

# Healthcare professionals promote jobs in demand

by Patricia Roy

## Health Records Technician/Medical Secretary



Janet Read, Manager, Health Records Department, Prince County Hospital.

Janet says there is a shortage of **Health Records Technicians** on the Island and across Canada.

The Health Records Department at Prince County Hospital has three divisions:

- **main office** employs clerical staff
- **transcription** employs medical secretaries
- **coding** work is done by health records technicians.

Positions in the main office include the release of information clerk/chart control, ambulatory clerk, in-patient clerk, microfilm clerk and medical secretaries who also work in the transcription area.

In large medical centres, these positions may require some shift work.

Training for these positions is available through public and private colleges on PEI.

A **Health Information Management** correspondence course is also offered by the Canadian Healthcare Association and through Nova Scotia Community College and New Brunswick Community College.

The two-year program concentrates on the management of the security, privacy and accuracy of health records and health information.

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## Paramedics

Natasha says there are currently 100 Paramedics working on the Island. "We may require more people to work in this field in the near future due to an aging population."

Natasha says that in order to work as a paramedic, a person needs to be able to work under stressful and sometimes very critical conditions.

The **Primary Care Paramedic program** requires grade 12 and involves 10 months of training at Holland College. It is also a prerequisite for the **Advance Care Paramedic program**, which is an additional 14 months.

"Paramedics perform CPR, give some medications and use their skills to deal with medical situations. We also gather information to help patients during emergency or non-emergency calls," she says.

John says paramedics need to be able to quickly respond to situations, remember their training, and remain professional. "It is most important to have the expertise to recognize when someone's condition is getting worse and know how to intervene."



Natasha Ewert and John Ellsworth, Paramedics

For more information about training, visit [www.hollandc.pe.ca](http://www.hollandc.pe.ca)



## Diagnostic Imaging



Colleen Nicholson, Coordinator of the X-ray Department, and Paul Young, Manager, Diagnostic Imaging Services at Prince County Hospital.

Colleen says about 120 people work in diagnostic imaging on the Island in a variety of support roles including clerical services, x-ray attendants, porters and technologists. The department in Summerside includes X-ray, CAT scan, Ultrasound, and Mammography.

"Diagnostic Imaging services are used by about 85 percent of patients who walk through our doors," says Colleen. "Our profession includes technologists who work in a variety of disciplines such as X-ray, MRI and Ultrasound. Technologists in our profession can also train to perform radiation therapy and nuclear medicine scans.

"There is a huge shortage in all of these areas of diagnostic imaging. In a few years, there will be many more job opportunities due to retirement. Right now, there is a lot of recruitment going on across Canada and many provincial

governments are offering sponsorships to students." She says most of these sponsorships require students to sign a return in service agreement to return to their home province to work for a pre-determined time period upon completion of their training.

### Education needed

Students need to have a good knowledge of Physics, Chemistry and Math. One year of a university science program is needed before going into a branch of diagnostic imaging. Training, which takes an additional three years, is available at UPEI, Dalhousie University, and 20 other accredited institutions across Canada.

"There is also a big shortage of ultrasound technologists. A four-year training program is available at Dalhousie University."



