

What are the criteria used to determine who is a paramedical professional?

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As a physiotherapist there has never been any question about my paramedical professional status, but the definition seems to be changing. What are the criteria?



The criteria were revisited and set out by the Labour Relations Board in its decision no. B444/95. Paramedical professional employees:

1. *are engaged in the health care field in a position involving technical proficiency and scientific knowledge;*
2. *hold a degree, diploma or other form of certification from a post-secondary educational institution appropriate to their particular discipline;*
3. *are members of a professional or quasi-professional organization dedicated to the advancement of their discipline;*
4. *exercise considerable independence of judgement and action;*
5. *perform an important role in either: (i) the diagnosis or treatment of patients, residents or clients, or (ii) health promotion, or (iii) the prevention of illness;*
6. *can demonstrate that both their collective bargaining aspirations and their community of interest are best met through their inclusion in the paramedical professional bargaining unit.*

In that decision the Board framed its analysis in the context of the recent change experienced in the design and delivery of health care: "...the change in the health care system from an 'illness' to a 'wellness' model, and a movement from acute care to community care." In that regard the application of the first criterion is not restricted only to therapeutic occupations, because that was inconsistent with "...both the historical line drawn around the paramedical professionals bargaining unit and the future direction of health care - the promotion of health and prevention of illness."

The Board concluded that:

It is the wellness and health promotion of the special-needs or disabled child which the preschool teacher or supported child care coordinator are concerned with. That health care is provided in the form of the continued development of the special needs or disabled child... It is the unique character of the skills in ensuring that the special needs or disabled child moves forward on a developmental continuum which leads me to conclude that the CDC preschool teachers and supported child care coordinators, based on the cumulative effect of all the paramedical professional criteria, are paramedical professional employees.

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