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# Attrition and Turnover Intentions of Paramedic Program Directors in the State of Texas

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## **Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership**

*Dena Counts*

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Dr. Dena Counts for  
Dr. Nannette Glenn, Dean of  
the College of Graduate and  
Professional Studies

Date: 03/27/2024

Dissertation Committee:



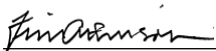
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Dr. Lawrence Santiago



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Dr. Cecilia Hegamin-Younger



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Dr. Tim Atkinson

Abilene Christian University  
School of Educational Leadership

Attrition and Turnover Intentions of Paramedic Program Directors in the State of Texas

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Jacob Charles Braddock

April 2024

### **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to my father, the late Bruce Braddock. I would not be here today without the unwavering example of dedication, perseverance, determination, and passion that led your life. While I did not fully appreciate it then, I can not thank you enough for the example you set and for constantly pushing me to reach my full potential. I am eternally in your debt and strive to fill the lasting legacy you provided. I love and miss you.

## **Acknowledgments**

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A special thanks goes to Dr. Konyu-Fogel and Dr. Sovani for graciously allowing me to use and modify the research instrument they authored. The instrument was the cornerstone of this research.

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I would also like to acknowledge my immediate and extended family for their constant support and encouragement. To my sister, Melina Birkenfeld, I cannot put into words how instrumental you have been in each step of my educational career. You have been a source of

inspiration, a role model, and my biggest supporter from the beginning. I truly would not be here today if it were not for you.

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Above all, I thank God for allowing me to find my vocational calling in EMS and education, giving me the courage to pursue this endeavor, and constantly bestowing his grace in all aspects of my life.

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## **Abstract**

Prehospital care currently finds itself in a critical crisis as the number of emergency medical technicians continues to decline nationwide. This is especially alarming as such shortages have been exacerbated in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Emergency medical service agencies are looking to educational institutions to ensure that an adequate number of providers are entering the field. These institutions are led by program directors, who oversee all aspects of the program. However, these individuals are also leaving the role at alarming rates nationwide. The purpose of this action research study was to take a qualitative descriptive approach to explore regional and national factors that influence paramedic program directors' intentions to leave the director role within the state of Texas. Through the use of semistructured interviews, the study provides a foundation for suggestions to help address the high attrition rates of these key individuals at the local, state, and national levels. The results demonstrated that, while various intrinsic and extrinsic motivators have a positive impact on the paramedic program director's job satisfaction, these incentives do not offset the excessive workload placed on these individuals due to various national, state, and institutional factors. Such a workload was also recognized to impact the program directors' work-life balance negatively. These factors contributed to a turnover intention within the sample that were significantly higher than the national average. Several recommendations were made to help mitigate the attrition of these vital program leaders including streamlining the requirements to maintain accreditation status, aligning state requirements to better match accreditation standards to reduce the replication of documentation, and ensuring that the organization is providing the proper resources so that the workload can be delegated effectively. Further research into the cause and effect of paramedic program director attrition is warranted, with several recommendations provided.



*Keywords:* paramedic program directors, attrition, turnover, turnover intention

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Imagine being in an emergency situation, calling 911, and finding that no one is available to respond during this dire time of need. This unfortunate situation is becoming a reality in many communities as the number of Emergency Medical Service (EMS) providers continues to decline. Cash et al. (2018) observed that 50% of urban and 56% of rural EMS agencies across the United States cannot staff their ambulances fully. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this shortage of providers (Naidu, 2021; Weidlich & Kalz, 2021). Cash et al. (2018) recognized the negative impact to the pipeline of incoming providers, increase in call volume and fatigue, and a decrease in provider well-being. Similarly, Mohammadi et al. (2021) observed that the increased call volume and inadequate staffing, coupled with poor organizational support and work motivation, have resulted in increased burnout and stress experienced by EMS professionals during the current pandemic. Stress and burnout are often recognized as contributing factors for EMS personnel leaving the profession (Blau et al., 2016; Cash et al., 2018; Rivard et al., 2020). Such turnover can have significant fiscal ramifications and a devastating impact on patient care, safety, and employee productivity (Blau et al., 2016; Crowe et al., 2018; Rivard et al., 2020). Because EMS acts as the first line of defense against highly infectious diseases and public health crises, the lack of providers is alarming (Bijani et al., 2021; Cheraghi et al., 2019). This concern is even more daunting looking at the demand for EMS services in the future. With an aging population facing more progressive disease pathologies, the need for EMS providers will increase by 24% or 62,000 providers in the decade to come (Bijani et al., 2021; Cash et al., 2018; Cheraghi et al., 2019). To meet future demands, the supply of EMS providers must be efficient.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic can also be seen in the educational setting. Cash et al. (2021) asserted that the temporary closing of some of the EMS educational institutions, coupled with the difficulties in completing the clinical component and taking the national credentialing exam, has reduced the number of providers produced during this trying time. These authors recognized student and faculty stress and anxiety as research priorities for future research to help promote the resilience of both programs and the student. An essential factor in the supply of paramedics is the efficiency and effectiveness of paramedic education programs (McKenna et al., 2015). The program director, according to the Commission on the Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP, 2015), “must be responsible for all aspects of the program” (p. 5). Despite this enormous responsibility, few empirical studies have been conducted on these influential individuals.

Bryan (2015) evaluated characteristics associated with the career success of program directors, while Kokx (2016) observed various leadership practices utilized by these individuals. Allmon (2020), utilizing a cross-sectional web-based survey, assessed national factors that influenced the turnover intentions in these positions. Using data provided by the Committee on the Accreditation of Educational Programs for Emergency Medical Service Professions (CoA EMSP), this author identified an average turnover rate of over 21% in paramedic program directors between 2016 through 2019. These findings are concordant with that of Bryan (2015), who recognized that 18% of program directors had intentions to leave the position within the year.

Locally, the inability to retain a consistent program director has also been realized. The primary EMS educational institution responsible for covering more than 13,000 square miles of Texas is provided through a community college that will use the pseudonym ABC College to



protect the organization and those who are employed there. ABC Community College's EMS program has witnessed five different program directors since 2009. Ramasamy and Abdullah (2017) stressed that the "quality of faculty is one of the most important components of higher education quality assurance" (p. 169). The authors emphasized that turnover could have significant negative impacts on efficiency, productivity, and threaten the long-term survivability of a program or institution. The problem of high turnover of the program director over the last decade could be tied to the issues experienced by ABC's EMS program regarding high attrition and low retention of students, as well as the underperformance on the national credentialing exam.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The issue of high attrition of program directors in education programs is recognized both nationally and locally. However, the regional factors that lead to program director turnover intentions have not been evaluated. The fragmentation of EMS education that resulted from the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, which shifted EMS funding from the federal government to the state level, has resulted in issues arising that are unique to each state (Brooks et al., 2015). While the national factors resulting in the high attrition of paramedic program directors are important, these factors must be evaluated in unison with regional issues to gain a better global perspective. Brooks et al. (2015) reinforced this stance by recognizing that such variation requires EMS education to be flexible enough to be adapted to local circumstances. The National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT), the national credentialing organization for EMTs, began requiring all paramedic candidates who seek credentialing to have graduated from a CAAHEP accredited program on January 1, 2013 (History of the National Registry, n.d.). Due to the rigor of achieving accreditation status and the consistency that the

accreditation process provides, this study will focus specifically on paramedic programs. This study seeks to build on the research of past scholars, while also helping fill this critical gap in literature.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive research study was to explore regional and national factors that influence paramedic program directors' intentions to leave the director role within the state of Texas through the use of semistructured interviews, to provide a foundation for suggestions to help address the high attrition rates of these key individuals at the local, state, and national levels.

### **Research Questions**

The primary research question explored in this study was: What are the perceptions of paramedic program directors of which regional and national factors influence turnover intentions in the state of Texas? The subquestions to provide clarity include:

**RQ1a.** How do such perceptions impact the paramedic program director's intent to leave the position?

**RQ1b.** How are intrinsic and extrinsic motivators being used or failing to be used to help retain paramedic program directors?

### **Definition of Key Terms**

**Accreditation standards.** The CAAHEP Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs in the Emergency Medical Services Professions. Accreditation of programs that prepare individuals for professions by meeting minimum standards of quality. (CAAHEP, 2015)

**Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT).** For patients requiring emergency medical care or transportation, AEMTs provide basic and limited advanced care and transportation under medical oversight. AEMT usually require an additional 300 to 600 hours of training after obtaining the EMT-Basic certification (Allmon, 2020; NREMT, n.d.).

**Allied healthcare provider.** A member of the healthcare team whose actions are regulated by a licensing agency or certifying board and who is educated in specific areas of medicine (Hoke & Hexem, 2017).

**CAAHEP.** Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Program. Paramedic programs in the United States are accredited by this body on an initial and on-going basis (CAAHEP, 2015).

**CoA EMSP.** Paramedic programs are evaluated by the Commission on Accreditation of Emergency Medical Services Programs, which recommends whether accreditation should be granted or denied by CAAHEP. Through annual self-study reports and more comprehensive self-study reports every 5 years, programs are checked for compliance with published standards by this body (CoA EMSP, n.d.).

**Emergency medical responder (EMR).** EMRs are equipped with the skills and knowledge to provide immediate life-saving interventions, such as bleeding control, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and first aid, while they wait for additional EMS resources to arrive. Additionally, while on scene and during transports, EMRs aid higher-level EMS personnel (NREMT, n.d.).

**Emergency medical services (EMS).** As a life-saving system, EMS responds to a wide range of life-threatening emergencies with limited time on-scene, before transporting patients to the hospital emergency department for definitive treatment (El Sayed et al., 2015).

**Emergency medical technician (EMT).** An EMT is equipped with the basic knowledge and skills required for stabilizing and transporting patients ranging from nonemergency transports to life-threatening emergencies. EMTs are also allowed to administer limited medications (NREMT, n.d.).

**EMS provider.** Medical professional levels range from emergency medical technician (EMT-B) to paramedic (EMT-P) certification for EMS practitioners (Bucher et al., 2018).

**National registry of emergency medical technicians (NREMT).** A nongovernment organization, the national registry of emergency medical technicians, certifies EMTs and paramedics through cognitive and psychomotor testing. The agency also verifies that continuing education requirements are met for recertification and conducts random audits to ensure providers are meeting those requirements (NREMT, n.d.).

**Paramedic.** Paramedics hold the highest level of knowledge and training of prehospital healthcare providers and primarily function as the team leader of the responding personnel at the scene. In addition to providing advanced life support care, they administer all medications, decompress the chest, manage the patient's airways, and provide other medical care in accordance with physician directions. Additional training usually takes 1000 – 1600 hours after obtaining an EMT certification. The certification examination may only be taken by graduates of accredited programs or programs with letters of review from the CoA EMSP (Allmon, 2020; NREMT, n.d.).

**Scope of practice.** The procedures and/or actions a healthcare provider is allowed to perform in accordance with certification or licensure (Hoke & Hexem, 2017).

## Summary

The strain of turnover has plagued the Emergency Medical Service nationwide and has been exacerbated by the recent COVID-19 pandemic (Cash et al., 2018; Naidu, 2021; Weidlich & Kalz, 2021). Such turnover places increased financial strain on organizations, negatively impacts EMS Providers, and reduces patient care and safety (Blau et al., 2016; Crowe et al., 2018; Rivard et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the number of graduates entering the field and has also increased the stress on students and instructors alike, including paramedic program directors (Cash et al., 2021). Such pressure is particularly problematic since the turnover of these essential directors averaged approximately 20% annually prior to the pandemic.

The intent of this study was to evaluate the turnover and turnover intentions of paramedic program directors in the state of Texas to develop a better understanding of how to help mitigate such high attrition locally, regionally, and nationally. Using a descriptive qualitative research approach with purposeful sampling, this study sought to identify factors influencing paramedic program directors' turnover intentions within the state of Texas.

The preceding chapter identified the conceptual foundation, purpose, significance, and research questions of this study. The following chapter will review the literature surrounding EMS and EMS education within the United States, the scope of paramedic program directors, and turnover intention theories. This review will also evaluate turnover and turnover intention in both EMS and education institutions.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to use a qualitative descriptive design to examine the various factors that impact paramedic program directors' attrition or intent to leave the position within the state of Texas. Such research will provide a foundation to help mitigate this phenomenon. While turnover has received considerable attention over the last decade, turnover in EMS and EMS education remains poorly understood (Allmon, 2020; Blau et al., 2016; Hom et al., 2017). Additionally, no specific literature pertaining to the turnover of paramedic program directors in Texas was identified.

To make evidence-based decisions in healthcare and healthcare education, a thorough and systematic review of the relevant literature is required (Hausner et al., 2015). While time-consuming, such efforts allow me to gain a more holistic understanding of the topic of study, help identifies gaps in the present research, and help avoid researcher bias (Bramer et al., 2018; Faggion et al., 2016; Salvador-Oliván et al., 2019). The EBSCO database available through Abilene Christian University was the primary source used to collect a robust foundation of literature for review. Keywords used in the literature search included (a) *EMS, prehospital, emergency medical services, paramedic, medical service*; (b) *retention, attrition, turnover, intent to leave, intent to stay*; (c) *faculty, instructor, professor, college teacher*; and (d) *program director, director, administrator*. In reviewing the articles, an iterative process was utilized in which the abstract, introduction, discussion, and conclusion were examined to ensure the article's relevance (Salvador-Oliván et al., 2019). Pertinent articles were then thoroughly inspected and coded in a thematic matrix to identify common themes. The references used in these articles also helped to provide additional resources for evaluation.

The attrition of paramedic program directors continues to plague the industry (Allmon, 2020). This phenomenon can dramatically impact EMS educational institutions, the students, and ultimately, the general public (Cash et al., 2018; Rivard et al., 2020). To better understand the intricacies associated with the importance of the program director role within EMS education, a brief review of the history of EMS and EMS education is needed, as well as a review of the literature regarding employee turnover and turnover intentions. The review of the literature will conclude by examining the theoretical foundations of the study.

### **History of EMS Within the United States**

The roots of EMS in the United States can be traced back to the Civil War, in which the injured would be transported from the battlefield in horse-drawn carriages (Bass, 2015). Later, the American Red Cross was founded by Clara Barton to aid those in need (Limmer & O'Keefe, 2016). Wars, including both World Wars, the Korea War, and the Vietnam War, continued to shape the early EMS system within the United States, and the responsibility of EMS was trusted to various agencies, including funeral homes, police departments, and fire departments (Bledsoe & Ganss, 2017; Caroline et al., 2013).

The birth of the modern EMS system was catalyzed in 1966 with the release of *Accidental Death and Disability: The Neglected Disease of Modern Society*. This pivotal work stressed the importance of and the need to develop a national standard for prehospital care, as trauma was the “leading cause of death among persons between the ages of 1 and 37 and were the fourth leading cause of death for all ages” (National Academy of Sciences, 1966, p. 8). To further exemplify the deficiencies of national EMS knowledge and application in the earlier models of EMS, the white paper went on to identify that “chances of survival would be better in

the zone of combat than on the average city street” for those who suffered significant traumatic injuries (National Academy of Sciences, 1966, p. 8).

Following the recommendations to establish national and local entities to deliver standardized prehospital care provided in this work, Congress passed the Highway Safety Act in 1966. This act instituted the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) became responsible for the development of critical components in the EMS system, including standards for training and licensing. The EMS Syst EMS Act of 1973 designated and allocated federal funds to contribute to the development of EMS syst EMS regionally (NHTSA, 1996). However, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 shifted control and financial responsibility to the state level, which resulted in the fragmentation of EMS practice and education (Brooks et al., 2015). Brooks et al. (2015) claimed that such fragmentation “accounts for the state-to-state variation in the structure, provision, and funding of EMS, as well as the scope of practice, and hence, educational requirements for each provider level” (p. 94). As a result of the variances between the states, confusion among the public has resulted, along with limited mobility for providers, mutual obligation issues, and decreased efficiency as the EMS services duplicate their efforts (NHTSA, 1996). Much like the history of EMS, the history of EMS education has been impacted by inconsistency and fragmentation.

### **History of EMS Education in the United States**

As the importance of EMS became increasingly recognized, the scope of practice and educational requirements also advanced. Early on, education was provided by physicians who were interested in assisting EMS providers but lacked both standardization and an established curriculum (Caffrey et al., 2018; Limmer & O’Keefe, 2016). The National Registry of



Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) was established in 1970 to help standardize EMS education by providing an independent credentialing examination for EMS providers (History of the National Registry, n.d.). In a concerted effort, the NREMT and NHTSA established the first national curricula for EMTs in 1971 and paramedics in 1977 (NHTSA, 2000). After multiple revisions, the standards in these curricula were substituted by the National EMS Education Standards (N EMSES) in 2009 (Brooks et al., 2015). The National EMS Scope of Practice Model published in 2006 sought to reduce the ambiguity surrounding the previous EMT professional levels by defining four provider levels and scopes of practice still recognized today: Emergency Medical Responder, Emergency Medical Technician, Advanced Emergency Medical Technician, and Paramedic (National Standards, 2021). Despite these efforts to standardize education, EMS education remains decentralized, with training drastically differing between institutions providing the education (Cannuscio et al., 2016). A similar conclusion is reached by Page (2017), who stressed that EMS education remains broken and insufficient.

As the literature demonstrates, an increase in EMS scope of practice is required to meet the demands of the community (Givati et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2017; McCann et al., 2018). Ancell (2015) stressed educational requirements to remain competent in this quickly evolving environment have undoubtedly exceeded the training that EMS providers receive. In order to progress the profession and to gain the respect of other allied health disciplines, the need to increase the educational requirements to that of a post-secondary degree is suggested (Aarons et al., 2016; Bowe et al., 2017). Cumbie (2018), referencing a 2016 State of EMS report, observed that while nearly two-thirds of EMS agencies agree that a minimum of an associate degree is needed to provide adequate treatment, the national standard requires just a high school diploma. However, increasing the requirement for further education could add additional strain to the

EMS system by further reducing the number of providers. Quaile (2015) recognized that the 2009 requirements of intensive tracking of progress using the NREMT portfolio and the need for paramedics to graduate from an accredited program considerably reduced the number of providers that completed the educational requirements to gain certification. The key to effective implementation of such changes landed on the shoulders of the program directors.

### **Paramedic Program Directors**

The EMS education program director plays a pivotal role in nearly every aspect of the program. As Allmon (2020) affirmed, “The program director is saddled with the responsibility of maintaining records of the past, running the program in the present, and using foresight to plan for the future” (p. 19). Paramedic educational programs are only as successful as their program directors. As such, they are essential to the provision of future providers to meet the needs of the communities being served (Margolis et al., 2009).

### ***Responsibilities***

The *Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs in the Emergency Medical Services Professions* (2015) provided by CAAHEP delineate many of the responsibilities of the program director, including:

1. The administration, organization, and supervision of the educational program,
2. The continuous quality review and improvement of the education program,
3. Long range planning and ongoing development of the program,
4. The effectiveness of the program, including instruction and faculty, with systems in place to demonstrate the effectiveness of the program,
5. Cooperative involvement with the medical director,
6. The orientation/training and supervision of the clinical and field internship

preceptors,

7. The effectiveness and quality of fulfillment of responsibilities delegated to another qualified individual. (CAAHEP, 2015, p. 5)

Additionally, these key individuals are “ultimately responsible for getting the program approved (authorized) by the institution, the state or local regulatory agencies and the accreditation body, when necessary” (NA EMSE, 2020, p. 26). Along with the myriad of these tasks, the program director usually has teaching commitments, as well. Their responsibilities, therefore, may include planning curriculum and lesson plans, certifying competency, monitoring the progress of the student, and disciplinary/grievance issues (CAAHEP, 2015; Kokx, 2016). Outside the classroom, the program directors are also often tasked with recruitment, retention, developing annual reports to track various aspects of the program, state and/or national self-studies, and outcome assessments (Kokx, 2016). With the vast array of formal and informal responsibilities that the program director is responsible for managing, Crowe et al. (2015) emphasized that although these individuals are scheduled to work 25 hours a week, 60 hours of work per week are often required. Several qualifications must be met to ensure that well-qualified individuals are at the helm to guide the programs into the future.

