remote communities have staffing models that reflect their needs. We would also work with First Nations to improve culturally safe emergency care in Indigenous communities, and strengthen coordination between BCEHS and hospitals to reduce delays and ensure paramedics are available to respond to emergencies.

2. Contracting out: Does your party support keeping ambulance, dispatch and support services publicly delivered by unionized BCEHS employees? Do you support maintaining the current model or would you consider outside BC or 3rd party organizations? Please briefly explain your position on contracting out this work.

Yes. The BC Greens strongly support keeping ambulance, dispatch and associated support services publicly delivered by unionized BCEHS employees. We oppose contracting out these essential services to private, for-profit providers or replacing the current public delivery model with organizations from outside BC. Our priority would be to strengthen the existing public system, invest in its workforce and work with the union to improve service delivery and working conditions.

3. Mental health: What would your party do to improve mental-health supports for paramedics, dispatchers and call-takers? Can you speak specifically to support services such as counselling, psychologists, and ongoing training?

Paramedics, dispatchers and call-takers regularly deal with traumatic situations, and they deserve timely, confidential mental health support throughout their careers. Our platform commits to expanding mental health care for first responders and their families, including better access to support and reducing the stigma associated with seeking help. We would work with BCEHS and the union to strengthen access to trauma-informed counselling, psychologists, peer support and ongoing mental health training. We have also committed to covering six visits annually to a mental health professional, such as a psychologist, under MSP for all British Columbians, and to requiring trauma-informed practice and Indigenous cultural safety training for 911 operators and first responders.