

# Background

The paramedic profession is developing at pace and becoming increasingly professionally diverse.

This is fantastic, for us as individuals in our profession – with so many opportunities opening up as the scope of role (and practice) evolves.

Yet, as this happens, expectations placed on paramedics are changing, particularly in healthcare. Political forces are influencing the placement exposure of students, and market forces are dictating where paramedics find themselves working clinically.

And yet, we have something that seems to unite us. What it means to be a paramedic - something that is not captured in existing definitions of the profession, scope of practice policies, or regulatory standards. These features of becoming, being, knowing and doing for paramedics that are universal. And yet, this essence seems not to have been captured anywhere.

We wanted to create something that captures the essence of who we are as paramedics, and that speaks to us as individuals.



# The hatching and nurture of the Paramedics' Pledge

We looked at other organisations, groups of people, and professions that have stood the test of time, and surfed the waves of change. Medicine has an oath, Girlguiding and the Scout Association have a promise and firefighters have a prayer - all of which serve to bring together autonomous and diverse members into one body and simultaneously defines their place in society. These oaths, promises, and prayers describe their essence, and gives a sense of what it means to belong to that group.

We wanted the paramedic profession to be elevated to the same level. We think that what paramedics do is no less important and no less noble than other institutions that have defined their place in our global society. So, we wrote a pledge.

The Paramedics' Pledge was drafted as a product of the thinking and evidence relating to Lawrence Hill's doctoral research into paramedic professional identity. Through the College of Paramedics, Georgette Eaton came on board with the early development. The College of Paramedics (UK) subsequently nurtured the pledge and worked with us to ensure it got exposed to a wide array of critical voices from within the international paramedic community. And this is important. The Paramedics' Pledge wasn't written just by us. During the consultation with the College of Paramedics we spoke with paramedics from across the world, paramedics working in diverse settings, paramedics at the beginnings and the endings of their careers. We heard their voices, we shared their stories. Through this, the Paramedics' Pledge contains the opinions, voices and minds of so many paramedics from across the globe- all of whom we'd like to thank for their thoughts, their words of challenge, and their wisdoms. Lawrence and Georgette are the curators, rather than creators.

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# The pledge fledges

In May 2023, the Paramedics' Pledge was presented at the College of Paramedics' National Conference and at the International Roundtable Committee on Community Paramedicine, in Nottingham, England.

Bringing the Paramedics' Pledge for official launch at International Paramedics' Day 2023 is a privilege.

We hope you think it has value - but won't be offended if you don't. Each of our professional identities is unique to us and for some, The Paramedics' Pledge will seem unnecessary. To others, we hope it will provide a statement that speaks to the individual at the centre of every paramedic. And if it does, then wherever you are in the world practising as a paramedic, you know there are others out there who share a sense of purpose with you – and a sense of pride in this professional title. Those who share with you what it means to know what you know, to do what you do, and be what you are. We are paramedics.

The pledge is now in the process of being translated into French. If you can translate it into another language, and help it reach a wider audience still, please get in touch.



# Ideas for using the Paramedics' Pledge

We have a couple of suggestions of how you might like to use the Paramedics' Pledge, but imagine you'll have other ways you can too. However you use it, we'd love to hear about it!

Our thoughts are:

## As student

- Something to aspire to
- Something to use as a grounding statement to guide your efforts and keep your momentum

## As an individual

- Something you can read it if you need to be reminded what you do is profound and important.

## As an educator

- Something to talk to your students about
- Something to be read at graduations, badge ceremonies, passing out parades, celebrations of achievement
- Something to present to paramedics for outstanding service

## As a company or service

- Something to hang in social areas
- Something to affiliate your organisation with to show your commitment to paramedics

## As a regulator, professional body, or governing board

- Something that could bind your professional values and organisational philosophy

# Guidelines for Using the Paramedics' Pledge

Please use The Paramedics' Pledge – the most important part of it is the message that we are a profession united by our experiences and our values.

That said it is also a piece of creative work that is covered by a Creative Commons agreement: The Paramedics' Pledge is covered under [Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International](#).

This means that you can:

- Reproduce it as it is
- Add your logo to the top of it
- Share it with people

You cannot:

- Modify the text or image
- Benefit financially from selling the work



# Lawrence Hill

*“I genuinely believe that the Paramedics’ Pledge captures the essence of being a paramedic.”*

Lawrence started his paramedic education in 2005 and worked for the London Ambulance Service in several roles before entering higher education as a lecturer in 2013 at the University of Hertfordshire.



After completing an MSc. in Medical and Healthcare Simulation in 2018 he is now reading for a ProfD using a realist methodology to explore how professional identity is generated by the experiences that paramedics have.

Currently working in his second academic post as an Associate Professor at the University of East Anglia, his roles include being the Professional Lead for paramedics, Course Director of the Paramedic Science degree programme, Fitness to Practise Lead for the School of Health Sciences, and chair of the cross-faculty multi-professional Simulation-Based Education Group.

As a result, his areas of interest and scholarship have gravitated towards complex matters such as the interplay between role and identity, values-based approaches to understanding and promoting professionalism, and attempts to harness philosophy to bring continuity and cohesion to the paramedic profession.

[Lawrence.P.Hill@uea.ac.uk](mailto:Lawrence.P.Hill@uea.ac.uk)

# Georgette Eaton

*“For me, the Paramedics’ Pledge provides us with a shared vision in the face of uncertainty. It gives us both solace and courage, reminding us that we are part of something greater than ourselves and that we work in solidarity with all those who share our professional title. I see it as a mechanism through which we can continue to grow our profession, illuminating the path towards a brighter, collective, future – wherever we operate as paramedics, and in the world.”*



Georgette Eaton currently holds two posts. One as the first paramedic NIHR Doctoral Research Fellow at the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences at the University of Oxford, where she is reading for a DPhil in Evidence Based Healthcare. Her project seeks to explore the impact of paramedics in NHS primary care, using realist philosophy to improve understanding, support intelligent policy and make recommendations for future workforce planning.

Georgette remains in clinical practice and is the Clinical Practice Development Manager for Advanced Paramedic Practitioners in Urgent Care within London Ambulance Service NHS Trust. Prior to this appointment, she split her employment between clinical practice and education, balancing work as a Specialist Paramedic in urgent care across a range of primary care settings with being a Senior Lecturer in Paramedic Science at Oxford Brookes University.

Alongside this, she has been involved in the College of Paramedics since 2017 and is currently the Trustee for Research on their Board of Trustees. She was a graduate paramedic from Coventry University in 2011 and after ‘topping up’ to BSc (Hons) began practising as a specialist paramedic (then an emergency care practitioner). She completed her first Master’s degree in Critical Care at Cardiff University in 2017 and her second in Education Research Design and Methodology at the University of Oxford in 2018.

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