### ***Qualifications***

To be appointed into the role of program director, an individual must achieve specific state and national qualification standards. Nationally, the following qualifications are required:

1. Possess a minimum of a bachelor’s degree to direct a paramedic program and a minimum of an associate degree to direct an Advanced Emergency Medical Technician program, from an accredited institution of higher education.
2. Have appropriate medical or allied health education, training, and experience,

3. Be knowledgeable about methods of instruction, testing and evaluation of students,
  4. Have field experience in the delivery of out-of-hospital emergency care,
  5. Have academic training and preparation related to emergency medical services at least equivalent to that of a paramedic,
  6. Be knowledgeable about the current versions of the National EMS Scope of Practice and National EMS Education Standards, and about evidenced-informed clinical practice.
- (CAAHEP, 2015, p. 5)

The state of Texas encourages program directors to also act as the course coordinator. To achieve the status of a basic course coordinator, the program director must also meet the following qualifications in accordance with State Code §157.43:

- (1) Submit an application for basic course coordinator
- (2) Have been certified as an EMT or higher for at least four consecutive years;
- (3) Have been a certified EMS instructor for at least two consecutive years;
- (4) Have documented not less than 120 hours of instruction for initial EMS certificate holders; or have successfully conducted an EMT-Basic course;
- (5) Submit documentation of positive evaluations as a certified instructor;
- (6) Be affiliated with and operate under the supervision of a licensed provider, an EMS medical director, a teaching hospital, a regionally accredited post-secondary educational institution and/or a health care institution accredited by an organization recognized by the department;
- (7) Submit letters of intent from qualified providers of clinical and field internship experience;

(8) Have successfully completed a department-sponsored course coordinator training course; and

(9) After completing all the above requirements, pass the EMS coordinator exam and retest, if necessary, no later than 1 year after course completion date (Rule §157.43, n.d.).

The taxing quantity of responsibilities, coupled with the required national and state qualifications, could have a significant impact on the program director's retention regionally. However, these impacts have not been evaluated to date. While such a literature gap is recognized, the vast amount of empirical research on voluntary turnover research must also be reviewed.

### **Employee Turnover**

The substantial impact of employee turnover on an organization has resulted in the topic being examined in great depth in various organizations, industries, and countries for over a century (Field et al., 2021; Kragt et al., 2018). Such research has resulted in several types of turnover being identified, as well as potential impacts of turnover and possible mitigation efforts. After reviewing the history of turnover research, the different classifications of turnover and the literature on the cost of losing employees will be examined.

### ***Historical Review of Turnover***

Turnover has gained the attention of researchers for over 100 years. While other research on employee turnover can be found, a seminal work that helped catalyze interest in the topic was that of Bills (1925). Utilizing a predictive research design, Bills (1925) examined clerical staff and found that those who had fathers who held professional positions or owned small businesses were more likely to resign than those whose fathers held an unskilled or semiskilled position (Hom et al., 2017). Hom et al. (2017) described the period between 1920 and 1970 as the

formative years of turnover research development. During this time, the work of March and Simon (1958), Mobley (1977), and Porter et al. (1974) helped progress the development of voluntary turnover research.

Prior to the investigations of March and Simon in the 1950s, the research around voluntary research lacked a theoretical foundation. While the influence of this work was impeded by a delay in the publications of finding, the authors suggested that the perceived ease and desirability of moving positions, jobs, or organizations as the primary drivers of voluntary turnover (Hom et al., 2017; Mobley et al., 1979). Mobley (1977), building on the work of March and Simon (1958), provided a process model that delineated how dissatisfaction of the employee can mature into voluntary turnover. The linear progression starts with the employee's discontent developing into the notion of quitting and assessing subjective expected utility (SEU) regarding the cost of quitting available jobs. Such evaluations transition into search intentions and the analysis of possible alternatives. Once the employee recognizes such possibilities, options are then contrasted against the current held role, which develops into the intent to terminate employment. The model ends with the employee acting on such intentions and resulting in that employee's voluntary turnover (Hom et al., 2017; Mitchell & Albright, 1972; Mobley, 1977). As turnover theories continue to evolve, the works of Porter et al. (1974) proposed several constructs that continue to influence the study of turnover today.

These authors' two most significant contributions included the introduction of met expectations theory and functional turnover theory. While the primary focus of turnover historically concentrated on the rate of turnover, the new perspective focused on who was quitting and recognized the cost that the loss of talented individuals can have on an organization (Hom et al., 2017). The met expectations theory postulates that job satisfaction and retention

largely depend on whether and how a position meets employees' expectations. If the assumptions are met, then the employee will be satisfied and will remain within the organization. However, if the organization fails to meet such the presumptions of the worker, dissatisfaction and attrition will likely ensue (Porter et al., 1974). Porter et al. (1974) also challenged the established dysfunctional nature of turnover.

Functional turnover theory demonstrates the potential positive impact of turnover on an organization. If an organization replaces an underperforming, unmotivated, or low-quality employee with a higher caliber worker after the employee quits, the productivity and morale of the group could be improved (Dalton et al., 1981). Organizational effectiveness and financial standing could also be enhanced if employee surplus is reduced or when a new hire replaces a costly employee at a lower salary. Such work influenced the work of Mobley et al. (1979), who would go on to develop the content model to identify further why people leave a position, as well as other current researchers (Hom et al., 2017).

Utilizing met expectancy theory as the central lens for evaluating turnover, Mobley et al.'s (1979) content model recognized multiple causes of turnover that accumulated and resulted in employee attrition. This included job dissatisfaction and the attractiveness of alternative jobs. The perceived reward or repercussion recognized by the employee drives such actions. For example, an employee may choose to stay in an undesirable position because of the expectation of increased pay, promotion, or a transfer to a more desirable position. Contrastingly, a worker may leave an acceptable job or organization if they anticipate superior benefits or utility in another employment opportunity (Hom et al., 2017). Mueller and Price (1989) would further contribute to the understanding of employee turnover by evaluating the impact of family influences on the attrition of employees.

Researchers neglected the influence of family ties on turnover and turnover intention before Mueller and Price's (1989) kinship responsibilities theory. The researchers evaluated the impacts of family on turnover by assessing variables such as if the employee was married, how many children or dependents the employee had, and the number of kin living near the employee (Blegen et al., 1988). These constructs predicted and often directly influenced additional inquiries into the impact of family on employee retention. For example, some employees may have to exit the workforce to care for aging parents or ill children or be forced to stay with an organization to continue receiving benefits such as healthcare or to keep dependents in high achieving school districts (Feldman et al., 2012; Hom & Kinicki, 2001; Ramasamy & Abdullah, 2010). Contrasting previously held notions of turnover, Mueller and Price (1989) helped progress turnover by expanding on the reasons and/or influences of why individuals stay in or leave an organization.

While turnover research over the last century was extensive and insightful, such investigations stalled in the 1990s (Hom et al., 2017; O'Reilly, 1991; Steel, 2002). Hom et al. (2017) credited such dormancy to the work of March and Simon (1958) and Mueller and Price's (1989) articulating, "[s]ome ideas are so powerful, intuitive, and focused that they can stall or hamper the emergence of novel ideas and research" (p. 535). Lee and Mitchell (1994), in response to O'Reilly's (1991) concern for lack of scholarly invigoration regarding turnover research, questioned some of the foundational principles previously established. Introducing a new voluntary turnover theory referred to as the unfolding model, Lee and Mitchell (1994) challenged three claims of March and Simon's (1958) work. The assumptions under question include:

- The main reason for turnover is job dissatisfaction;



- Dissatisfied employees depart in search of alternative and more advantageous employment opportunities; and
- A rational calculation of SEUs helps prospective employees compare alternative jobs with one's current jobs (Hom et al., 2017).

To provide a more inclusive model, Lee and Mitchell (1994) presented four distinct routes of employee turnover that occur due to a “shock” or life-changing event that initiates the intent to leave. In the first path, a life event triggers a preestablished plan for quitting, such as marriage to devote time to child-rearing. The second path occurs when a job shock challenges the employee's core values or goals. Such an event could happen when a superior asks the employee to perform an immoral or questionable act. The established commitment to the organization is damaged, resulting in the employee seeking an alternative employment opportunity that aligns with one's established values and/or goals. In the third track, an employee receives an unsolicited employment offer. Such opportunities can result in the employee seeking additional prospects for comparison. The employee then weighs the potential opportunities and selects the best option. The final route follows the conventional track of a dissatisfied worker terminating employment after procuring multiple job offers (Hom et al., 2017; Lee, Hom, et al., 2017). The work of Lee and Mitchell (1994) helped reinvigorate interest in turnover research.

With a background in sociology, Price (2001) sought to look at turnover through a different lens. Utilizing past studies, Price (2001) focused attention on the content of turnover instead of strictly the turnover process. Additionally, the author also stressed environmental influences of employee volunteer turnover instead of attitudinal factors (Hom et al., 2017). Such work included evaluating the job site and labor market influences, community and family ties impacts, and occupational causes (Mitchell & Lee, 2001). Such work resulted in the development

of practical models that allowed managers to mitigate turnover and served as a catalyst for future inquiries into additional environmental contributors of turnover (Hom et al., 2017). These studies included evaluations of social cues (Felps et al., 2009), the influence of community and family embeddedness (Mitchell & Lee, 2001; Ramesh & Gelfand, 2010), and social networks (Feeley et al., 2008). Huysse-Gaytandjieva et al. (2013) stressed that an employee's mental health could be negatively impacted if the employee had the perception of feeling stuck in a dissatisfying job. Moving further from the older studies focusing on job satisfaction, Lee, Hom, et al. (2019) recognized that external events, such as employment offers with higher salaries and improved benefits, may initiate the intent to leave and result in various paths to turnover.

As the century of literature demonstrates, turnover has captured the attention of researchers and employers alike. While considerable developments have been made, continued advancement is still warranted. Hom et al. (2017) recognized the need for each industry to evaluate the attributes unique to that setting be studied and warn against the "one size fits all" approach. Urbina (2020), supported by Salimzadeh et al. (2017), asserted that factors contributing to turnover of faculty in academia remain worryingly limited and underresearched. Similarly, Ramasamy and Abdullah (2017) believed that a thorough evaluation of the perception from the faculty is needed if contributing factors to turnover intention and attrition are to be identified and mitigated.

### ***Concept of Turnover***

Since the first research on employee turnover was conducted in the early 1900s and the first empirical publication in 1925, several similar definitions of turnover have been used (Hom et al., 2017; Muchinsky & Morrow, 1980; Ngo-Henha, 2017). The common underlying theme of these definitions is employee turnover as an employee severs employment ties and membership

to an organization (Hom et al., 2017). Ngo-Henha (2017), referencing the works of Ellett et al. (2007), categorized turnover as unavoidable, desirable, and undesirable. According to these authors, unavoidable turnover occurs when uncontrollable circumstances, such as sickness or family matters, or retirement result in the employee leaving the organization. Desirable and undesirable turnover occurs when either incompetent or valuable competent employees, respectively, terminate employment against the employer's will.

Scholars have further classified turnover as either voluntary or involuntary. Involuntary turnover is when the employee is fired or laid off by the employer for various reasons such as under/poor performance, unethical behavior, violation of organizational policies, and others (An, 2019; Ngo-Henha, 2017). Voluntary turnover, contrastingly, occurs when the employee terminates employment on their own accord without the involvement of the employer (Zhen & Mansor, 2020). Some of the causes of voluntary employee turnover include the employees' perception of not being compensated adequately, stress, unjust labor practices, and the lack of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, career advancement, and/or autonomy (Breugh, 2021; Ngo-Henha, 2017; Rivard et al., 2020; Rubenstein et al., 2018). Job dissatisfaction has been identified by many scholars as the primary driver for voluntary turnover (Apostel et al., 2018; Terason, 2018; Woo & Allen, 2014; Zhen & Mansor, 2020). Employee turnover, no matter the cause, can be costly in many ways for both public and private institutions.

### ***Cost of Employee Turnover***

Turnover of employees can have both visible and invisible outcomes that can place an enormous burden on the organization (Kegan & Lahey, 2016). As Ngo-Henha (2017) emphasized, excessive turnover can plague an organization and can have both destructive and

detrimental impacts on both the organization and the employees. Such costs can be classified into direct and indirect costs.

**Direct Costs.** The fiscal ramifications of employee turnover are often stressed within the literature. Hom et al. (2017) asserted that replacement expenses can range from 90% to 200% of the annual salary of the employee being replaced. Similarly, Field et al. (2021), referencing the work of Cascio (2006) and Allen (2008), emphasized that the cost to replace an employee can exceed the amount of the individual's annual salary and that such a cost can consume 40% of the organization's annual income. Yarbrough et al. (2017) estimated the replacement cost of a single nurse to range from \$44,380 to \$63,400 and that loss of these employees results in hospitals in the United States losing over \$6 million annually. Such findings are similar to that of Hughes (2017), who estimated that replacing a single healthcare worker cost approximately \$50,000. The fiscal ramification of turnover alone warranted further investigation into the retention of Program Directors regionally. To validate the need for such a study further, the nonvisible impacts, or indirect costs, of turnover must also be considered.

**Indirect Costs.** The invisible impact of turnover can be even more damaging to the organization than the financial implication of losing employees. The intangible nature of indirect costs also makes such consequences more challenging to recognize and track (Collins et al., 2015). Hancock et al. (2017) identified loss of productivity, the underperformance of the organization, and decreased customer service as the gravest outcomes resulting from high attrition of employees. While Rivard et al. (2020) also recognized the loss of productivity, these authors also acknowledged the negative impact of turnover on patient care and safety. Harris (2019) insisted that the retention of faculty is imperative to meet the shortages of providers experienced throughout the country. Failure to retain these valued employees threatens the

access that Americans have to healthcare across all healthcare disciplines.

The organization's employees are often the victim of the indirect costs of turnover. As vacancies occur, organizations place increasing workloads on the remaining staff (Kumar & Yakhlef, 2016). The increased workload can result in loss of productivity, erode morale, and result in burnout (Breugh, 2021; Crowe et al., 2018; Kumar & Yakhlef, 2016; Kurnat-Thoma et al., 2017). Additionally, these employees are at increased risk for work-related stress, obesity, mental illness, and the development of chronic diseases (Crowe et al., 2018; Shan et al., 2016; Urbina, 2020). Such risks increase the likelihood that these individuals will also look for an alternative place of employment (Hancock et al., 2017). This phenomenon is referred to as turnover contagion theory.

First introduced by Felps et al. (2009), turnover contagion theory postulates that turnover can spread like an illness or disease as an employee sees others in the organization seeking alternative employment. The authors developed turnover contagion theory utilizing two seminal works. The first was *Organizations* by March and Simon (1958). These authors asserted that the primary causes of voluntary turnover are job satisfaction, the commitment of the organization, and the employees' perception of the ease of obtaining new employment. The second work was that of Festinger (1954), who developed the social comparison theory. Social comparison theory recognizes that if one's views, emotional state, and behaviors differ from those of another employee, he or she is more likely to change such perspective of the situation in order to conform to those of the relevant other, especially during ambiguous situations.

Utilizing two large samples from different industries, Felps et al. (2009) used multilevel analysis to identify behaviors such as updating a resume, participating in job interviews, and discussing the intent to leave increased the propensity of other individuals in the department to

participate in similar behaviors and result in increased turnover within the organization. Such findings are concordant with those of Hancock et al. (2017) who after performing a meta-analysis of 159 studies of collective turnover, affirmed that the collective turnover increases as the presence of involuntary turnover become more prevalent. These authors went on to identify that in addition to depleting an organization's human resources, such turnover can be costly as vital knowledge, experience, and skills are also lost.

### **Attrition of Faculty**

Although there is minimal literature that pertains directly to the turnover of the faculty in EMS and paramedic programs, the turnover of faculty in other healthcare disciplines provides valuable insight. Grawe (2018) recognized the unique differences and challenges of retaining high-quality faculty between two and four-year post-secondary educational institutions. The author acknowledged the use of part-time faculty to help fill the void. However, Grawe (2018), referencing the work of Bok (2013), warned that such practices could result in the inflation of grades and negatively impact retention. Due to the similarities in practice and educational standards, it is prudent to review the literature regarding nursing faculty retention.

### ***Nursing Faculty Turnover***

Attrition of nursing faculty has gained much more interest than paramedic faculty. As with many areas of research, much of the dated studies were qualitative in nature, setting the foundation for quantitative inquiries (Anderson, 2009; Boyd & Lawley, 2009; Dempsey, 2007; Duffy, 2013; Findlow, 2012; McArthur-Rouse, 2008; McDermid et al., 2013; McDonald, 2010; Schriener, 2007; Terrell, 2016). These studies identify a lack of role responsibilities, insufficient administrative support, differing skill sets from clinical application to education, and the need for increased psychological and sociological support as contributing factors for nursing educators

leaving. To help reduce such turnover, proper socialization of faculty in the organization using social support such as a robust mentoring approach, clear roles and responsibilities supported in handbooks, and faculty support for the first 3 years or until the educational member becomes adequately acclimated to the new position were suggested (Anderson, 2009; Dempsey, 2007; Findlow, 2012; McArthur-Rouse, 2008; McDonald, 2010). Such inquiries helped lay the basis for additional quantitative research.

Much of the recent literature regarding nursing faculty attrition and turnover intentions have been quantitative in nature. Using a quantitative descriptive framework, Westphal et al. (2016) identified workforce issues, such as administrative problems, lack of compensation, and unsatisfactory working conditions, as primary contributors to nursing faculty attrition. Emory et al. (2017) and Lee, Miller, et al. (2017) both used a quantitative correlational design to explore factors that impact the nursing faculty's intent to stay with an organization. These studies found that workplace factors such as institutional leadership, policies that facilitate a proper work-family balance, and cultivating a culture that fosters collaboration are key recommendations for retaining nursing faculty. Woodworth (2016) also applied quantitative correlational methodology and stressed the relevance of Herzberg et al.'s (1959) two-factor theory in nursing education. They concluded that both hygiene and motivational factors influence job satisfaction and the intent to stay.

To help fill the void due to a lack of qualified full-time nurse faculty on an intervention that has been seen is the use of part-time or adjunct faculty (Elder et al., 2016; Schaar et al., 2015; Sousa & Resha, 2019). While such strategies help reduce the strain of vacant positions within the educational setting, adjunct faculty utilization is not without its challenges. While these individuals possess the clinical knowledge, they lack the pedagogical and instructional

competencies required to teach such principles (Pennbrant, 2016; Sousa & Resha, 2019).

McPherson and Candela (2019) found that program directors and administrators should provide adequate support, mentoring, and onboarding programs to help ensure that all nursing faculty are prepared for the rigors of the job. However, such support is difficult to provide consistently and adequately if the program directors are not retained, as seen in paramedic education programs across the nation.

As demonstrated by the review of literature on nursing faculty turnover, research regarding paramedic faculty and administrative attrition is lacking compared to nursing administration research. Further enquiry is needed to advance the understanding of regional and national factors contributing to the turnover of paramedic program directors. Following the example provided by the nursing faculty research, a robust qualitative inquiry can provide the foundation for additional quantitative studies. This study intends to add to such qualitative research so that future quantitative analysis can be conducted to help formulate interventions to help mitigate the attrition of these key individuals.

### ***Turnover Intention***

While extensive research has been conducted on employee turnover, the challenge of collecting employment turnover data has been recognized by researchers (Blau et al., 2016; Ngo-Henha, 2017). Mobley (1977) identified that turnover intention could be utilized as a proxy for turnover when data on employees leaving the organization was unavailable. While many similar but distinct definitions of turnover intention have been provided by researchers over the years (Ngo-Henha, 2017), turnover intention can be defined as the employees' deliberate willingness to renounce employment with an organization due to job dissatisfaction (Hafeez, 2019). Over the last several decades, turnover intentions have been recognized as the most effective predictor of



actual employee turnover and continue to be used as a surrogate in turnover research (Fallon & Rice, 2015; Hom et al., 2017; Ngo-Henha, 2017; Pasha & Aftab, 2020; Xiao et al., 2021).

Fortuin (2017) insisted that such intention can adversely affect organizational performance and is the leading cause of organizational turnover. To help alleviate turnover intention and low employee attrition, managers need to recognize and correct the determinants of turnover intention.

### ***Determinants of Turnover Intention***

The employees' job satisfaction can be impacted by various intrinsic and extrinsic variables resulting in differing levels of intent to leave an organization. Arthi and Sumathi (2020) found administrative leadership, contextual factors, and organizational flaws as primary influences of job satisfaction and, in turn, turnover intention. In higher education, workload, stress, burnout, and poor work-life balance increase the turnover intentions of the faculty (Gulsaule & Magdolna, 2019; Ramasamy & Abdullah, 2017; Urbina, 2020). In a study of nursing program directors and administrators, Mintz-Binder (2014) found that such roles are challenging to fill and retain. This author noted the impetus for such turnover are lack of job satisfaction, unclear role expectations, role conflict, faculty shortages, absence of administrator support, and lack of work-family balance. The attrition of faculty can have a disastrous impact on the institution. Webber (2019) acknowledged that leadership, mentorship, and student role models are lost as faculty vacate such educational roles. The author proceeded to stress decreased productivity of the institution and lower return on investment as consequences of faculty attrition. In the increasingly complex realm of higher education, retaining high-quality faculty is paramount if an institution wishes to maintain a competitive advantage.

## **Theoretical Foundations**

As Walumbwa et al. (2019) recognized, a theoretical framework guides research, defines what will be measured, and what types of relationships will be studied. The theoretical foundation for this qualitative study is derived from Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory and Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory. The expectancy theory has guided much of the research regarding turnover intentions, especially regarding faculty in higher education (Daly & Dee, 2006). Motivation-hygiene theory provides a two-dimensional paradigm that influences an employee's perception of the work environment. Each of these theories helped to develop the purpose statement and research questions to guide this study and were evaluated further.

