

A21.EMSG.ISS Defining Mentorship in Prehospital Care: A Qualitative Analysis of the Characteristics of Prehospital Mentors

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<https://doi.org/10.32378/ijp.v3i2.135>

Introduction: This study sought to begin to define the current understanding of the term mentor within the prehospital environment (emergency medical services or EMS) as described by nomination letters written by mentees for a newly launched prehospital mentor award. **Methods:** The John Ross Paramedic Mentor Award was created in the fall of 2015 to recognize outstanding mentors in prehospital care. In the spring of 2016, nineteen nomination letters were received from registered prehospital professionals in Alberta detailing why their mentor should receive the mentor award. Written text from the nominations for this peer nominated award were analyzed using thematic and content analysis (n=19) to identify the current understanding of mentorship in EMS, desirable qualities of prehospital mentors, and what a successful mentoring relationship looks like in the prehospital environment from the perspective of mentees. Demographic data of the mentees and mentors were obtained. **Results:** Mentees and nominated mentors had varying years of experience, worked in diverse practice areas within prehospital care and represented varying scopes of practice (PCPs and ACPs). Three themes were identified from thematic analysis of the nomination letters 1) nominators seek to emulate their mentors, 2) mentors create a safe and nurturing environment, and 3) mentors act as advocates. In addition, content analysis was used to identify a number of desirable professional and personal traits of prehospital mentors. **Conclusion:** This study describes the qualities of prehospital mentors and identifies a number of common elements in a successful mentoring relationship (from the perspective of the mentee). These results highlight exceptional mentoring that is already occurring within the prehospital care environment. This research has the potential to provide guidance to those who aim to support both formal and informal mentoring within the prehospital care environment.