

Trends in Paramedic Program Graduate Outcomes at Grady Health System

When considering advancement to the Paramedic Scope of Practice, it is important to review the market of paramedic education programs so that the one best is chosen. One should start with verifying the school's accreditation with Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). Effective *January 1, 2013, Paramedic applicants* (for testing and certification with NREMT) *must have successfully completed state-approved and CAAHEP-accredited Paramedic (NRP) program* (NREMT, 2016). Programmatic accreditation can be verified online at the following website: <http://www.caahep.org/Find-An-Accredited-Program/>.

While waiting for its recommendation for CAAHEP accreditation, the Grady Health System Paramedic Program operated under a Letter of Review (LOR) from the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions (CoAEMSP). In March of 2015, CoAEMSP recommended that the Program be award CAAHEP accreditation. From inception to the present, five cohorts of Paramedic graduates have been produced by the Program—two of which have graduated since accreditation was awarded and two more are scheduled to graduate in 2017.

As a condition for remaining accredited, *current and consistent summary information about student/graduate achievement* must be *available to the public*, (CAAHEP, p. 10, 2015). Programs are also required to publish a *3-year review window of average results of the outcomes for National Registry written* (computer-based tests) *and practical* (psychomotor skills tests) *exams, retention, and positive placement* (CoAEMSP, p. 13, 2016). In accordance with CAAHEP and CoAEMSP requirements for maintaining accreditation, a summary of programmatic outcomes is shown below in Table 1; these outcomes are reported by graduation year.

Table 1. Summary of Grady Paramedic Program Outcomes (2013 to 2016)	AVERAGE	CAAHEP	Before CAAHEP		
		2016	2015	2014	2013
Programmatic Retention rate	72.9%	73.3%	87.5%	30.8%	100.0%
NRP CBT ¹ 1st time success rate	78.4%	75.0%	85.7%	75.0%	77.7%
NRP CBT total success rate	97.7%	90.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
NRP PST ² 1st time success rate	86.8%	86.4%	85.7%	75.0%	100.0%
NRP PST total success rate	98.9%	95.5%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Positive Job Placement Rate	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Upon completion of a curriculum at an accredited program, graduates are accorded three initial attempts to successfully attain National Registry certification. If none of these attempts are successful, the National Registry requires the graduate to attend a remediation course to be eligible for three additional attempts. Should a graduate fail all six attempts, the graduate must re-enroll and repeat an entire paramedic curriculum to be eligible for subsequent attempts. ***No graduate of the Paramedic Program at Grady Health System has ever had to enroll in a remediation course or re-enroll in the paramedic curriculum.***

Trends in Georgia and National Testing Outcomes

The National Registry of Emergency Medical Services (NREMT) publishes annual reports of national outcomes and outcomes by state. Outcomes reported are updated daily by the National Registry on the *NREMT Data Dashboard* (NREMT, 2016). Outcomes listed below illustrate the overall rate of achieving Paramedic certification.

Table 2. Trends in Testing Outcome	4 YEAR AVERAGE	2016	2015	2014	2013
National Registry first time success rate (GA)	69.5%	69.0%	72.0%	68.0%	69.0%
National Registry total success rate (GA)	82.8%	80.0%	87.0%	81.0%	83.0%
National Registry total success rate (USA)	73.0%	73.0%	72.0%	74.0%	73.0%

References

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- NREMT. (2016). *National Registered Paramedics - Certification Process*. Retrieved from National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians: <https://www.nremt.org/rwd/public/document/paramedic>
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¹ NRP CBT = National Registry Paramedic Computer-Based Test

² NRP PST = National Registry Paramedic Psychomotor Skills Test