### ***Expectancy Theory***

First established by Vroom in 1964, the expectancy theory postulates that before any event, an employee has a preconceived expectation. If the organization meets such presumptions favorably, then the employee is satisfied. Inversely, if the employee's expectations are not met, then the employee becomes dissatisfied and can have a negative impact on the effort put forth with greater intent to leave the organization (Jiang & Klein, 2009).

Various authors have utilized the term valence to describe the desirability and feelings regarding the outcomes of goals (Gyurko, 2011; Miner, 2005). The term force refers to the effort the employee is willing to expend to obtain an objective (Gyurko, 2011). Expectancy theory recognizes that effort is determined by how much the reward is worth for achieving the goal (Hidayatus, 2017).

If the employee values the position held in the organization and believes that the rewards are adequate, the employee will expend more effort to maintain the position. However, when the rewards of the position are inadequate and the employee does not appreciate the role in the

organization, little energy will be applied to retain the job (Ngo-Henha, 2017). Mobley et al. (1979) recognized that an employee may decide to stay with an undesirable job if the eventual rewards, such as promotion or transfer, are deemed worthy. Additionally, an employee may leave a desirable job if they expect the returns to be greater from another employment opportunity. Gyurko (2011) also stressed that the expectancy theory only captures an individual's feelings at a specific time during employment and that the variables that impact valence may vary over time, resulting in a fluctuation in the exerted force of the employee.

Organizations in higher education can significantly benefit from recognizing the components of the expectancy theory. According to Daly and Dee (2006), structural expectations for faculty influence job satisfaction and commitment. When such expectations are met, increased job satisfaction and loyalty can help reduce the attrition of educators. Conversely, if the employee does view the rewards as suitable to the amount of effort being applied, dissatisfaction can result in the faculty member leaving the organization. Livi et al. (2019) and Yanik and Yildiz (2019) both emphasized the importance of organizational socialization to help mitigate turnover. Such socialization helps align the employees' expectations to the values and goals of the organization and helps make the employee agreeable and productive members of the company.

Scholars have scrutinized, debated, and empirically tested Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory in a number of industries and settings (Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). Withstanding such rigor over several decades has established the credibility of the theory. However, researchers have recognized the continue need to evaluate the expectancy theory in supplementary social context, geographic locations, and varying educational institutions to better understand factors that contribute to faculty attrition (Daly & Dee, 2006; Hom et al., 2017; Lloyd & Mertens, 2018;

Zhou & Volkwein, 2004). No literature was identified that utilized the expectancy theory to evaluate such turnover within the state of Texas or pertaining to EMS education.

### ***Motivation-Hygiene (Two-Factor) Theory***

First introduced in 1959, Herzberg utilized a quantitative study evaluating the perceptions of 200 participants to identify factors that impact employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction within the United States (Herzberg et al., 1959; Tan & Waheed, 2011; Vévoda et al., 2011). Building on Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, Herzberg et al. (1959) believed that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by various mutually exclusive variables within the workplace and cannot be evaluated effectively on a single continuum (Hur, 2018). Opposing the traditional view that a lack of job satisfaction produces a dissatisfied employee, Herzberg argued that instead of job dissatisfaction, no job satisfaction was the inverse of job satisfaction (Kacel et al., 2005; Lacey et al., 2015; Robbins & Judge, 2013). The result of the study was "a two-dimensional paradigm of factors affecting people's attitudes about work" (Gawel, 1997, p. 1). Such influences were categorized into intrinsic (i.e., motivational) and extrinsic (i.e., hygiene) factors.

Motivational and hygiene factors are inherently different and impact the employee's satisfaction in various ways. Utilizing the medical term of hygiene in which health hazards are removed from the environment, hygiene factors include interpersonal relations, salaries, company administration and practices, working conditions, and supervision (Alshmemri et al., 2017; Herzberg et al., 1959). Such influences tend to be short-lived, with workers' attitudes often returning to the previous state (Gawel, 1997; Yeh et al., 2010). Motivational factors, including advancement or possibility for growth, recognition, personal achievement, increased responsibility, and satisfaction from work itself, are recognized as having a longer-lasting impact on positive attitudes towards employment by satisfying personal needs for self-actualization and

growth (Alshmemri et al., 2017; Gawel, 1997; Herzberg, 1966). Alfayad and Arif (2017) agreed by stressing that while it is crucial to focus on the hygiene elements to minimize job dissatisfaction, it is more important to strengthen the motivational elements to increase job satisfaction. Such factors can be observed in a combination of ways.

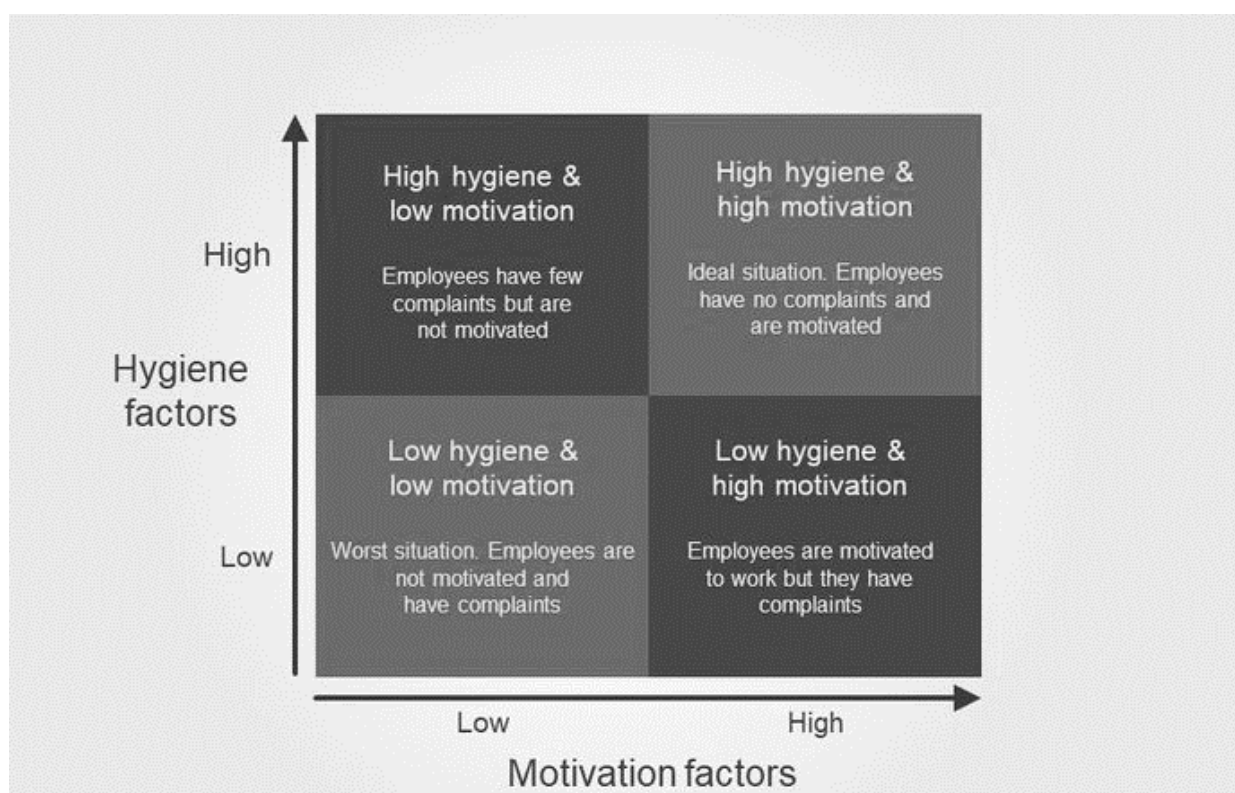
Miner (2005), referencing the work of Herzberg and Zautra (1976), recognized four schemes that measure the employee's attitude and are presented in Figure 1. The least favorable is low hygiene and low motivation. Such a combination results in an unmotivated employee being dissatisfied with the job and, if the grievances are not addressed, the employee will leave the employer. The second results in low hygiene and high motivation. While the employee is dissatisfied and has complaints, the worker is motivated and pleased by the work performed. Such a situation could arise if an employee is working in an industry that they find valuable but the pay and/or benefits of the organization fall below the industry standard. Inversely, high hygiene and low motivation occurs when the pay and working conditions are acceptable, but the work is undesirable or uninteresting. The employee's primary motivation to go to work is to obtain a paycheck and will leave if they perceive another job to be lucrative but more interesting. The last and most desirable is high hygiene and high motivation in which the worker has no complaints or grievances and are motivated to perform.

Herzberg et al.'s (1959) two-factor theory has also been extensively studied in a variety of disciplines and industries. The applicability of the model has resulted in the two-factor theory becoming the most employed framework for research measuring job satisfaction (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Such a framework has been predominant in healthcare with many nursing researchers utilizing the two-factor theory as the theoretical lens at which to evaluate job satisfaction amounts nurses (Derby-Davis, 2014; Kacel et al., 2005; Lawan et al., 2017). Such utilization can

also be seen within nursing education (Lee, Miller, et al., 2017; Westphal et al., 2016). Much like Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, which has been successfully applied to the related field of nursing and nursing education, no literature regarding the use of Herzberg et al.'s (1959) two-factor theory in EMS was identified.

**Figure 1**

*Illustration of the Two-Factor (Motivation-Hygiene) Theory*



### Theoretical Application

Both Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory and Herzberg et al.'s (1959) two-factor theory have been utilized by researchers in a variety of contexts and disciplines. To address the identified gap in the literature and to gain a broader lens to examine the factors that influence the intention of paramedic program directors to leave their position within the state of Texas, these

two theories will be utilized in unison. The expectancy theory provides the framework to evaluate the perception of how the preconceived expectations of the position were met or not met, the valence of achieved goals, and the force these individuals are applying. Such force is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators (Gyurko, 2011; Hidayatus, 2017). Through the use of the two-factor theory, such motivational and hygiene factors can be identified, as well as the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of such approaches. As demonstrated in the related field of nursing education, the job satisfaction and turnover intention of these individuals can then be better understood (Lee, Hom, et al., 2017; Westphal et al., 2016). Additionally, the two-factor theory can be used to identify which of the four schemes are most prominent among paramedic program directors and assist in the formulation of recommendations to help curb the attrition of these individuals.

Without understanding the nuances that impact the turnover of paramedic program directors regionally, the impacts that have been witnessed locally will likely continue to plague the state of Texas. The study sought to add to the literature and provide valuable insight into the root causes of such turnover to offer suggestions to mitigate the negative impacts of turnover. The current global COVID-19 pandemic and the stress it has placed on the healthcare system globally, regionally, and locally makes this study more essential than ever before.

## **Summary**

To help lay the study's foundation, a literature review was conducted to examine the history of the EMS profession and EMS education within the United States. Compared to other healthcare professions, EMS is relatively young and fragmented in both clinical and educational settings. Such variances, coupled with accreditation and state requirements, make the paramedic

program director an integral component of the success of the programs. However, these vital members continue to leave the position at alarming rates (Allmon, 2020).

A review of employee turnover was also conducted, beginning from a historical perspective. The direct and indirect costs of such attrition were also evaluated. Due to limited research conducted on the turnover of EMS faculty and paramedic program directors, the related field of nursing faculty was assessed through the lens of attrition. While the literature on turnover has been extensive, the difficulty in collecting turnover data has been recognized (Blau et al., 2016; Ngo-Henha, 2017). Such hardships have led to the use of turnover intentions as a proxy for predicting actual turnover (Fallon & Rice, 2015; Hom et al., 2017; Ngo-Henha, 2017; Pasha & Aftab, 2020; Xiao et al., 2021).

The review of the literature concluded with the theoretical framework of the study. Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory recognizes that the organization's ability to meet or fail to meet the expectations of the employee impacts the intent of the individual to remain with the organization, while Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory recognizes the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence the intention to stay in the position. The combination of these theories in a single study will allow for a more comprehensive evaluation of regional and national factors that influence paramedic program directors' intentions to leave the director role within the state of Texas. Chapter 3 will outline the methodology of the research design, sampling, the collection of data, analysis, and ethical consideration. The following chapter will conclude by recognizing the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study.



### **Chapter 3: Research Method**

The study of employee turnover has been rigorously evaluated and has produced a substantial body of data. Lee et al. (2017) reviewed more than two thousand articles related to voluntary turnover. However, Urbina (2020) recognized that academics' views and experiences of academic demands are worryingly understudied from a personal perspective, and this field remains substantially unexplored. Salmzadeh et al. (2017) went on to stress the need to evaluate the first-hand experiences of educators to gain a better understanding of the root causes of factors that contribute to voluntary turnover. To help address this need, a qualitative descriptive approach was utilized for this study.

The qualitative approach can yield a deeper understanding of a concept and shed light on its various aspects since quantitative research looks at a concept in its cultural context from those who have had a long-term relationship with the concept in question and have experienced it personally (Mohammadi et al., 2021). Ramasamy and Abdullah (2017) reinforced this stance by stressing, "qualitative research provides a deeper understanding and insight into the realities of the faculty's past experiences from the perspective of the faculty themselves" (p. 173). Similarly, Doyle et al. (2020), referencing the work of Bradshaw et al. (2017), reported that a qualitative descriptive design is appropriate since it considers the subjectivity of the problem, the varying experiences of the participants, and is presented in a manner that reflects the shared terminology of the profession. The authors acknowledged the commonality of utilizing the qualitative descriptive design in healthcare research secondary to the inherently flexible and straightforward approach to addressing complexities within the healthcare context. The descriptive design contributed to the knowledge surrounding program directors' turnover and turnover intentions in the state of Texas to aid in the improvements in the practical setting (Chafe, 2017).

## Sampling

A purposive sampling technique was employed to identify and recruit a pool of participants familiar with issues currently facing program directors in the state of Texas. Doyle et al. (2020) described this approach appropriately by stating, “Purposive sampling refers to selecting research participants that can speak to the research aims and who have knowledge and experience of the phenomenon under scrutiny” (p. 446). The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) database provided on the organization’s website was utilized to identify all program directors in the state of Texas for accredited programs or those with a Letter of Review (LOR) status. The LOR status signifies “that a program seeking initial accreditation has demonstrated sufficient compliance with the accreditation standards through the Letter of Review Self Study Report (LSSR) and other documentation” (Find A Program, n.d.). A recruitment email was sent to each of the 62 identified program directors (Appendix C). The email outlined the study, asked the director to participate, and stated that a Zoom meeting would be scheduled once the individual agreed to take part in the research.

To be considered for the study, the individual must have been currently functioning in the role of program director of a paramedic program within the state of Texas and be willing to be recorded either on video or audio mediums. Exclusion criteria included those that were no longer the program director for a paramedic program and those that were not willing to be recorded either on video or audio. Additionally, to ensure that the individual has been in the role long enough to have gained insight and experience that would contribute to answering the research questions of this study, the directors must have held that role for a minimum of 2 years. If the person did not respond, a follow up reminder email was sent out periodically after the original message.

Directors were entered into the study on a first come basis. This continued until a point of data saturation occurred. It is recommended that a purposeful sampling should be between five and 25 participants for phenomenon inquiries (Ramasamy & Abdullah, 2017). However, recruitment ended when data saturation had been achieved. Doyle et al. (2020) recognized that data saturation provides the gold standard for determining sample size in qualitative research. According to Fusch and Ness (2015), data saturation is reached “when there is enough information to replicate the study, when the ability to obtain additional new information has been attained, and when further coding is no longer feasible” (p. 1408).

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

Once a participant was entered into the study, data were collected utilizing a semistructured interview using Zoom, the commonly used video-conferencing platform. The use of Zoom helped reduce the cost of conducting the study and allowed scheduling that best accommodated the participants’ schedules. Such a platform also helped maximize the variation of those involved and not limit the study by geographic boundaries (Doyle et al., 2020). The participants provided consent to have the interview recorded on video prior to the scheduling of the interview. If the individual did not want their face to be recorded, only the audio recording were downloaded after the interview. If consent was not given for either video or audio recording, the interview were not conducted. Kim et al. (2017) endorsed that semistructured interview for data collection is the most used technique in qualitative descriptive research. In semistructured interviews, participants may answer structured questions in a way that provides flexibility and freedom (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Additionally, an interviewer can add supplementary questions based on a participant’s response to enhance the depth of the data

(Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018; Bryman & Bell, 2015). Notes were taken throughout the interview to help formulate common themes and to assist in asking follow-up questions.

Due to my positionality of being a practicing licensed paramedic and holding the director position of a paramedic program, it is important to recognize and minimize potential biases. As Sinatra et al. (2014) asserted, to better understand the view of others, the researcher must be able to comprehend, accept, and mitigate personal biases and points of view. To help address such biases, the use of bracketing was utilized. Bracketing, as defined by Chan et al. (2013), is the ability to conduct research without using prior knowledge, experience, or bias. In bracketing, two practices are employed: removing assumptions and recognizing one's new level of comprehension as the study advances (Overgaard, 2015).

The “Interview Questions Based on Job Satisfaction Factors in Relation to Motivation Theories” created by Sovani and Konyu-Fogel (2020) provided the framework for the interview. The tool was validated by a panel of expert witnesses within the field and was initially used to evaluate Millennial’s job satisfaction and retention within the hotel industry. After receiving permission to use the instrument (Appendix B), minor changes were made to the verbiage of the instrument. For example, the term “millennials” was changed to “Paramedic Program Directors” and changing hotel to organization (Appendix D). However, the questions and their intent remained unchanged. Since the tool did not address the turnover intention of the participants, four questions were added to the introductory questions to better gauge turnover intentions and holistically address the study's research questions. Before conducting the interviews, such changes were validated by a qualitative subject matter expert to ensure that the minimal changes in terminology did not compromise the original instrument and that the added questions properly accessed the turnover intentions of the participants. To help ensure that the instrument flowed

appropriately and that the modifications met the needs of the study, several pilot tests were performed on individuals, including a past paramedic program director, a paramedic clinical coordinator, an advanced EMT coordinator, and a nursing director. These pilot tests were transcribed and evaluated to help identify potential areas that were revised to improve the study.

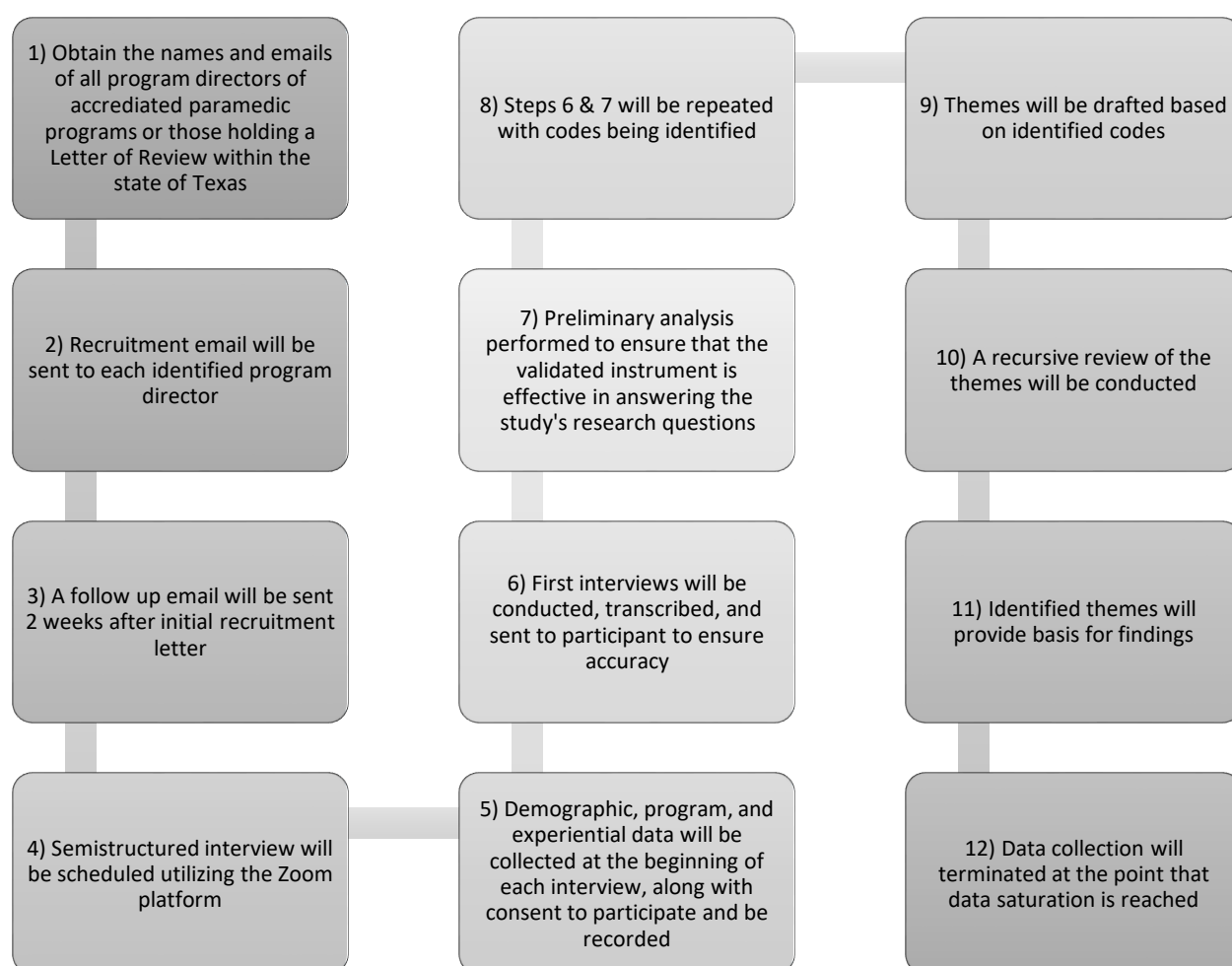
Each of the interviews were transcribed and all information that would identify the participant or the place of employment were removed. Participants were assigned a random pseudonym to further protect their identity. The transcripts were then sent to the participant to ensure the accuracy of both the transcription and the information provided (see Appendices E–O). The email stated that each participant had two weeks to review and provide feedback. If no response was received, then it was assumed that the participants had approved the transcripts, and the data was utilized as is.

An inductive analytical approach was utilized to analyze the data following analytical suggestions provided by Braun and Clarke (2006). After becoming familiar with the data, a list of codes directly related to the study's purpose were developed as part of the analysis. Like a semistructured interview, the researcher retains the liberty to introduce additional codes during the process as needed (Howitt, 2019). NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software, was utilized to help process the raw data into identifiable themes and helped focus the analysis. Both Grasso et al. (2014) and West (2012) identified the use of such software to help mitigate the impact of human error. Similarly, Kaefer et al. (2015) recognized the benefits of using data analysis software, such as NVivo, to analyze qualitative research. To ensure the data were examined and understood, Bloomberg and Volpe (2019) recommended rereading the transcripts multiple times to identify missed codes. After the codes were identified, they were evaluated using conceptual and relational analysis, resulting in combining similar codes and eliminating nonrelevant codes.

Based on these codes, themes were drafted. A recursive review of the themes was then conducted to ensure the applicability and accuracy of the developed themes while assisting in defining and naming such themes. These themes provided the basis for the findings reported (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Doyle et al., 2020). Data collection was terminated at the point that data saturation was reached (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2**

*Data Analysis Process*



## **Rigor**

For all research approaches, it is crucial to demonstrate the quality of the research process and, later, the data collected. In their seminal work, Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified four essential criteria to demonstrate the quality of qualitative studies: credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability. The recommendations of Bradshaw et al. (2017) were followed. To show credibility, a rapport was established before the interviews while demonstrating both compassion and empathy during the interview process. Utilizing member checking or verifying the accuracy of the transcripts also increased credibility. The second criteria, confirmability, was achieved by identifying the demographics of those involved and utilized direct quotes for the participants to help avoid researcher bias. Dependability was achieved by establishing an audit trail of the research process and identifying any changes that occurred in the study. Bradshaw et al. (2017) endorsed the use of purposeful sampling, ample description, and providing rich details on the study's design to help increase transferability. In accordance, transferability was exemplified by using purposeful sampling and supplying sufficient detail regarding the specifics of the research so that it can be recreated if desired.

## **Ethical Considerations**

To ensure adherence to The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research (1978), each potential participant received an email that explained both the voluntary nature of the study and the candidate's right to withdraw at any point during the study (Edlund et al., 2014; Hardicre, 2014). The email also explained the research's intent and the participants' autonomy and confidentiality. As stated in the Protection of Human Subjects, 45 CFR § 46 (2018), minimal risk is defined as "the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research [which] are not greater in and of

themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests” (p. 8). While the methodology and study pose minimal risk to the participants, the potential risks were explained. Such risks include discomfort or added stress resulting from the unpleasant recollection of past work experiences.

Member checking can improve the precision of transcription interpretations (Andraski et al., 2014). The member-checking process also ensured the proper use of language and word meanings throughout the study (Archbold et al., 2014; Forber-Pratt, 2015; Fusch & Fusch, 2015). A completed interview transcription was provided to each participant to confirm accuracy before beginning the coding process. If disparities arose, the participants were encouraged to give clarification to correct such inaccuracies.

Pseudonyms were assigned to each participant, and the organization for which they work were not mentioned. All surveys and electronic data were stored on password-protected computer and password-protected files. All hard-copy files were secured within a locked filing cabinet. In accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections, all data will be maintained and protected for a period of 3 years (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2009). Once this time elapsed, all electronic files will be permanently deleted and hard files will be disposed of by a professional shredding service. See the IRB approval in Appendix P.

## **Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

### ***Assumptions***

Hibbert et al. (2014) recognized that assumptions are characteristics of the study taken for granted by the researcher. While such assumptions are believed to be factual, the assumptions are not verified (Ellis & Levy, 2009). The first assumption of this study was that the respondents would provide accurate and honest feedback during the interview process. The second



assumption was that the individuals selected would offer value to the research based on the experiences gained from the position of paramedic program director.

### ***Limitations***

Several limitations must also be recognized. The first limitation is that the study is restricted to paramedic program directors. Directors of other levels of EMS educational programs were not considered and conclusions cannot be drawn beyond the targeted population (De Gieter & Hofmans, 2015). Next, the study is not longitudinal and only assessed the perspectives of paramedic program directors at a single point in time. Additionally, the study was restricted to the state of Texas to better understand attrition and turnover intentions within the region. However, such a methodology could reduce the generalizability of the findings in other states.

### ***Delimitations***

Delimitations are the scope or boundaries of a research project (Yin, 2014). Three delimitations are recognized in this study. The first is the participants must be a paramedic program director with a minimum of 2 years of experience in that role, and the program must be accredited. Participants were further delimited to the state of Texas.

### **Summary**

This chapter provided an outline and rationale for the research design to help explore regional and national factors that influence paramedic program directors' intentions to leave the director role within the state of Texas. The population, sampling, and process of data collection and analysis were also discussed. Credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability were presented to help ensure the quality of the research. The chapter concluded with ethical considerations and the process of protecting the data and participants before recognizing

assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study. Chapter 4 will examine the collection and analysis of the data and findings to answer the primary research question: What are the perceptions of paramedic program directors of which regional and national factors influence turnover intentions in the state of Texas?

## **Chapter 4: Results**

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to investigate the regional and national factors that impact paramedic program directors' decisions to leave the director role within the state of Texas. This research study was a necessary and specific response to the findings that (a) there was a 21% turnover rate nationally of paramedic program directors between 2016 and 2019, (b) attrition of paramedic program directors has plagued EMS education for years, and (c) no empirical studies were found that focused specifically on the causes of attrition or turnover intentions of paramedic program directors in the state of Texas (Allmon, 2020; Bryan, 2015). The research questions that guided the study and that will serve as the framework for this chapter are:

**RQ1.** What are the perceptions of paramedic program directors of which regional and national factors influence turnover intentions in the state of Texas?

**RQ1a.** How do such perceptions impact the paramedic program director's intent to leave the position?

**RQ1b.** How are intrinsic and extrinsic motivators being used, or failing to be used to help retain paramedic program directors?

Chapter 4 presents data and themes that emerged after interviewing paramedic program directors within the state of Texas. The chapter will first discuss the data collection process, demographic data of the study's participants, and data analysis. To conclude, a summary of the findings is presented.

### **Description of Sample**

After sending out the recruitment and follow-up emails to all 62 identified paramedic program directors within the state of Texas, 23 directors contacted me. Of these 23 directors,

seven (30.43%) of the 23 directors did not meet the inclusion criteria of being in the position for a minimum of 2 years and these individuals were not included in the study. Eleven (47.83%) of the 23 initial queries agreed to participate and returned the IRB-approved consent form. Each had an interview set up utilizing Zoom. Before the interview was conducted, each participant verbally stated they understood that the interview was completely voluntary and that the participant reserved the right to withdraw at any point or to skip questions that they did not feel comfortable answering, as well as providing verbal consent to being recorded. The interview ranged from 36 minutes to 89 minutes, with a mean of 61 minutes and standard deviation of 16 minutes.

### **Demographics of Sample**

Basic demographic information was obtained in the introductory portion of the interview protocol. As demonstrated in Table 1, the sample consisted of three females and eight males. Four of the interviewees held the paramedic program director role with a consortium, with the remaining eight holding the same position in a community college setting. The educational achievements of the participants ranged from a bachelor's degree (36%) to a doctoral degree (9%), with the majority currently holding a master's degree (55%). The average time participants spent in the paramedic program director role was 14 years. This experience comes from varying locations, institutions, and program sizes that span the state of Texas to provide a dynamic and robust data set to help answer the study's research questions. The average amount of time holding the director role of the participants was 14 years of experience, with a standard deviation of 8.73 (Table 1). 54% of respondents have been in the position for 5 or less years and 75% have been in the position for less than 10 years.

**Table 1***Participants Demographic Information*

Demographic	<i>n</i> (%)
Gender	
Female	3 (27%)
Male	8 (73%)
Years as a director	
<i>M</i>	14
<i>SD</i>	8.73
Highest level of education	
Bachelor's degree	4 (36%)
Master's degree	6 (55%)
Doctoral degree	1 (9%)
Organizational Structure	
Community college	7 (64%)
Consortium	4 (36%)

*Note.* One director of a consortium was a partial owner of the EMS education company.

**Coding and Analysis**

The virtual interviews were conducted following the interview guide in Appendix D. Supplementary questions were used as appropriate to help provide clarification, to encourage a more in-depth response, or to better understand the perspective of the respondent. The interviews continued until data saturation was reached, which was obtained after the tenth interview. All interviews were transcribed and sent to the participant for validation. The validated transcripts were then placed into NVivo 14 for initial analysis. Codes were developed using conceptual and relational analysis based on the similarity of the participant's responses. A recursive review of the transcripts was conducted to help identify any missing codes. Themes were generated using the specified codes and were also reviewed multiple times. A final analysis of pertinent themes

provided an opportunity for me to reflect and determine the relevance of the data in answering the study's research questions.

## **Results**

Data analysis of the lived experiences of paramedic program directors in the state of Texas revealed seven broad themes with multiple subthemes. These themes align with research questions of the investigation and included excessive workload, institutional support, national factors, regional factors, intent to leave, recompense, job satisfaction, and support from the program director's direct supervisor. All 11 (100%) participants provided constructive insight that helped shed light on the factors that impact attrition and turnover intentions of individuals in the paramedic program director role in the state of Texas.

### ***Theme 1: Excessive Workload***

The first overarching theme was excessive workload. This theme provides insight into the first research question: "What are the perceptions of paramedic program directors of which regional and national factors influence turnover intentions in the state of Texas?" Eight participants (73%) stressed that the position of paramedic program director required more than 50 hours of work a week to complete assigned job duties. Ben, who has held a program director role for 24 years, recognized that it currently takes 40 to 50 hours to complete assignments.

However, as Ben reflected on his formative years in the position, he emphasized:

The first year you're here, you're working 60 to 80 hours trying to learn everything and make everything. But you know you start getting things in a row, and you know when things are due, and know how things are done...so now we're down to 40 or 50 based upon recruitment, after-hours board meetings, or you know, other administrative duties as assigned, that are outside of regular hours.

However, the less tenured program directors found they must have to allocate over 50 hours each week to ensure the demands of the position and student needs are properly fulfilled. Several subthemes also emerged from the data gathered through the life experiences of the participants that added to the present workload. These include national accreditation, regional factors, and institutional factors, as shown at the bottom of Table 2.

**Table 2***Contributors to Workload*


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1: Shifting standards and variance in interpretations of accreditation standards	1: DSHS is a valuable resource when contacted	1: Teaching requirements outside of the director role
2: Micromanagement from the accreditation agency	2: Replication of work to meet the needs of various regulatory agencies	2: Inability to capitalize on release time
3: Increased workload due to accreditation requirement	4: Lack of communication between state governing entities	3: Institutional requirement to participate on a committee(s)
	5: Need of DSHS to hold programs accountable	4: Lack of instructional staff
		5: Lack of administrative assistant support

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**Subtheme 1.1: National Accreditation.** Of the factors that increased the workload of the participants, the national factor that was most often stated dealt with the requirements to obtain and/or maintain national accreditation. Of the directors interviewed, none of them disagreed with the need for accreditation. Most had a similar perspective as Chris, who stated, “I think that the national accreditation is a key to having successful programs.” However, Samantha, Mason, and Peter all expressed frustrations over the continuously changing standards and varying interpretations of the standards depending on who they were speaking with. Samantha would go on to acknowledge:

I realize we, as a profession, need to improve, even in EMS education. It seems like it’s a continually moving target. Every time you finally feel, oh, my goodness! I finally got here, and I have everything that [the accreditation body] needs. The way that they can understand it with our little odd program here, they move the standard.



Peter shares in Samantha's frustration with the "moving target" associated with reporting outcomes by affirming:

Every time I think I know what they want, they change what they want. So, you can't just use last year's and modify it. Make it better. You have to kind of review it, and in some ways I guess that's probably better in the long run... [but] it causes the most confusion and frustration. This is not enjoyable you know...I guess that I would say is it just seems like I spend an awful lot of time doing things that maybe aren't as important to me as they are others.

Joshua, who described accreditation as a "necessary evil" and a "two-edged sword," recalled a conversation that he had with the accreditation body:

[The accreditation body] asked how we were doing, or how they were impacting us. My response was, it just cost me money to get the same results, cause we were doing fine before accreditation. Accreditation didn't really change our results. It just made more work on me and more expense to the program. Now, having said that, I am not against our accreditation, I think it's valuable if we're gonna get to the profession to be viewed more professionally, instead of ambulance drivers.

Chris, Thomas, Joshua, and Ben all felt that the accreditation was micromanaging the paramedic programs that they were responsible for running. Such micromanagement was a direct cause of Ben considering leaving the director role, who emphasized:

[I]f we could find somebody who would take over that program. I would turn it over to them in a minute... it's just not worth the paperwork for me. It's not worth the administrative headaches. I love teaching. I've been a very successful teacher. I've had

very good pass rates throughout my years of teaching...But being a program director for an accredited program, it is a pain in the ass.

Besides the frustration that stemmed from the constantly changing standards, varying interpretations of the standards, and perceived micromanagement of the accreditation body, the accreditation process was recognized as one of the largest learning curves associated with the position.

Angie and Becky both voiced that they underestimated the amount of work that the accreditation process would require and identified these tasks as the largest learning curve after assuming the program director role. Similarly, Chris felt that the commitment to remain accredited went unrecognized by the college's leadership by stating, "With the accreditation stuff, I don't think that they totally understand the enormity of what we have to do. So sometimes I don't feel like some of the [college's] administration understands all the roles that we have to play." There was some overlap between national accreditation and regional factors that increased the workloads of the participants.

**Subtheme 1.2: Regional Factors.** Of the state regulatory agencies that impact EMS education, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) was the most referenced. Overall, the interactions of the participants with this agency were very positive. Angie, Ben, Rodney, and Peter all recalled various individuals from the state department in helping her navigate issues throughout their careers. David had a comparable experience and encouraged others to "[w]ork very closely with your local state rep. They can save you a lot of headaches." Similarly, Rodney recognized, "[the agency] wants to help you. They want you to succeed. They are not the big, bad wolf." Peter utilized both the DSHS and fellow directors, recalling:

So, the State was very helpful. I found that the State is your best friend when it comes to being a program director. I also found some other people across the State, and the nice thing about Texas is that... you could pick up phone call any other program director, and they'll help you out. So, I found those resources very early and was very glad to have.

While the perceptions of the DSHS were very encouraging overall, issues were identified that increased the workload of the interviewed directors.

The replication of work to meet the specific requirements of various regulatory agencies was a source of discontent among the participants. Chris stressed such frustrations stating:

In Texas, higher education coordinating board who have their own view of things that doesn't correspond with what the Texas Department of State Health Services think education programs should be. That's what's amazing is you have two government entities that won't even talk to each other.... When it comes to the State, there are all kinds of people. And then the local institutions. It's just we, you know, there are so many people we have to just keep in mind whenever we make decisions.

Jerry had a similar perspective and provided some advice for new program directors by recognizing:

You can want what you want, but it's not necessarily what the people who are going to be grading wants. What you want is not necessarily what the national body wants, not necessarily what the college wants. Not necessarily what the freaking state wants, and knowing what it is that they want, has been so much more important in changing the way that I do things coming from that background. So that would be my biggest piece of advice is, learn what it is that you actually are being graded against, and then work towards that.

Comparably, Mason affirmed his exasperation by voicing, “I feel like it’s pretty redundant from already having to do stuff for accreditation and then we’re having to do it through another avenue as well.” Ben recognized some of the issues that directors of consortium EMS programs face dealing with variances between agencies regarding documentation, stating that there is “miscommunication oftentimes in the forms, one wants one thing and the other wants another.” He would go on to elaborate on the experience by recalling:

We have the exact same documentation with different headers on the top of it, and so, when we do minutes of our meeting, the Accreditation body 1 wants to see every that’s mentioned about what we did for our paramedic program. And we talk about the EMT Basics, having a chance to go to a pediatric clinic and learn how to do patient assessments. And the [accreditation body] came right back and said, we don’t need the information. It shouldn’t be in there. It’s not pertinent to your accreditation. So that’s been a double the work type of thing.

While DSHS, overall, was referenced positively, the multiple regulatory agencies in Texas, coupled with the misalignment between the national, state, and organization reporting requirements, has resulted in an increased workload. Varying accountability that programs are held to was also recognized.

While not directly affecting the workload of the paramedic program directors, the lack of accountability to which the state holds programs was another grave concern that was identified. Angie voiced such distress by stressing:

That kind of frustrating to me, and I still ask State representative 1, when are we gonna start looking at these schools that have the lowest pass rates? And these students that are going to them and taking their money cannot pass the test. That is frustrating because I

believe in education, and I believe that everybody has an opportunity to learn...I sometimes feel like the state it falls on deaf ears.

Mason's views were concordant with those of Angie, who voiced:

Back in the good old days, if you had a pass rate in the 60s, you had whoever that project specialist is in that area, he or she was having a conversation with you, and they were saying, "Hey, look! You need to get your business right because we're not gonna continue to have individuals' that are coming out subpar." And unfortunately, if you look at the kind of pass rates throughout the State for the last few years, you have a lot of places that are not meeting that standard. So, what are what are we doing for the future of EMS education, when we continue to allow those under performers to continue to underperform, and then whose responsibility is it to manage that?

As the recollections of the participants have demonstrated, the various agencies that these individuals must report to often lack communication, increasing the workload by requiring the duplication of work. Since each state sets the educational requirements of institutions, it may be time to reevaluate the reporting requirements within the state of Texas to better align with other governing entities within the state and the national accreditation agencies. While these national and regional factors negatively impact the workload of these program leaders, perhaps the most alarming and impactful can be seen at the institutional level.

**Subtheme 1.3: Institutional Factors.** Of the voiced dissatisfaction with holding the position of paramedic program director, the majority revolved around institutional factors. These factors included a lack of instructional staff/faculty, inadequate administrative assistant support, and various requirements that added to the already overwhelming workload. Several participants recognized that such factors could significantly increase the attrition of program directors,

especially among the less-tenured leaders, and increased the participant's turnover intentions.

***Added Requirements.*** Of the directors that were interviewed, nine of the 11 (82%) were still actively teaching in the program, with most of them carrying a full load of 15 hours or greater. All seven (100%) program directors that function within the community college setting were required to instruct in the classroom. David, Rodney, and Chris were given release time by the institution, where the required teaching hours are reduced to provide time to focus on director duties. However, due to the amount of work needed for the position, none of them were able to capitalize on such a benefit. As Rodney illustrated:

I basically carry a full-time teaching load. And so the program director were extra duties on top of that. So the college gave me three hours. So basically, we get 15 equated hours... Now the reality is, I didn't really get the release. What I basically got was an overload in essence. I would get a little bit of overload for it, but not really. It was other duties as assigned is really what it was... But we've been short staff, and then we added extra classes, and so that also hasn't really kind of played out as it should have.

Chris provided a similar scenario as he explained:

I'm in the classroom for 24 hours a week, three days a week. So, it's Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursdays. So, Mondays and Fridays are the only days I really have to do anything administrative. So even though they say I have released time to do the program director job, when you look at it, compared to other academic programs and also vocational programs, I'm not getting that released time.

The release time provided by the organization could not be capitalized on due to the workload placed on the individuals. To add to this burden, most had a required commitment for institutional involvement.

Similar to the teaching requirements, nine of the 11 (82%) directors were required to serve on a committee outside of their programs, including all seven (100%) directors in the community college setting. While several voiced the importance of contributing to the institution and becoming familiar with organizational politics, most saw such roles as mandatory burdens. Becky stressed that such requirements are vital to receiving annual raises, stating:

We're required to have college service. So, I sit on committees, and we do other functions of the college as part of my college service. There's not a number requirement, but, as you know, our pay increase yearly is always contingent upon our volunteerism, and what we do within the college.

Chris recognized the struggle in trying to be a leader within his organization while juggling the demands of the director role, explaining:

We also have our normal college duties here. So, I'm known throughout the college, I think, as someone that is really passionate about the college and what we do. So, I've been on a lot of committees. So that takes a lot of time. I find myself on a lot of long-term committees when some instructors may have one committee assignment a year. I may have 5 to 10.

The pressure placed on program directors with the obligated teaching load and the requirement to participate on committees was amplified as they had to adapt to being inadequately staffed.

***Lack of Instructional Staff/Faculty.*** During the interview process, only four (36%) of the programs stated that the program was adequately staffed with instructional support. The other seven directors (64%) indicated that they needed one to five additional instructors to meet the needs of their programs. Angie acknowledged that she would be able to relinquish some of her workload with the added help, stating, "With the program growing, I think I would be better with

one more full-timer. That way I could kind of step down... so I could do more stuff with the chair and the program director [roles].” However, Ben, Peter, Jerry, and Mason all recognized the difficulty in competing with the wage that paramedics are getting paid in the EMS industry. Ben reaffirmed such difficulties and the impact that it has had on his program by stressing:

College cannot compete with what they’re making in the workforce nowadays... You could look at my job board right now. I’ve probably got 15 positions that are open that I could find right now if I had applicants. Makes it tough, and that just adds to the burden of everybody else.

Similarly, Jerry voiced his primary dissatisfaction with the director role by stating:

I mean, the dissatisfaction is just the time, and the workload, and the infrastructure. You know, we could always use more people always. If I had unlimited funds, I would hire 10 full-time instructors tomorrow, and I could probably find 10 good full-time instructors that could start tomorrow. But just the revenue’s not there. [The faculty] just don’t get paid enough.

The inability of EMS educational institutions to compete with the EMS industry’s salaries was not the only identified factor that has impacted the need for additional academic personnel.

Lack of institutional support to provide additional personnel to satisfy the needs of growth in the programs was also stressed. Peter and Becky both recognized the resistance by the organizations to provide such resources until program growth requires additional employees. Becky, whose greatest dissatisfaction with the director role were the restraints due to a lack of support, recognized:

I would probably be able to sustain four to five full-time faculty, because in between our paramedic courses and our EMT courses, we have three cohorts going on at the same



time, with 15 to 20 students at a time. So that's about 60 students in the spring, and probably 75 in the fall, not including summer, which we have another two cohorts. We could sustain at least three additional full-time faculty and have them make load. So is it one of those things where they want you to grow the program but they're not going to give you the help until it gets there.

This "putting the horse before the carriage" mentality could also be seen in Peter's organization, who articulated:

If we had that other person, we would be able to grow a little bit better, and I think that's the downside. And again, kind of the way colleges think. They think you should grow, and then we will provide you with the resources. Rather than saying "Hey, let's plant a seed, and then maybe it'll grow." So, we're not an agricultural college. We don't think about planting seeds.

Without the proper instructional support, the current instructors/faculty must be in the classroom more often to pick up the slack and ensure that the students' needs are adequately met. For program directors, this meant that less time was available to commit to the administrative duties associated with the job. Such limitations are worrisome since the vast majority of the participants also voiced, they lack the needed administrative assistance support.

***Lack of Administrative Assistant Support.*** The lack of administrative assistant support was a concern to nine of the 11 (82%) program directors, who either shared an administrative assistant among several programs within the department, had an opening for such a role, or did not have such support. Much like instructional support, compensation for the administrative assistant was recognized. Angie vocalized her greatest frustration, stressing:

One of the issues I'm fighting right now is the college does not pay our admins enough. And so my [administrative assistants] are a revolving door. That's probably my biggest dissatisfaction is that aspect of not getting the support for my Admins. So now I've had to get the rest of my faculty together and assign them tasks to make sure things are getting done, because if not, we get way behind.

Like the added workload to Angie and her faculty, Rodney, Peter, Becky, Mason, and Chris all recognized that much of the administrative duties were being delegated to them. Chris, stressing the ineffectiveness of sharing an administrative assistant, expressed that the extra administrative duties not only negatively impacted his satisfaction in the program director role but also had harmful ramifications on his instructions by stating:

The task that becomes a little burdensome is the administration part of it. And without a delegated administrative assistant, it makes it more difficult to do my job. If I had some assistance there, I feel I would be more satisfied overall. I'm totally happy with what I do in class, but I wish I could have more time to develop materials. But you know, if I just had to instruction role, I'd have some awesome materials. But with the administrative duties as well as instructor [duties], I don't have what I would like to have there, and that's one of the frustrating things.

Beside improving job satisfaction and instructional content, the proper administrative assistant support would also decrease some more tedious aspects of the program directors overwhelming workload.

Becky, who estimated that she puts in approximately 55 hours a week, projected that if her program had a designated administrative assistant that was fluid with the technicalities of the program, she would reduce her weekly workload by 10 hours. Chris, who shared an

administrative assistant with eight other programs, admitted that it reduced his workload by an estimated 15%. However, such support still leaves a considerable amount of administrative work uncompleted. Chris stressed that such burdens have a potentially negative impact on enrollment into his program by revealing:

We're doing more [administrative work] at this college than I was at other colleges. We are doing our own registrations, our own advising. Our administrative assistant answers the phone, and then forwards it to me rather than answering questions themselves...

That's the one thing that I feel bad about. If I'm teaching 4 days a week and I'm getting emails from potential students, they kind of get passed by the wayside, and I think we're losing students because of that. So, I think that's really the one thing that is kind of missing is that we should have somebody who helps us with that background role better.

When looking at the national, regional, and local facets that add to the workload of the paramedic program directors in the state of Texas, it is easily understandable why so many hours are required to meet such demands. Coupling such a workload with a lack of instructional and administrative support has damaging consequences for the director, the students, and the organizations. Such subthemes all tie into the second overarching theme of work-life balance.

### ***Theme 2: Work-Life Balance***

Of the directors that participated in the interviews, only two (18%) had a positive work-life balance. The other nine program directors (82%) described an unhealthy work-life balance in which work consumed a great percentage of their lives, as demonstrated in Table 3.

**Table 3***Work-Life Balance*

Perspective	<i>n</i> (%)
Positive work life balance	2 (18%)
Negative work life balance	9 (82%)

Thomas, who has been able to find an efficacious balance despite devoting 25% of his weekend to working on the ambulance, found his work-life balance is “great right now. I do my job here, and then I’ll go home and be able to be a dad. You know. Be a husband.” Ben, who also has been able to find a favorable balance between his work and private life, recognized that that such a balance came with his experience in the position, stating:

It’s changed over the years. I think it has to do with my age. When I was 30/40, I typically always ran three different jobs. I would teach at night, I’d work at school during the day, and I work on the ambulance on the weekends, you know, cause I really didn’t have a life. There was no life to it, and I think, as you get older, you’re gonna go, “Someday I’m gonna be rich, and I won’t remember how to spend the money, because my brain will be gone.” I think you come to realize, ... work, as a whole, is a lot less important than life. Life is more important, because I know again, I’ve been in EMS long enough to know that, life is going to come to an end. It’s time to start enjoying some stuff. So as I’m getting close to retirement, at least it is stuff I find interesting.

While others have been in the role of program director as long as Ben, not all of them have been able to find such balance. When asked about his work life balance Peter jokingly observed:

Oh, it’s terrible! I get up the morning I come to work and I go home. I’m tired. I eat something. I watch *Wheel of Fortune*. I go to bed. I keep thinking of my grandparents every time I go home, because that’s what they did, you know.

Mason described a similar routine as he recalled his work-life balance:

It's pretty rough. It's probably 60 to 70 hours a week devoted to work. So it starts about 5:30 or 6 o'clock in the morning. Try to get some things done at the house, get into the office somewhere between 8:00 and 9:00, put out whatever forest fires that are there. Whatever was on the agenda for the day that usually starts about 3:30 or 4 o'clock, and then, you know, everybody goes home. So, it's quiet, and then you can get everything done hopefully before dark. It's summer now. So, it's nice that you can stay at the office till 9 o'clock if you need to, and there'll still be daylight.

Chris, who also would like more balance between his life and work, identified that the culture found in EMS has bled over into EMS education. He articulated:

Unfortunately, in EMS we are taught to get the job done, regardless of the resources that you have. So, make it happen, and we don't care how you make it happen, just do it. So, whenever I was rebuilding the program here, I was putting 70 hours in a week. Trying to get everything back up and running. And even now this should be a 40 hours a week job, but it's not. I could say 40 hours, and that's it. But my personality will not let that happen, and as a result my home life suffers a bit for that. I'm not like a lot of other folks that have gone through divorce and stuff like that. But I have missed t-ball games and soccer games and band concerts... I had to sacrifice home stuff for that and that's stuff you can't get back, and I am trying to do better at balancing the off time versus the work time.

Becky also found it hard to remove herself from her work and went on to acknowledge:

I would say my work-life balance is hard, but I've gotten a lot better with trying to separate myself or pull myself away when I need to. It's easy for me to just kind of dive

in, and the time goes by and not realize how much time I've spent in the office. So, I've had to make a conscious effort to get myself some relief or some reprieve from the office. But it's easy not to, because you've got so much to do. You just have to get to the point where you say you know what it's going to be here tomorrow. No matter if I put an extra two or three hours today, it's not going to matter, because tomorrow they're going to replace it with something else. And the more you do the more they're going to expect.

With the time needed to satisfy the national, regional, and institutional requirements, it comes as no surprise that the directors must sacrifice time away from family and personal lives. Such sacrifices are associated with the EMS industry and appear to have become engrained in EMS education as well (Allmon, 2020). The culmination of the excessive workload, the lack of support, and the less-than-optimal work-life balance, leads us to the second research question of the study: "How do such perceptions impact the paramedic program director's intent to leave the position?"

### ***Theme 3: Intent to Leave***

As previously mentioned, measuring turnover directly is difficult, time-consuming, and expensive. Turnover intention serves as the most recognized and effective proxy for actual turnover and was utilized to help answer the second research question of the study. The turnover intentions of the participants is displayed in Table 4. With over 30% of the contacted program directors not being in the position for at least 2 years, the findings were worrisome and exemplified the need to focus on improving factors to help retain program directors within Texas.

**Table 4***Turnover Intentions*

Intent to leave	<i>n</i> (%)
Turnover intention (Actively looking for a new job)	4 (36%)
Leaving career in near future (Within 3 years)	7 (64%)

Of the directors interviewed, four (36%) had interviewed for a new position within the last year. Alternative roles in the educational setting made up three of the sought-after positions, with one looking at returning to the healthcare setting. Only four (36%) directors had not interviewed for a new job within the last year and stated that they saw themselves in the director role for at least the next 3 years.

Of the seven program directors who had not interviewed for a new role, three (43%) did not see themselves in the position within the next 3 years. Two of the directors were looking at retiring, and the other planned on giving up the program director role to focus more on the administrative duties required for the department chair.

A preliminary review of the data would suggest that paramedic education in Texas could be negatively impacted as many of the most tenured directors retire, advance within their educational institutions, or return to the healthcare setting. With the lack of EMS providers across the state already well recognized, retention of these educators is paramount to ensure an adequate pipeline of providers in the future (Harris, 2019). To help retain these key individuals, the use of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators and the impact of such practices must be examined.

***Theme 4: Motivators***

As identified by Herzberg et al.'s (1959) two-factor theory, employee motivation is derived from either intrinsic or extrinsic factors. The participants recognized how various internal and external influences impacted their satisfaction with the program director role. Such

aspects of the position resulted in the primary theme of motivators being divided into three subthemes to help answer the final research question. The themes regarding intrinsic and extrinsic motivators are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivators*

Theme 4: Motivators		
Subtheme 4.1: Recompense (Extrinsic)	Subtheme 4.2: Working conditions (Extrinsic)	Subtheme 4.3: Job satisfaction (Intrinsic)
1: Satisfaction with annual salary	1: Demonstrates respect/open communication/gives and receives feedback	1: Advancement/increased responsibility
2: Concerns with the rising inflation	2: Interpersonal relationships with co-workers	2: Recognition
	3: Career mentorship	3: Positively impacting student's lives

**Subtheme 4.1: Recompense.** Interestingly, 10 of the 11 (91%) of the participants stated that they were satisfied with the salary they received for the director role. Samantha, the only individual that was unsatisfied, was a part owner in an EMS education program and admitted, “there’s nothing I can do, because it’s my company. I only afford to pay me what we can afford to pay.” While the vast majority of directors were satisfied with the financial compensation received, nearly all also voiced the opinion that it could be improved. Mason observed that his satisfaction with pay was secondary to the built-in overload pay that is secondary to the workload placed on him by stressing:



In my opinion...in the college community college environment, you really just have that 12 months of that 9-month contract. But the way we are not having to eat top ramen or Vienna sausages, is you counted on that overload. You were looking for that 7, 8, 10, 15 hours of overload to be able to get by. Because historically, community colleges just don't pay much, and it's not because they don't have the ability. That's just how community colleges function, just the way of the world as a teacher.

Peter also recognized the lack of pay for community colleges overall by noting:

But I think those are the challenges for a lot of other people as colleges, what is a nice way to put this, colleges don't pay crap. I find that a very interesting thing. We've got two programs... that both have open positions...I asked, "Why can't you fill this position after 2 years?" They said in that industry they could be making twice what we pay.

There's a simple solution to that. But colleges won't [increase pay]. They look at things [through the lens of] an English teacher. Everything's based on what an English teacher makes. You know our schedules, the way our computer stuff is all built. Everything is based on English classes. We have a hard time getting biology to fit into those schedules. So that mindset isn't quite there again. That's what I knew coming into this business.

And I accept it because it still gets done when I set out to do it.

Becky observed the same gap in pay between the EMS field and EMS education and emphasized:

I would say that I am moderately satisfied [with the pay]. Do I think it could be better? Absolutely. I think it could be better, but it could be worse on the same token. So, yes, but in comparison to what industry is making right now and again, I'm not professing that

educators should make the same as someone who's on a truck for 48 hours. But it should be a little bit closer. There shouldn't be that big of a gap like there is now.

As demonstrated, the perception of the salaries in relation to holding the paramedic program director role was satisfactory with room for improvement. A recognized concern, outside of competing with the increasing salaries in competing industries, was the rise in national and state inflation rates.

While the overall perception of the compensation was satisfactory, an area of concern that was voiced by eight of the 11 (73%) of the directors was the rising inflation. Despite the increased cost of living, educational institutions have not been able to adjust the compensation to offset such prices adequately. This unease was stressed by Chris who stated:

If you were talking to me 3 years ago, I'd say, we're doing pretty well. Now, I'm thinking, not so well. It's not as good because people, like in the EMS field because of demand, they have had increases to get to where they're at today, which is great. But here at the college we were getting regular raises, and then all of a sudden, 3 years straight, we didn't get one, and that's frustrating because the economy is getting more and more expensive. But I'm not getting additional funds. And finally, this last year we have, we were able to get a bit of a raise.

Becky voiced similar concerns and recognized:

Everything's gone up and we've not seen that same increase within pay. I think our colleges have done a fairly good job in trying. Just haven't made the mark yet, as far as I'm concerned, specifically for the technical programs. And I think this happens a lot of times in many community colleges. A lot of the time and effort, and money is pushed into

larger programs like your nursing programs, and then the other technical programs kind of off the wayside.

The extrinsic motivator of financial compensation was looked upon favorably by most program directors, but the impact of inflation was a source of concern. Educational institutions also feel the pressure of the government and may contribute to the lack of pay raises voiced by the participants. Another extrinsic motivator that was addressed by the individual who participated in the research was the working conditions of their organization.

#### **Subtheme 4.2: Working Conditions.**

**Direct Supervisor.** Of the aspects that impact on the director's working conditions, the relationship with the direct supervisor was often recognized. Ten of the 11 program directors (91%) described a positive working relationship with their immediate supervisors. A key aspect of the other directors' relationship with their direct supervisor revolved around open and honest communication in which the directors were free to voice concerns without fear of repercussions. Thomas illustrated such communication by expressing:

I think, just through dialogue, you talk with someone and it's not a rigid conversation where barriers are up. They're very loose whenever they talk with you, and they're approachable. And so, therefore, they're going to be always having an open ear, and want to help out in any way they can. You're definitely gonna have their help...In addition to that, if anything comes up my supervisor will definitely reach out to me if anything needs to be talked about. Very open communication.

Angie, Ben, Rodney, Jerry, Mason, and Thomas all mentioned that mutual respect and trust were keystones in the relationships they held with their supervisors. Support for personal growth/advancement and obtaining needed equipment was also an important attribute mentioned

by Ben, David, Rodney, Peter, Jerry, and Mason. Much like the relationships with their direct supervisors, the program directors also greatly valued the relationships with the individuals who reported to them.

***Relationships With Co-Workers.*** Effective collaboration with co-workers was noted by six of the 11 (55%) of the program directors to be crucial in the success of their programs and could produce a variety of benefits. For example, Rodney recognized the increased pleasure in the program director role when effective teamwork is present by stating:

I think that's a large part of what makes being at work joyful, I mean. So, if you get along and everybody's kind and you're appreciating each other and supporting each other through the ups and downs, it's good. So, if it's a cutthroat, stab in the back work environment, I think I wouldn't enjoy it as much.

Becky stressed that it helps make her role easier when everyone works together. She noted that her relationship with those she works with is "very important. And again, it's what makes or breaks most departments. It makes the job easier, too. If you have people that are looking out for you, and you're looking out for them and makes the job easier." Similarly, Chris recognized the impact that such relationships play, calling them "critical." He would go on to stress:

If we can't get along, the program suffers. I have had a couple of former individuals that worked at the program that did not see that vision, and did not want to get along, and all they did was create upheaval in the program and didn't really contribute. They actually took the program down versus help building it up.

Mason, while he values his working relationship with his employees, also recognized the solitude often associated with leadership roles by emphasizing:

That's an interesting thing. And again, being a program director, I've noticed that there's a different dynamic cause, you know, when I was young, he wanted to be everybody's buddy. And that works until you have to be their boss, unfortunately. So, I think an EMS program director is probably one of the best jobs that you can have. But at times it's also one of the loneliest jobs that you can have, because they're looking at you as the boss and their friend. But there are certain boundaries, and I always have those certain boundaries. Based on the lived experiences of the program directors in the study, the relationships with direct supervisors and co-workers can dramatically impact job satisfaction, program effectiveness, and turnover intention. However, there was another group of individuals that also impacted on the working conditions of the program directors, especially early on in their careers: personal mentors.

***Career Mentors.*** Of the directors that participated in the interviews, eight of the 11 (73%) had a personal mentor that positively impacted their careers. Most of them were internal to the organization for which they worked (55%) with the others being past directors or instructors that were external to their current organization (18%). Jerry found such support to be extremely beneficial in navigating the state issues stating,

The way that Texas is like four states in one, [my mentor has] really helped me navigate that part of it. I don't know that I would have done it without that. I don't know that I would have been successful.

Similarly, David recognized the tremendous impact his mentor has had on him personally and the benefit that such relationships can have on program directors across the state by recalling:

My predecessor actually, before he retired, he stepped down. So, they promoted me so he was still here, and could help me in that very way, which was tremendous. I couldn't

imagine coming into this role without that mentor. It would have been just an absolute nightmare. I don't think it can successfully be done. You are just going to have a huge turnover all the time, because there's so much that you don't know, and you don't know until they say, "Well, you're not doing it right," and then you're still trying to teach. Still try to do this and that, and get to a point of saying screw it, I'll just go back to teaching and or go back to the field or wherever... I think people hire program directors and expect them to be teachers, and then do the directing on the side. That mentality should be flipped because the directing takes more time than the teaching.

Thomas, Mason, and Ben did not have such resources. Ben recognized that he was able to meet the demands of the position due to his past experiences in previous roles. Mason described his experience with the challenges of holding the program director role without a mentor by emphasizing, "So sometimes you learn by the school of hard knocks. That's probably the worst way to learn the job." Thomas's experience was similar. He recalled:

I had to learn on the fly, and from the moment I took over the program director within, I think 5 months we had a site visit. So, therefore you're just trying to understand things, and then you get kind of thrown out there and have to pay for other people's sins. And that's fine. But yeah, definitely had to learn on the fly.

All three of these individuals recognize the importance of mentorship and all are actively mentoring others to step up and fill the role when the time comes. Peter also recognized the importance of developing an apprenticeship within the organization by affirming:

I think mentorship is something we do need to promote more. That's something that's very beneficial... Who's the next guy? We have to plant seeds, grow them in house, so that we have a nice perspective on who's gonna be the next person running your program.

If you don't, you start over every time you hire a new person, and I think that's the biggest challenge we do not do enough instructors development in our industry and in educational programs in general.

As demonstrated, the working conditions of program directors are greatly influenced by the established relationships with supervisors and co-workers. Mentorship is also extremely valuable in improving the extrinsic motivation surrounding working conditions. While such hygiene factors are important to the retention of paramedic program directors in the state of Texas, motivational factors must also be recognized. Such intrinsic motivators, including advancement or growth opportunities, recognition, personal accomplishment, increased responsibility, and job satisfaction, are considered to have a longer-lasting impact on positive attitudes toward employment by satisfying personal needs for self-actualization and growth (Alfayad & Arif, 2017; Alshmemri et al., 2017; Herzberg, 1966).

#### **Subtheme 4.3: Job Satisfaction.**

**Advancement.** When speaking of advancement opportunities, the program directors fell into two classifications. Ben, David, and Peter were not interested in being promoted in their organizations since they were looking at retiring in the near future. The other program directors stated that they are pleased with their current role and were not actively seeking advancement.

Thomas summed up the feelings of most of the directors by emphasizing:

I guess advancements for me would be something like being a dean or being a Vice Chancellor or the Chancellor of the college, and that's not where I wanna be. I'm happy where I'm at. I [want to] be in the classroom. I [want to] have interaction with students. That is who I am, and that's what gives me purpose and meaning. So, I don't see me advancing up any more past EMS program director because I wouldn't be in the EMS

program anymore. I've been looking all over health sciences or some other administrative role. And that's just not where a where my passion lies.

The participants also recognized that the available administrative roles above the program director roles are rare due to extremely low turnover in these positions.

The increased responsibility and influence to guide the program toward their personal vision was recognized as one of the primary drivers for Angie, Ben, David, Peter, Thomas, and Becky in assuming the program director role. Rodney recognized that as he has grown in the organization, so has his involvement and satisfaction by stating:

So, I think as I've grown in the organization, they ask you to serve on different committees and ask you to serve in different ways. And I think that just kind of helps continue to grow and to challenge me and helps me understand different aspects of college experience... So, I think that's so that knowledge and welcoming in and helping you understand, and just developing all those relationships kind of helped or brought that satisfaction, that joy.

Such motivational factors have positively impacted the paramedic program directors in the study. Recognition of accomplishments also provided intrinsic motivation to these individuals.

**Recognition.** While all the paramedic program directors received formal evaluations, usually on an annual basis, these were often seen as a necessary mandate. However, all 11 of the program directors (100%) valued the informal recognition received. Angie and Ben both stated that their accomplishments were recognized in front of various board members within their organization. Becky and Rodney both realized increased responsibility and being provided a "seat at the table" helped affirm their importance to the organization. Similarly, Mason and Peter stated that such achievements and recognition have gained them greater support by their



supervisors and administration regarding the decision-making process within their programs and organizations. Rodney stressed valuing such informal recognition and support over formal awards by stating:

I was actually educator of the year one year and on the Chancellor's list of excellence another year. So, I've had those awards. That's not exactly what I was working toward. ...Just a simple thank you is enough for me. Just tell me, thank you for what you're doing. And when I say I wanna try something new support it, I think that's the best we can get. Anything else is just reaching from the stars.

Thomas found similar value in informal recognition by stressing:

I'm big on affirmations, not just because you're saying it, but because they're actually meaningful. And it is recognizing the hard work, and it was earned, not handed out ... and so she does a good job whenever we do something that's worthy of it to give that affirmation.

Recognition, based on the responses of the participants, influences job satisfaction most when informal means are utilized. Such contentment increased when they were coupled with increased responsibility, trust, and respect from superiors. Of all the motivational factors that attributed to job satisfaction, the program director's positive influence on the student's success was the most cited.

***Impact on Students.*** Of the program directors that participated, 10 of the 11 (91%) vocalized that the positive impact that they had on the student's life was the great contributor to job satisfaction. Ben explained, "When I go home at night, I know what I've done, and I feel good about what I've done... [to have made] a difference in someone's life." Similarly, Mason

described his experience as the student begin to master the content and continues on to be successful by expressing:

It's even a more rewarding experience when that light comes on for that paramedic, and they get it. And seen those individuals' 2 or 3 years down the road where they've progress through the ranks, whether it's through the fire department or through a private agency, or they've even gone and maybe further their education into nursing or maybe a PA or gone to Med school, and you know that you gave them that foundational base of that love for medicine, and that's probably the most rewarding thing to me... This is the best job in the world. It truly is. Is it challenging? Yes. Does it have its moments where you wish that you know you were selling shoes at the mall? Yeah, you probably have some of those moments, but it's the little wins that add up to that overall job satisfaction.

Peter shared a similar perspective by stating:

The main satisfying things are always the students. That's the thing. It's the outcome. What I want to do is put out a student who's happy to be a paramedic, happy to take care of patients and that will take care of them, regardless of who they are...I think that's why I continued to do it is to see what we can do to mentor those students, especially ones that say I might want to be an educator one day, cause now we're just passing that that torch along to good people. That's, to me, what it's all about.

He went on to stress:

Seeing the students go out and make something of themselves. That's what it's all about.... That's a great thing. John Wayne said in the movie *The Cowboys* that you always want your kids to grow up to be better than you are, and that's the sense right there, that's what it's all about.

Based on the input of the respondents, the impact that the program directors have on the students, and in turn the community, is both intrinsically motivating and adds to their overall job satisfaction. While the challenges of providing a quality education experience and the time needed to ensure that the students are properly prepared for the rigors of the profession was recognized, seeing these students master the material, adequately treat the patients of the community, and go on to have successful careers reinforce the passion to continue on in the program director role.

### ***Summary of Findings***

**Excessive Workload/Work-Life Balance.** In summary, various multi-level factors increased the workload of these crucial program leaders. In response to the first research question: “What are the perceptions of paramedic program directors of which regional and national factors influence turnover intentions in the state of Texas?” accreditation challenges, replication of reporting at the state level, and a lack of institutional support were the most recognized, resulting in a negative work-life balance for 82% of the paramedic program directors.

While all the directors agreed with the need for a national accreditation body to ensure that paramedic programs are meeting a set standard, the directors voiced frustration with the increased workload associated with maintaining accreditation, the variances in interpretations of the standards, the continuously changing requirements, and what was perceived as micromanaging of the accreditation body. Terms such as “necessary evil” and “two-edged sword” described the program director’s perception of the accreditation body. Regional factors were also identified that exacerbated such frustrations.

Most directors spoke positively regarding the primary regulatory agency within the state of Texas, DSHS. However, a lack of communication between the various regulating agencies and the duplication of work to meet both national and state requirements were recognized. A variance in the accountability that DSHS held paramedic programs across the state was also a source of discontent. Of the factors that increased the workload and negatively impacted the work-life balance of the directors, institutional factors were the most dominant.

Various institutional factors were identified that increased the workload of paramedic program directors within the state of Texas. The study illustrated that 82% of all program directors, and 100% of those who were associated with a community college, still held a teaching/instructional load and were required to serve on auxiliary committees. Several organizations attempted to reduce the strain on the program directors by affording release time to focus on the duties assigned to the director. However, none of the directors could capitalize on the benefit due to the excessive workload associated with the position. The lack of both instructional and administrative support was the most problematic.

The program directors in the study recognized that the lack of both instructional faculty and inadequate administrative assistant support resulted in the workload of those positions being distributed among those within their department, with a large portion being assumed by the program director. To delegate the workload effectively, 64% percent of the participants stated that one to five additional instructors would be required. Additionally, increased administrative assistance support was emphasized by 82% of the program directors, who either shared an administrative assistant with other programs or who lacked such support entirely.

These factors contributed to 73% of the paramedic program directors having to allocate over 50 hours a week to their position, and in turn, create a negative work-life balance for the

vast majority of the respondents (82%). The various national, regional, and local factors that contributed to the excessive workload and distracted the program directors from their personal lives were recognized as the most prominent job dissatisfaction amongst the study's sample. Such strain provided insight into the second research question: "How do such perceptions impact the paramedic program director's intent to leave the position?" and the third overall theme.

**Intent to Leave.** Of the paramedic program directors who participated in the study, 36% of the respondents had the intent to leave the position and were actively interviewing elsewhere. Even more alarmingly, 43% of those that were not seeking new employment stated that they did not see themselves in that role within 3 years, with retirement being the primary reason for exiting the position. The turnover intentions of the sample of paramedic program directors and those that do not foresee themselves in such a role in the next 3 years exceed the national findings of Allmon (2020) and Bryan (2015) and require further investigation. Various extrinsic and intrinsic motivators utilized by the program director's institutions were recognized.

**Motivators.** Based on Herzberg et al.'s (1959) two-factor theory, all 11 program directors that participated fall into the low hygiene and high motivation classification, in which the individuals are motivated to perform the task of the role but have complaints. Solidifying the findings of Alfayad and Arif (2017) and Alshmemri et al. (2017), the intrinsically driven motivational factors of informal recognition, increased support/responsibilities, and the satisfaction of seeing students excel were the most vocalized as contributing to job satisfaction. Advancement opportunities did not impact the job satisfaction of the respondents since most wished to remain in the educational/instructional role or were looking to retire. It was also recognized that such advancement would be difficult due to a lack of turnover in administrative roles in most organizations. The formal evaluations were not highly valued by the respondents,

since such assessments were often mandated. However, informal appraisals were highly regarded and positively impacted job satisfaction. The positive impact that the directors had on the lives of their students was the motivational factor that had the most significant impact on the overall job satisfaction of the program directors.

The extrinsic hygiene factors that positively impacted the perceptions of these individuals were an acceptable salary, constructive relationships with their direct supervisor, and good working relationships with subordinates. The impact of mentors was also recognized as a critical component, especially during the developmental years in the position. Surprisingly, nearly all of the participants were satisfied with the financial compensation they received. However, there was a concern about the rising cost of inflation. The respondents, overall, spoke positively about and highly regarded the relationships they had with both supervisors and co-workers, adding to job satisfaction. However, the lack of administrative support to provide adequate faculty and staff resources was viewed unfavorably by many of the respondents and negatively affected both the job satisfaction and work-life balance of the program directors. Such job satisfaction overlaps with Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory.

Of the paramedic programs directors that participated in the study, nine of the 11 (82%) stated that the job was partially or exactly what they expected. Based on the number of hours the program directors were willing to expend to see the student excel, the force of the program directors was inspirational. Overall, the valence of the group was also positive. However, as Mobley et al. (1979) stressed, an employee may leave their current job if they believe another opportunity will provide greater rewards. The competitive wages of the EMS and healthcare fields, as well as higher administrative positions, were attractive to several program directors. Workload, burnout, and poor work-life balance has been well established as contributors for

increased turnover intentions (Gulsaule & Magdolna, 2019; Ramasamy & Abdullah, 2017; Urbina, 2020). As Mintz-Binder (2014) found in nursing program directors who emphasized faculty shortages, absence of administrative support, and lack of work-family balance as primary drivers of turnover, this study established similar results.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive research study was to explore regional and national factors that influenced paramedic program directors' intentions to leave the director role within the state of Texas. The chapter provided an in-depth account of 11 paramedic program directors from across the state of Texas with various levels of tenure and institutional settings. After transcribing the interviews and coding of the data, the overarching themes and subthemes that emerged helped thoroughly investigate each of the research questions that guided the study. An assessment of the preliminary findings of the study was provided.

The following chapter will provide an in-depth discussion of such results in relation to the study's theoretical framework and compare it to the current literature available. The limitations and implications of the research will also be addressed. Lastly, recommendations for the practical application of implications derived from the study and future research will be provided.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations**

Despite the substantial attention that turnover has garnered over the last decade, turnover in EMS and EMS education is worryingly lacking, especially regarding paramedic program directors (Allmon, 2020; Blau et al., 2016; Hom et al., 2017). While the annual turnover rate of paramedics has been found to be over 20% annually, and the dramatic impact that such attrition can have on EMS education organizations, students, and the general public, no study was found that evaluated the factors that attribute the high attrition rates within the state of Texas (Allmon, 2020; Cash et al., 2018; Rivard et al., 2020). Due to the fragmentation resulting from the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, it is important for each state to evaluate such causes individually to identify unique reasons for the high attrition of these key individuals in each state and holistically apply these to common national impetuses (Brooks et al., 2015).

The robust insight provided by the participants of the study allowed for the following findings to be developed. Despite the program directors agreeing with the necessity of accreditation and the majority of them looking favorably on the primary regulatory agency of the state, DSHS, these individuals also recognized how both added to an already overwhelming workload. All directors working in the community college setting and many associated with a consortium are required to instruct in the classroom and be active on various committees, all while managing the roles and responsibilities required to lead the program effectively. While several organizations have tried to offset such burdens by providing release time to focus on administrative tasks, none of the program directors could capitalize on such benefits. The lack of institutional support further exacerbated the workload of these key programmatic leaders.

Of the motivators stressed by the program directors, the intrinsic (i.e., motivational) factors of informal recognition, increased support/responsibilities, and the satisfaction of seeing



students excel had the greatest impact on the overall satisfaction with holding the role of program director. Acceptable salary, constructive relationships with their direct supervisor, effective mentors, and good working relationships with subordinates were the extrinsic (i.e., hygiene) motivators that also help increase satisfaction with the role. The challenges and motivators associated with being a paramedic program director in the state of Texas resulted in all 11 of the participants falling into the low hygiene and high motivation classification of Herzberg's two factor theory.

The following chapter will discuss such findings in relation to past literature and the theoretical foundations. The limitations of the study will then be identified. Before concluding, the implications of the research, recommendations for practical applications, and proposals for future research will also be addressed.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The following section will address the findings of the study in relation to the research questions and previous literature.

### ***Excessive Workload***

Of all the findings that resulted from the study, the excessive workload placed on paramedic program directors across the state was the most prominent. Various national, regional, and institutional factors contribute to 73% of the participants having to allocate over 50 hours of work a week to meet the demands of the position. Such findings are consistent with the previous literature (Allmon, 2020; Bryan, 2015; Crowe et al., 2018).

The workload of the paramedic program directors in the state of Texas is not unique but similar to those within other states. In the classroom, these individuals are responsible for developing curriculum and lesson plans, confirming competency, monitoring student progress,

and handling disciplinary/grievance issues (CAAHEP, 2015; Kokx, 2016). Additionally, responsibilities outside of the classroom include recruitment, retention, developing annual reports to track various aspects of the program, national and/or state self-studies, and outcome assessments (Kokx, 2016). In concordance with Bryan (2015) and Allmon (2020), who both stressed that the responsibilities of program directors require over 50 hours a week, Crowe et al. (2018) found that paramedic program directors have to greatly exceed the 25 hour scheduled hours and must dedicate 60 hours each week to ensure that all task are adequately addressed to keep the program viable. Allmon (2020) found that the excessive hours needed to fulfill the job requirements was associated with high turnover intentions of the programmatic leaders, with 53% of the directors stressing the workload as the primary or secondary reason for leaving the position. Excessive workload has also been recognized to impact the mental and physical health of professors/instructors and result in the attrition of educators (Ramasamy & Abdullah, 2017; Urbina, 2020).

A number of stressors have been identified that impact academic staff, including teaching, supervising, a heavily allocated workload, and long working hours (Darabi et al., 2017; Ishaq & Mahmood, 2017; Kinman, 2014). Such burdens result in higher stress levels, increased burnout, and more prone to developing mental problems than the average population (Darabi et al., 2017; Guthrie et al., 2017; Kinman & Johnson, 2019; Padilla & Thompson, 2016; Simons et al., 2019; Záborská et al., 2018). Urbina (2020) identified that such stressors were also closely linked to adverse health ramifications.

These negative outcomes have also been shown to have a greater impact on lower tenured educators (Chen et al., 2014; Ishaq & Mahmood, 2017; Osumah, 2017; Rubenstein et al., 2018). The present study helped reinforce this finding. The three participants (27%) who committed less

than 50 hours a week to the job had an average tenure of over 20 years. Two of these program directors also stressed that the strain of the position was much more significant during the formative years of their careers. Such trends concern the overall tenure of paramedic program directors across the state of Texas.

All programs are susceptible to the impact of budgetary restraints. Directors are being asked to do more with less resources (Crowe et al., 2018). With nearly two-thirds of all paramedic programs nationwide, and nearly 60% of paramedic programs in the state of Texas, being conducted within community colleges, the attrition of program directors can have a devastating financial impact (Allmon, 2020; Field et al., 2021; Hughes, 2017). Hom et al. (2017) recognized that the cost to replace an employee can range from 90% to 200% of that individual's annual salary. Field et al. (2021) also identified that not only can the replacement cost surpass the annual income of the employee but that such cost consume 40% of the organization's annual income. The cost to continuously replace these organizational leaders nationally, regionally, and locally reduces the amount of money organizations could invest within the program and is highly counterintuitive.

Of the 62 available program directors in the state of Texas, 24 were contacted and provided the number of years in which they held the role of program director. As stated previously, 54% of respondents have been in the position for 5 or less years and 75% have been in the position for less than 10 years. Care needs to be taken in the onboarding and socialization processes to help mitigate the turnover intention of the new program directors, with such recommendations made later in the study (Breaugh, 2021; Yanik & Yildiz, 2019). With more time to be delegated to the role of paramedic program director, the study also recognized the unhealthy work-life balance amongst the participants.

### ***Work-Life Balance***

The same national, regional, and institutional factors that added to the workload of the participants also contributed to the negative work-life balance of most of the participants, with 82% of the paramedic program directors reporting an unhealthy balance. Of the identified factors, the institutional components had the greatest impact. Such factors included the requirements to carry an instructional load in the classroom, participate on various organizational committees, and inadequate faculty and staff to properly delegate the workload effectively. This results in additional tasks being placed on the faculty and staff of the program, with much of the workload being assumed by the program directors. Each of the directors were willing to make sacrifices to ensure that the educational standards of the program were not compromised. Such findings are concordant with that of Allmon (2020), who recognized how the adapt and overcome culture associated with the EMS industry has bled over into EMS education. Similarly, Kokx (2016) stressed that in order to foster a culture of longevity, sustainability, and creativity, the “do it at all costs” mentality must change (p. 121). Bryan (2015), who found similar contributing factors leading to the excessive workload of program directors recognized that “work/life balance is a barrier faced by paramedic program directors” (p. 226). As previously mentioned, the literature on EMS is limited. However, the findings of this study align with the literature found in the related field of nursing.

Nursing directors and faculty must attempt to manage much of the same workloads as EMS effectively. Such tasks include carrying a teaching load, participating in organizational committees, and managing all aspects of the program, resulting in them allocating 56 hours each week to meet such demands (Crawford, 2021). In concordance with this study, insufficient faculty and lack of administrative support exacerbate the workload placed on these individuals,

resulting in a negative work-life balance (Mintz-Binder, 2014). It is well-established that overwork, burnout, and poor work-life balance contribute to an increase in turnover intentions (Gulsaule & Magdolna, 2019; Ramasamy & Abdullah, 2017; Urbina, 2020).

### ***Intent to Leave***

The causes of turnover intentions found in this study are concordant with past research. The primary drivers of program directors' turnover intentions in Texas included lack of administrative support, national, state, and local organizational flaws, excessive workloads, faculty shortage, inadequate administrative assistant support, and poor work-life balance. Such factors have been well documented (Arthi & Sumathi, 2020; Gulsaule & Magdolna, 2019; Mintz-Binder, 2014; Owens, 2017; Ramasamy & Abdullah, 2017; Tourangeau, 2015; Urbina, 2020; Yedidia et al., 2015). Turnover intentions are the most reliable predictor of actual employee turnover (Fallon & Rice, 2015; Hom et al., 2017; Ngo-Henha, 2017; Pasha & Aftab, 2020; Xiao et al., 2021). Such attrition has been shown to have disastrous consequences, including decreased productivity of the institution, lower return on investment, loss of leadership and student mentors, and difficulty filling the vacancy (Mintz-Binder, 2014; Webber, 2019).

The current turnover intention rate within the state of Texas is considerably higher than the national average (Allmon, 2020; Bryan, 2015). It must be noted that the previous research findings were obtained prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The intent of this research was to gain a better understanding of the attrition and turnover intentions within the state of Texas as a foundation framework for future research within the state, and the scope did not allow for a thorough assessment of the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on paramedic program directors and is recognized as a recommendation for further research.

### ***Motivators***

The theoretical framework for this study was derived from both Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory and Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory. Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory postulates that an employee has a preconceived expectation before any event occurs. When such presumptions are met, the employee is satisfied. A failure to meet the employee's expectations can subsequently result in dissatisfaction and may lead to greater intent to leave the organization in the future (Hidayatus, 2017; Jiang & Klein, 2009). While the true impact of mentorship is still examined, it has been found that such relationships can help mitigate the effects of burnout (Owens, 2017). Valence and instrumentality also play a vital role in job satisfaction.

If an employee believes their efforts and accomplishments are positively related, then they will be rewarded in a desirable and satisfactory manner, increasing work output and the quality delivered (Ayub & Islam, 2018; Parijat & Bagga, 2014). The paramedic program directors who participated were, overall, satisfied with their current role, their relationship with superiors and co-workers, the recognition provided, and the salaries they received. One of the most prominent influencers on job satisfaction was the impact that each director was able to have on the lives of the students whom they served. Such factors influenced the program directors' willingness to dedicate long hours to meet the field's overwhelming demands. However, turnover intention was still a recognized problem.

In their seminal work, Mobley et al. (1979) stressed that an employee may leave a desirable job if the returns from another employment opportunity are greater. Although 10 (91%) of the participants described themselves as either satisfied or very satisfied, 43% of the participants who were not actively seeking other employment opportunities stated that they did

not see themselves in the paramedic program director role within the next 3 years. This finding aligned with that of Allmon (2020). This author found that although 75% of paramedic program directors nationwide described themselves as satisfied with the role, 48% planned to vacate the position within 3 years. While Vroom (1964) suggested that an organization's ability to meet or fail to meet its employees' expectations influences the employee's willingness to remain with that organization, Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory emphasizes the impact of intrinsic and extrinsic factors on the intention of staying.

### ***Motivation-Hygiene Theory***

Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory stresses that various intrinsic (motivational) and extrinsic (i.e., hygiene) factors influences an employee's job satisfaction and can influence turnover intentions (Alfayad & Arif, 2017; Alshmemri et al., 2017; Herzberg et al., 1959). Hygiene factors include interpersonal relations, salaries, company administration and practices, working conditions, job security, and supervision (Alshmemri et al., 2017; Herzberg et al., 1959). It is also recognized that motivational factors, including advancement and growth opportunities, recognition of personal achievement, as well as increased responsibility, have a long-lasting effect on positive attitudes towards employment because they satisfy personal needs for self-actualization and growth (Alshmemri et al., 2017; Gaweel, 1997; Herzberg, 1966).

In this study, extrinsic hygiene factors that positively impacted the perceptions of participants included an acceptable salary, constructive relationships with their direct supervisor/co-workers, and mentorship. While concerns regarding the rising inflation rates were voiced by the majority of the participants, 10 of the 11 (91%) stated that they were satisfied with the salaries received to perform the role. As previous research indicates, the annual salaries of paramedic program directors ranged from approximately \$55,000 to \$70,000 a year. Nearly 80%

of directors make over \$50,000 a year, with 10% being paid over \$100,000 each year (Allmon, 2020; Bryan, 2015). Much like the state of Texas, the variances in the cost of living across the United States could account for the variances in income seen by program directors. However, similar to the responses of the participants in this study, Allmon (2020) found no statistically significant association with the amount of income received and the turnover intention the paramedic program director role. Regardless of annual salaries, paramedic program directors intend to vacate the role at similar proportional rates. While the participants of the study looked favorably on the hygiene factors, the motivational factors seemed to be most influential on their overall job satisfaction.

Past research has demonstrated that motivational factor have a more pronounced and longer lasting impact on an employee's positive perception towards employment by fulfilling the individual's need for self-actualization and growth (Alfayad & Arif, 2017; Alshmemri et al., 2017; Gawel, 1997; Herzberg, 1966). Of the intrinsic factors, advancement had the lowest impact on the program directors in the state of Texas, with eight of 11 (73%) voicing that they were content in their current role within their organization and we not actively looking at advancing up the hierarchy. The other 27% stated that they plan on retiring in the near future. Such findings are concordant with research on a national level. Allmon (2020) found that the three primary drivers for turnover of paramedic program directors were excessive workload (28%), pending retirement (25%), and lack of faculty (16.3%).

The positive impact that paramedic program directors had on the student's lives was strongly voiced as one of the most significant aspects that influenced job satisfaction within the study and was stressed by 91% of the participants. While no literature regarding student's success influencing faculty in EMS was able to be found, similar findings were recognized by



nursing faculty. Laurencelle et al. (2016) identified that influencing students' knowledge base and positively impacting the profession as positive themes influencing job satisfaction of the educator. Similarly, Gravens (2014), referencing the work of Lane et al. (2010), identified that such influence on students' lives and the associated satisfaction could help mitigate the negative impacts of excessive workload and the work environment. However, with the recognized attrition rate of paramedic program directors, both nationally and regionally, excessive workloads and poor work-life balance still needs to be addressed to help curve attrition of these program leaders.

### **Limitations**

Although the study provided insight into the attrition and turnover intentions of paramedic program directors in the state of Texas, several limitations need to be addressed. First, the cross-sectional design of the research accessed the directors' perspectives at a single point in time. A longitudinal design would allow me to determine changes in motivational and hygiene factors and turnover intentions of paramedic program directors over time (El Badawy & Bassiouny, 2014). Second, the study was limited to paramedic program directors in the state of Texas. This delimitation was intentional to gain a greater understanding of the factors influencing the turnover intentions of the sample. While many of the findings are supported by previous research on a national level, caution should be taken when generalizing the results to other states due to the vast differences that exist between various state EMS organizations and educational institutions (Brooks et al., 2015; Cannuscio et al., 2016; De Gieter & Hofmans, 2015; Queirós et al., 2017).

Due to the rigor and consistency of meeting various standards that paramedic programs must demonstrate to obtain accreditation status; the study was further restricted specifically to

paramedic program directors. While many of the participants voiced that they must oversee EMT-Basic and Advanced EMT courses/programs, this study did not investigate these additional responsibilities. The director also needed a minimum of 2 years of experience in the role to be considered to help ensure they had the expertise required to provide robust and insightful responses. The challenges associated with the first few years after assuming the paramedic program director role were not evaluated and could provide valuable insight into how to help onboard these new leaders to build resiliency and better prepare them for the rigors of the position.

Lastly, the study was conducted in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. While some of the initial impacts on the medical and educational communities, including increased burnout, having to adapt quickly to online or hybrid learning models, and increased workload, have been realized, the true impacts of such a pandemic are still being examined (Cash et al., 2021; Naidu, 2021; Weidlich & Kalz, 2021). This study did not evaluate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the participating paramedic program director's job satisfaction or turnover intention. However, such investigations, both regionally and nationally, are warranted in the future.

Despite these limitations, multiple steps were taken to protect the credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability of the study. First, a rapport built around compassion and empathy was established and maintained throughout each interview. Member checking was also utilized to validate the final transcriptions before the coding process began to strengthen the credibility of the research. Extensive direct quotes from the participants and bracketing were used to support the emerging themes and help avoid researcher bias. Data saturation was obtained, and a recursive review was conducted after the initial coding process to help ensure the

applicability and accuracy of the developed themes. Following the recommendations of Bradshaw et al. (2017), dependability and transferability were protected by using purposeful sampling, establishing an audit trail, and providing ample descriptions of each step of the research process so that the research could be replicated.

### **Implications**

Since the concept of employee turnover first captured the attention of researchers in the early 1900s, several similar but varying definitions of turnover have been recognized (Hom et al., 2017; Muchinsky & Morrow, 1980; Ngo-Henha, 2017). All these definitions imply employee turnover as an employee severing employment ties and membership in an organization (Hom et al., 2017). Furthermore, dissatisfaction with employment has been identified by many scholars as the primary driver for voluntary turnover (Apostel et al., 2018; Terason, 2018; Woo & Allen, 2014; Zhen & Mansor, 2020). Employment turnover data has been recognized to be challenging to obtain (Blau et al., 2016; Ngo-Henha, 2017). The use of turnover intentions as a surrogate in turnover research has developed over the last few decades as an effective predictor of employee turnover (Fallon & Rice, 2015; Hom et al., 2017; Ngo-Henha, 2017; Pasha & Aftab, 2020; Xiao et al., 2021). The purpose of this qualitative descriptive research study was to explore regional and national factors that influence paramedic program directors' intentions to leave the director role within the state of Texas, to provide a foundation for suggestions to help address the high attrition rates of these key individuals at the local, state, and national levels.

Several conclusions can be drawn from this study. First, the state of Texas is not immune to the issue of paramedic program director attrition that plagues the United States. Conversely, the state of Texas has a considerably higher turnover intention rate than the national average

(Allmon, 2020; Bryan, 2015). Such findings are further exemplified by the number of program directors who assumed the director role within the last 2 years and were excluded from the study.

Next, turnover among these programmatic leaders will persist if changes are not implemented. Issues, such as hours needed to meet excessive workloads, lack of organizational support, lack of administrative assistance, understaffing, and poor work-life balance, are not unique to EMS education but have also been recognized in both nursing and post-secondary education (Bowering & Reed, 2021; Ramasamy & Abdullah, 2017; Urbina, 2020). Harris (2019) recommended that emphasis should be focused not only on recruitment but also on retention of healthcare faculty if the growing demand for providers is going to be met in the future. Strategies to reduce workload, improve work-life balance, increase flexibility to attract young faculty members, and ensure adequate personnel to meet the demands of the students have all been suggested to help reduce burnout, increase job satisfaction, and help reduce turnover (Elder et al., 2016; Emory et al., 2017; Gulsale & Magdolna, 2019; Harris, 2019).

Herzberg et al.'s (1959) two-factor theory postulates that job satisfaction is dependent on motivational (i.e., intrinsic) and hygiene (i.e., extrinsic) components of the job. In this current study, motivation and hygiene factors impacted paramedic program directors' overall job satisfaction in several ways. The participants were satisfied with the relationship with both supervisors and co-workers, informal recognition for a job well done, the pay received, and recognized the importance of early career mentors. Formal recognition was not valued highly since such praise was often seen as mandated. Organizational advancement was also not valued by the participants due to the most valued being in the classroom or looking to retire in the near future. The primary dissatisfiers voiced by the participants were the excessive workload, excessive hours to ensure the position's demands were adequately met, lack of administrative

assistant support, inadequate faculty/instructors, and poor work-life balance. These components contributed to 91% of the participants being either satisfied or very satisfied with their current role, supporting Herzberg et al.'s (1959) two-factor theory.

Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory examines how desired outcomes contribute to satisfaction or dissatisfaction when they are achieved. According to this theory, valence, instrumentality, and expectancy refer to the feelings people have about outcomes, their effort to meet the goal, and their perception of how likely they are to achieve it (Ciarniene et al., 2010; Hidayatus, 2017). According to the study, nine of the 11 paramedic program directors (82%) found the job to be partially or exactly what they expected. As shown by the number of hours program directors were willing to spend to help students succeed, the force of the program directors was inspirational. In general, the valence of the group was positive as well. The findings of this study support Vroom's expectancy theory. However, as Mobley et al. (1979) warn, an employee may leave a desirable job if the returns from another employment opportunity are greater. Although 10 (91%) of the participants described themselves as either satisfied or very satisfied, 43% of the participants who were not actively seeking other employment opportunities indicated that they did not see themselves in the paramedic program director role within 3 years. To help mitigate the negative impacts of turnover of these vital individuals, several recommendations should be heeded.

### **Recommendations for Practice**

The purpose of this research study was to explore regional and national factors that influence paramedic program directors' intentions to leave the director role within the state of Texas using semistructured interviews to provide a foundation for suggestions to help address the high attrition rates of these key individuals at the local, state, and national levels. This study's

qualitative findings provide insight into challenges faced by paramedic program directors in the state of Texas and the necessary actions needed to help ensure these vital leaders remain in such a role. These recommendations will be directed to the national, regional, and local levels.

### ***National Recommendations***

Since each paramedic program must be accredited if its graduates seek national certification, it is unsurprising that accreditation issues arose among the participants (NREMT, 2022). Margolis et al. (2009) recognized that obtaining and maintaining national accreditation status is essential to maintaining a high-performing paramedic educational program. None of the participants of this study disagreed with this stance and agreed with the need for accreditation. However, frustrations were expressed regarding the constantly shifting standards and varying interpretations of the standards. Based on email correspondence that was sent to all program directors nationally in September 2022, 33 new site visitors were trained and added to help address the 168 programs waiting for a site visit. With such an influx of new site visitors, care needs to be taken to ensure that the standards' interpretations are applied fairly and consistently.

Concerns with the micromanagement nature of the accreditation body and the amount of documentation required were also strongly voiced. Several participants stated that they were overwhelmed by the work necessary to ensure compliance for each student and the program. Such requirements had an adverse impact on the educational program. Examples of best practices demonstrating how to best meet and document each standard are warranted. As new standards are implemented, better communication expressing the reasoning behind such changes would reduce resistance to the change. It is also strongly recommended that time is allocated to identifying ways to reduce, simplify, condense, and/or streamline the documentation required,

demonstrating compliance with each standard. A similar approach is also needed at the state level.

### ***State Recommendations***

While several state regulatory agencies were identified in the study, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) was most referenced. Overall, the paramedic program directors spoke positively about DSHS. However, several issues were identified that increased the workloads of these individuals. Such complaints revolved around a lack of communication between various state agencies, replication of required documentation needed for both national and state agencies, and inconsistencies in holding underperforming programs accountable.

Since each state is responsible for the EMS educational programs within the state, the state needs to stay current with the national requirements and identify ways to reduce the replication of documentation across all levels of EMS education. As recommended at the national level, the communication of expectations should be more explicit, including several examples of how programs are meeting state requirements in a more efficient manner. State representatives also need to ensure that such standards are consistently applied and that underperforming programs are being held accountable by the various stakeholders, including the students and the general public. Lastly, creating a mentorship program in the state would allow the seasoned directors to provide guidance and support to those new to the role and prevent past mistakes from being repeated. Recommendations at the local level would likely have the most significant impact on the directors' workload.

### ***Local Recommendations***

Several changes at the local level are needed to reduce the workload and provide a better work-life balance for paramedic program directors in Texas. First, following the accreditation guidelines of CAAHEP, which recognize that the paramedic program director role should be a full-time position, programs must find ways to reduce the instructional load that the directors carry (CAAHEP, 2015). Similarly, the need to sit on auxiliary committees should also be reconsidered, especially within community colleges. Such a reduction would allow the program director to allot more time to administrative duties and ensure that state and national requirements are effectively met.

Next, organizational leaders need to ensure that adequate instructional and administrative assistance support is provided. If the teaching load of the program director is to be reduced, additional faculty/instructors will be needed so this workload is not allocated to the current instructors in the program. The use of part-time or adjunct instructors has proven effective in meeting such needs in nursing (Elder et al., 2016; Schaar et al., 2015; Sousa & Resha, 2019). Each program should also have an administrative assistant delegated solely to the EMS program. Such an assistant could be trained in onboarding students, processing paperwork, record keeping, and assisting with various other time-consuming activities.

Lastly, the organization should provide an adequate onboarding and socialization process to ensure that the director can meet the demands of the organization and the program without becoming overwhelmed (Breagh, 2021; Yanik & Yildiz, 2019). The organization should also provide an organizational mentor to help the director through the early years of the career, which have been identified as the most challenging. Ideally, this individual would have a background or general understanding of EMS and EMS education. Minimally, the mentor should have a solid



understanding of the operations of the organization to assist the new program director in navigating the intricacies unique to such a setting.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Turnover and turnover intentions of paramedic program directors across the nation were found to be extremely lacking despite the recognized direct and indirect costs that such turnover can have on an organization (Field et al., 2021; Hancock et al., 2017; Hom et al., 2017; Hughes, 2017; Rivard et al., 2020; Yarbrough et al., 2017). The intent of this research was to add to the existing literature and evaluate turnover and turnover intentions in EMS paramedic education by investigating one of the largest states in the country. However, further research is warranted.

First, students, faculty, teaching modalities, and personal lives have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic were not assessed in this study since it began while the pandemic was still actively impacting the nation, and the true effect could not be truly realized. A replication study, both regionally and nationally, comparing job satisfaction, workload, work-life balance, and turnover intentions pre- and post-pandemic would allow for a better understanding of the global pandemic's true impact on EMS education.

Additionally, the cross-sectional design of the research only accessed the directors' perspectives at a single point in time. A longitudinal design would allow the researcher to determine changes in job satisfaction and turnover intentions of paramedic program directors over time (El Badawy & Bassiouny, 2014). The scope of the sample size could also be extended to other EMS educational levels, including EMT-Basic and Advanced EMT programs, to compare if the additional responsibilities impact turnover.

As previously mentioned, this study was restricted to directors who had a minimum of 2 years of experience to help ensure the respondents had the expertise required to provide robust

and insightful responses. Future research could evaluate the perceptions of new program directors to identify early career issues, help mitigate such concerns early, and increase the resilience of the new directors to meet the demands of the position.

Next, it is my hope that this study provides a foundation for other interventional studies. The impact of social support and mentorship has been well documented (Breagh, 2021; Emory et al., 2017; Gulsaul & Magdolna, 2019; Lee, Hom, et al., 2017; Urbina, 2020). However, the impact of mentorship programs in EMS education was not able to be identified. Future research could implement mentorship programs to a small sample size of programs to evaluate the impact that such socialization and support could have on the retention of program directors before extrapolating such programs to a larger population. The findings of such research could provide recommendations for best practices that could be recommended at both the state and national levels.

While the current study focused on paramedic program directors, the impact of these individuals vacating the role on the other members of the programs was not evaluated. The indirect costs of turnover have been well documented and recognized as being more challenging to assess due to such costs being inherently intangible (Collins et al., 2015). Such indirect costs on the remaining educators include increased workload, loss of productivity, eroded morale, increased burnout, the development of chronic disease, and increased likelihood of other employees following suit by leaving the organization (Breagh, 2021; Crowe et al., 2018; Felps et al., 2009; Kumar & Yakhlef, 2016; Kurnat-Thoma et al., 2017; Shan et al., 2016; Urbina, 2020). Future studies should focus on the impact that the attrition of paramedic program directors has on those who remain with the program so that interventions can be implemented to help reduce the effects of such negative consequences on the rest of the program.

Furthermore, due to the fragmentation resulting from the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, each state should individually evaluate how regional policy and practices influence turnover and turnover intentions within each individual state to identify common national trends and issues unique to that state. Lastly, the directors who have left the position should also be evaluated. While such studies would be challenging to complete, the data that could be garnered would be worth the effort.

## **Conclusion**

The goal of this study was to use a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the regional and national factors that influence paramedic program directors' intentions to vacate the director role within the state of Texas, and to provide a foundation for recommendations to help mitigate the high attrition of the key individuals at the local, state, and national levels. Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory and Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory provided the theoretical framework to answer the study's research questions. While extrinsic and intrinsic motivators, such as acceptable salary, constructive relationships with direct supervisors, good working relationships with subordinates, informal recognition, increased support/responsibilities, and the satisfaction of seeing students excel, contributed to the job satisfaction of paramedic program directors in the state of Texas, excessive workloads and poor work-life balance contributed to a turnover intention greater than the national average in the sample.

Factors that were recognized to increase these individuals' workloads include accreditation requirements, replication of work to meet state standards, teaching and committee participation requirements, insufficient faculty/instructors, and lack of administrative assistant support. Collectively, these attributed to most participants having to delegate over 50 hours a week to meet the role's demands. These contributing factors and findings are congruent with

previous research (Allmon, 2020; Bryan, 2015; Crowe et al., 2018). After presenting the limitations associated with the current research, the implications of these findings were discussed. Recommendations were presented at the national, regional, and local levels to help reduce the workload of program directors, improve work-life balance, and, in turn, help reduce the turnover intentions of these key individuals. The chapter concluded with recommendations for future research.

With the need for EMS providers expected to increase by 24% in the coming decade, ensuring an adequate supply of entry-level providers is vital (Cash et al., 2018). If such a demand is to be met, the attrition of paramedic program directors must be addressed. The intent of this research was to help shed light on this ongoing issue that continues to plague EMS education in the state of Texas. Organizational, state, and national leaders are strongly encouraged to consider implementing the recommendations provided in this study to ensure that these invaluable leaders are retained and that the hemorrhaging of directors is occluded. EMS providers are only as strong as the educational institutions that they attend. EMS leaders owe it to the students, the communities, and, most importantly, the patients to ensure that these institutions, under the leadership of the program directors, provide the highest level of education so that patients and loved ones receive the care they deserve.

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## Appendix A: Request for Permission Letter

Dear Dr. Konyu-Fogal and Dr. Sovani,

My name is Jacob Braddock and I am a doctorate candidate in the Doctor of Education in the Organizational Leadership program at Abilene Christian University. In my dissertation project, titled *Attrition and Turnover Intentions of Paramedic Program Directors in the State of Texas*, I want to take a qualitative descriptive research approach to explore regional and national factors that influence paramedic program directors' intentions to leave the director role within the state of Texas through the use of semi-structured interviews, to provide a foundation for suggestions to help address the high attrition rates of these key individuals at the local, state, and national levels. The theoretical foundation is derived from Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivations and Hersberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory.

I would like to formally request permission to use the research instrument titled "Interview questions based on Job Satisfaction factors in relation to Motivation Theories" found in *Job Satisfaction and Retention of Millennials in the Canadian Hotel Industry: Finding Innovative Solutions*. The rationale for using this validated instrument is that both studies share the theoretical foundation based on the Vroom's expectancy theory. While Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs was utilized in your work, the questions also align with the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors found in Hersberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory. Additionally, the questions are well written and broadly address issues that affect both attrition and intention to leave in both the hotel industry and the healthcare industry. Lastly, the questionnaire aligns perfectly with the research questions that I seek to answer.

If permission is granted, I will use each of the thirteen sections and many of the introductory questions. Each section and the introductory questions would be slightly modified to address paramedic program directors, but the questions' intent will remain the same. The instrument would only be used to conduct my doctoral research with your authorship being fully disclosed and noted in all future publications of my doctoral manuscripts and/or related publications using the appropriate APA 7<sup>th</sup> reference citation. Additionally, my gratitude would be expressed in the acknowledgment section of the dissertation by recognizing the value that the instrument has provided to my work and expressing my sincere appreciation and gratefulness for granting me permission.

If you have any questions regarding my dissertation project or how the instrument would be used, please do not hesitate to contact me. I truly appreciate your time and consideration.

Respectfully,



Jacob Braddock

## Appendix B: Permission for Instrument



Page 1 of 1

September 12, 2022

Dear Jacob Braddock,

Thank you for your interest and request for a permission for the use of the research instrument "Interview Questions Based on Job Satisfaction Factors in Relation to Motivation Theories" published in the doctoral research study titled: "Job Satisfaction and Retention of Millennials in the Canadian Hotel Industry: Finding Innovative Solutions" (Sovani, A. 2020).

As the Chair of Dr. Sovani's doctoral research project and Co-Author of the instrument, I am glad to inform you that we grant you a permission for using the instrument in your doctoral research study titled "Attrition and Turnover Intentions of Paramedic Program Directors in the State of Texas" in the Doctor of Education in the Organizational Leadership program at Abilene Christian University.

As you indicated in your Letter of Permission, we grant permission for using the instrument with the stipulation that you will use the instrument with some minor modifications to fit your study purpose and research questions as you indicated in your request letter for conducting the doctoral research study and that you will provide full disclosure of both authors' names in the in-text citations and reference list in the doctoral manuscript and in all related future publications as per APA reference guidelines.

In addition, we would certainly appreciate if you would indicate and recognize both of us as co-authors of the instrument and mention in the gratitude section of the doctoral manuscript what was the value of the instrument and how it helped you collecting and analyzing data.

We would also appreciate if you could send us a copy of your final study with the results and let us know if you would be interested in collaborating with us further for publishing and/or expanding your research. Feel free to contact us by email or phone at the address below.

Good luck! We wish you success and all the best in your doctoral research project.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Gyongyi Konyu-Fogel*

*Dr. Altaf Husen Sovani*

Gyongyi Konyu-Fogel, DBA, PhD

Altaf Husen Sovani, DBA

School of Business and Management, California Southern University, USA

### **Appendix C: Email Request for Participants**

Dear Fellow Program Director,

My name is Jacob Braddock, and I am the Program Director of the paramedic program at South Plains College. Over my tenure with the college, I have seen 4 program directors leave the position. This trend has also been seen across the nation with the turnover rate of paramedic program directors being estimated around 20% annually. Being a program director yourself, you know how much value, knowledge, and leadership that such a role provides and how essential this position is to the program, the faculty, the students, and, ultimately, the patients these students treat.

I am also a doctoral candidate at Abilene Christian University. To help fulfill the requirements of the Organizational Leadership degree, I am conducting a study to evaluate regional and national factors that influence paramedic program directors' intentions to leave the director role within the state of Texas. I will be using semistructured interviews to provide a foundation for suggestions to help address the high attrition rates of these key individuals at the local, state, and national levels. I would like to invite you to participate in the study and share your professional knowledge and experiences to help better understand this phenomenon.

If you are willing to participate, please respond to this email. I will then reach out to schedule a time that is convenient for you to conduct the interview over Zoom. The interview should not take longer than an hour. Please understand that participation is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time. If you choose to participate, your responses and identity will remain confidential and safely secure on a password-protected computer accessible only by myself. I appreciate your time and willingness to participate. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Jacob Braddock

### Appendix D: Interview Guide

Interview questions	Herzberg et al. (1959) Motivation-Hygiene Theory	Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory
<p>Introductory questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is your current job, and how long have you been in this role?</li> <li>- How long have you worked in the EMS?</li> <li>- Which other roles have you performed with in the industry?</li> <li>- Which other organizations have you worked for?</li> <li>- Why did you decide to become a paramedic program director?</li> <li>- Have you searched for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job with in the last year?</li> <li>- If so, where to?</li> <li>- How likely will you be in the role of Paramedic program director in 3 years?</li> <li>- If not, what do you see as the primary reason for you leaving the role of Program Director?</li> </ul>		
<p>1. <b>Rewards:</b> Linked to performance and valued by employees Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors: Q1a: Does your supervisor understand what is important to you as an employee? Q1b: How do potential advancement opportunities influence your loyalty to the current organization?</p>	Motivational/Hygiene	Valence
<p>2. <b>Goal Setting:</b> Setting challenging but achievable goals Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors: Q2a: How important to you are new activities that expand your skills in meeting your job expectations? Q2b. How likely are you to stay with the organization if you enjoy the role and benefits, but you are not provided with opportunities for advancement?</p>	Motivational	Expectancy

<p>3. <b><u>Feedback:</u></b> Feedback that informs employees of their level of performance and progress towards achieving their goals  Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors:  Q3a: Does your supervisor give you feedback on your work?  How often and in what format?  Q3b: Are you given the opportunity to provide feedback to your supervisor? If yes, is it readily accepted?</p>	Motivational	Valence
<p>4. <b><u>Job Characteristics:</u></b> Job characteristics where the job is interesting and challenging  Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors:  Q4a: Is the job and the work you are doing what you expected?  Q4b: What are the main satisfiers and dissatisfiers of your job?</p>	Hygiene	Expectancy
<p>5. <b><u>Compensation:</u></b> Salary as a motivator  Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors:  Q5a: How satisfied are you with the pay you receive in relation to the type and amount of work that you do?  Q5b: What do you think of the pay you receive in relation to the cost of living in the city you live?</p>	Hygiene	Instrumentality
<p>6. <b><u>Advancement &amp; Growth:</u></b> Advancement and growth opportunities within organization  Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors:  Q6a: Are you provided with the tools, resources including training to help you develop your career?  Q6b: Are the promotion practices in your organization fair and transparent?</p>	Motivational	Expectancy
<p>7. <b><u>Working Conditions:</u></b> Working Conditions including the tools required  Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors:  Q7a: Is there flexibility and autonomy in your work? How do you feel about it?</p>	Hygiene	Instrumentality



Q7b: Are you able to do the work assigned to you? (Do you have the tools and skills you need to succeed at the job?)		
8. <b><u>Recognition and Appreciation:</u></b> Being appreciated by the supervisor Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors: Q8a: Is your work appreciated by your supervisors? Q8b: How have you been recognized for a job well done?	Motivational	Valence
9. <b><u>Training and Development:</u></b> Training and development to enhance skills and ability to improve performance Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors: Q9a: Do you have opportunities for professional and career development? Please explain. Q9b: Do you have a learning plan and if yes, does your supervisor support you? If no, why not?	Motivational	Expectancy
10. <b><u>Job Responsibilities:</u></b> Job responsibility – taking ownership of one’s productivity Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors: Q10a: Are you satisfied with the responsibility and challenges offered by your work in the organization? Please explain. Q10b: Do you have the opportunity to use all your skills in your work? Please explain.	Motivational	Instrumentality
11. <b><u>Job Security</u></b> Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors: Q11a: Does your work give you a sense of accomplishment? Why? How likely are you to stay with the organization if it is not meeting your job expectations? Q11b: How important are your relationships with your work colleagues?	Motivational	Instrumentality
12. <b><u>Leadership:</u></b> Trust in leadership Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors:	Hygiene	Instrumentality

<p>Q12a: How do you expect supervisors to demonstrate that they genuinely value your contributions?</p> <p>Q12b: What support do you expect supervisors to provide to you in order to achieve the next level in your career?</p>		
<p><b>13. <u>Performance Appraisals and Feedback:</u></b>  Performance appraisals that are nonsubjective and accurately measure an employee's performance levels  Questions to ask Paramedic Program Directors:  Q13a: Does your supervisor conduct performance appraisals and do they give you feedback on your performance?  Q13b: Is there a formal process for performance appraisals and is it documented?  Does your supervisor give you an opportunity to provide feedback?</p>	Motivational	Expectancy



## Appendix E: Interview 1 Transcript

Interviewer: So for the record can you please consent to be in recorded both audio and visually?

P1: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you understand that this interview is completely voluntary and you reserve the right to withdraw at any point or choose to skip eight question that you're not comfortable, answering?

P1: Yes.

Interviewer: Perfect. So what is your current role. And how long have you been in that role?

P1: So currently, I'm the Chair of Public safety. I have eight programs under me, and I'm also the EMS program director. I have been the EMS program director since 2015, and I've been the chair since 2018.

Interviewer: Why do you decide to become a paramedic program director?

P1: Well, one of the reasons is because I actually came through this program back in 95. And I've seen some of the changes happening in EMS.

I've always been one of those people that I'm always trying to make it better cause everybody has room for improvement that's one of the reasons why I became a site visitor.

Also just because I want to see what other programs are doing. And I want to also see how I can improve my program. But the biggest reason was to make change in EMS. There's just not enough change down here in [region of] Texas. I've always said we're 10 years behind, so my goal has always been to improve the way we do teaching improve the way that our students learn. And then, of course, build our program to where it's it's big and we have a good outreach with good success stories.

Interviewer: Just out curiosity. How long have you been a site, visitor?

P1: I just started this last year.

Interviewer: How's new like that role, I mean, is it what you expect?

P1: Oh, yeah, I definitely, I really like it. It's it gives me a chance to see what others doing. And I actually come back. And I'm tell my faculty, you don't know how good you have it, cause what one of the things I found was, there's not a lot of program directors that are tenured positions a lot of them. One of the things that I have in my program is every one of my positions is tenured.

Interviewer: What role your processor took when they vacated the directors by chance?

P1: So he was actually the program director. And then he also was chair, and he started as the program director back in shoot 90? I wanna, say 96. He was here, and then he became chair, and probably 2,010 around that time. Yeah. And then when he left, he left kind of not on his choice, but he left because of some other things. So that's when they put me in that position.

Interviewer: How long you worked in EMS as a whole. If you don't mind me asking.

P1: Since 96, 1996, yeah.

Interviewer: What other roles have you performed within the industry?

P1: So I actually was an EMT. And I did that. And while I worked through paramedic, I worked at a children's hospital. Part-time I worked as a phlebotomist for about 5 years. I also worked on private ambulances. I worked in 911. I've also worked in the hospital setting as an er tech at 2 different facilities, and then went back into riding the ambulances again, just so I could keep my scope up and then I worked no I quit doing private. I mainly worked 911 in 2 different rural areas while I was also teaching here, too, as well.

Interviewer: Perfect what best describe your sponsorship style of the organization that you work for? Is it post secondary, including community, college and 4 years universities, hospital, consortium, fire based, ambulance based, or something other.

P1: So it's a community college. Yeah, to your, it's a 2-year degree.

Interviewer: And do they have the certificate option as well? I'm assuming.

P1: Yeah, we offer the certificate one for paramedic. And then we offer the associates degree for Paramedic.

Interviewer: How many parameters does your organization graduate on an annual basis?

P1: So I just pulled those numbers for 2,021 for 2,022 school year. We had 107 paramedics that started, and we had a 105 that completed and all certified.

Interviewer: Do you still perform that teaching role within your organization? What percentage of time, would you say, is instruction versus just in at administrative duties?

P1: Yes. So just know that I don't have to teach classes, but I choose to. But I teach two EMT classes where I teach. That's what I'm teaching right now. I have a dual credit class, and then I have an 8-week EMT class, and the only reason why I do that is because I need another instructor, because I have three full time faculty that teach.

I have one that's dedicated to the fire department, and then I have two that teach the paramedic classes cause we offer a paramedic class. Every semester, spring, summer, and fall.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So outside of that teaching responsibility and administrative duties, what other tasks make up the bulk of your time or responsibility?

P1: So, a lot of it's the eight programs. So as chair. In fact, we're getting ready to do self evaluations. And then I have to do chair evaluations. Payroll! That's huge. I have to basically put in budgets and put in for Perkins. Grants, and of course, the attend tons of meetings for chairs.

I'm also the chair council, the chair of chairs. So I do a lot with the president and the VP. Of the college. A lot of it's attending meetings and things like that. But my biggest thing is with those eight programs I'm constantly trying to make sure that they have what they need. I look at their canvas courses, try and make sure that they're teaching what they're supposed to be teaching online. They required hours, so there's a lot of auditing.

And then at the program director level. Of course, everything that is required by the State. You know the reviews, that's the other thing. Program reviews. I'm responsible for all those 8 programs to make sure they get in on time. I have to read through those. And then basically making sure everybody's teaching the right stuff, turning in schedules to the state, and then making sure that we get all the classes scheduled for the following semesters.

Interviewer: So I'm pretty sure I know the answer to this question, but how many hours a week are needed to perform your duties? Would you say it's less than 30 hours, 40 to 50 hours, or more than 50 hours?

P1: More than 50 hours. I'm up here on weekends as well.

Interviewer: Of the administrative duties that are assigned to which would you say, take up the most time?

P1: Probably the chair duties are probably the biggest, that biggest. Yeah.

Interviewer: So you mentioned your full time faculty members, could you say one more time? How many full time faculty, or educators that you have, and you have a part time that help in there as well.

P1: So I have three full time lecture instructors that are all tenured, and then I have one full-time clinical coordinator, and then I have about maybe three adjuncts. What makes it difficult with my adjuncts, though, is they all work for the fire department. So I like for them to come in and teach courses. But it's just really hard to give them a class, because they're on shift. So that's why I kind of and my past rates are not to my own horn.

But my pass rates for EMT are really good. So I'm kinda hesitant about turning it over to a part timer. And I have about 31 skills preceptors as well, and those are the ones that come in for skill days, and those are the ones that go out to clinical.

Interviewer: Perfect, so just regarding the full time faculty that you have employed. Do you feel like that number is adequate for your programs.

P1: With the program growing I think I would be better with one more full timer that way. I mean, I could kind of step down as thing you know. The other person teaching, so I could do more stuff with the chair and the program director. I'm getting ready to kinda hand it off to another one of my faculty he's my assistant person right now, but once I turn it over to him, he's my one that's dedicated to the fire department, that extra person would really help in that aspect so that he could take over the program director stuff.

Interviewer: Does your organization provide an administrative assistant to help reduce the workload?

P1: Yeah, so I actually have one full time for chair. So I have one admin that helps me at the chair. And then I also have one position right now. That's open. That is a dedicated just to EMS, and then I have another admin that is dedicated to my fire and OSHA in my other program. So I have a total of three.

Interviewer: Would you describe yourself as very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with your current role?

P1: Satisfied.

Interviewer: What would be the main reason for your current level of satisfaction?

P1: Just that I have a lot of support from the college. They've always been there for me in case I ever needed, and they've told me it's time for you to kinda let's back off a little bit. We don't want you to get burned out, but I kinda do it to myself.

But they are really, I mean, you have to have the support of the college. If you don't have that support, then it's just it's unhappy here, and anything that I ask for. I've always gotten it. I mean, there's some things I've asked for. Unlike my Dean will say, you know, [name redacted], you want the shuttle, the space shuttle, and I'm like well, if I don't ask.

But pretty much everybody that I work with here is awesome. I mean, and I think that's what that really helps me in my role cause if you don't have that support system, you're not gonna last, especially when you're asking for people and you can't get it and kinda seeing some of these other schools around the country, I see a lot that the colleges say are the other.

You know, even the private companies are saying, you know, I wish I had another person. I wish I had somebody to help us but they won't let us do it. And so my response is always been. Well, then ask, ask for help, and tell them that accreditation, you know you can't get this stuff done, you, and you can't build your program if you don't have the resources. And so a lot of them are kinda listening to that other than just saying, well, I don't wanna do this anymore, cause I can't get the you know I can't get the backing so I don't know. I think it's kind of a two-way street you have to. You have to ask for the help, and you know, if you ask and ask, and they still don't do it. Then, okay, then, at least you tried. So.

Interviewer: So have you searched for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job within the last year?

P1: No!

Interviewer: Okay. How likely will you be in the role of paramedic program director in 3 years?

P1: I'll probably be turning it over next year. We are having our accreditation site visit is next year. So I'll be turning it over to my other faculty member. So I'll be full time chair, and that's what all my duties will be.

Interviewer: So that kind of answers the second question. So where do you see yourself? So still with the college but just in the chair. Position. Correct.

P1: Correct, correct.

Interviewer: So as far as just maintaining that chair position, there's nothing that's pushing you out of the program directory roll short of just want to gear back a little bit lighten the workload.

P1: Yeah, yeah. Well, I'll just say that the upper administration, the higher ups are just kinda like, Hey, you need to kinda pass it on to somebody and focus just on chair stuff. But I just feel like there's so much more to be done, and I'm having a really hard time giving it up. But I mean, I realize it's gonna come to that. And I gotta start looking towards the future. So I'm you know. I'm hoping that maybe in the next 5 years I'll be able to retire.

Interviewer: So question 1A- does your supervisor understand what's important to you as an employee?

P1: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay, how would you say that he does so, or they do?

P1: Cause he listens to my concerns. He listens to the okay. Let's just say I actually hired the Dean, but he was the chair. He was working in our police academy for a little while, and the old chair that was here before me I'll just say that he didn't like to work for women. So when it came up they asked him, So who do you think would be the best fitted for the chair position? And of course he mentioned my Dean, the chair at the time named him, who I have been here the longest, and I was. I'm very active, with faculty council. I'm very active, with chairs. I'm very active with, you know, the President, and it was kind of one of those things that he told me one day. I will never work for you, and I will never call you Doctor.

So when I took over and he decided, I'm gone, the Dean currently now, and his name is Individual 1, Individual 1 has always been there, and he he knew my frustrations with that former person, and he has really. He knows that. I know that I what I'm talking about. He knows the things that I've gone through to get this program accredited. So with that being said, he's

always had my back. So in anything that I that comes up, or something that I need to talk to him about. He's right there, and he will also discuss it with the VP.

And the VP, like. I said, I meet with her once a month, and then I also have a good report with the President, so I can contact them. I can contact our lawyer because he's kind of on speed dial with some of us about some of the stuff that happens. All of them have been. They've all had my back. And so I I think that's, I think that's really good for a college to be able to for me to be able to say something like that.

Interviewer: For sure. So how in this kind of goes to what you're alluding to earlier? How do you feel, how do potential advancement opportunities influence your loyalty to your current organization?

P1: Oh, yeah, there's always there's always that possibility that you could move up real quick. But I will say this, you don't have. But there's not a lot of turnover with that right, unless somebody retires.

That's just. You know. We may get mad about compensation.

That's the other thing. I'm on the compensation committee as well. So I'm a push, for you know, raises and things like that. So they know me already, and that's just because I'm comfortable with who I work with, and so that's what makes it, you know, easy for us to move up into those positions. And the college, you know, is always open to that. But, like I said, there's not a huge turnover with us here, because, it's I don't wanna say it's free. I mean, you still have to be careful about what you said and do. But they just. It's open for us to make those move ups pretty easy.

Interviewer: Nice. So question 2A- How important to you or new activities that expand your skill and meeting your job expectations? As far as like attending conferences or continuing education, additional degrees, that kind of thing.

P1: So part of our compensation committee is, we're constantly trying to get like our base increased. They pay us for our degree, they pay us for longevity, they pay us for the professional development. So we do a 5 year, or 3 year, or 4 year in a 3 year, or something like that to advance to Professor. So every level you're gonna get a certain amount. So with the Compensation Committee, where we're actually able to kinda negotiate some things. In fact, we got a pretty good jump up last year, but there's just there's some things that the college could do better on that aspect.

And the CE stuff. We have our own Ce. Here, so they're always getting us on board. And I'm also constantly continuing education stuff together for the region. I'm also the chair for [professional committee]. So I do EMS not an EMS expo, but a C Rac expo. So I get people from all over the State to come in and even some across the country, and I'll ask them to come in. And do you know some type of thing right now, we're focusing on Pediatrics.

And then, as far as travel goes. This last year we had to cut back on travel, because, you know, we had low enrollment. But the colleges we have an I tag, which is money that's put to side for different conferences. So they'll pay us up to 2,000 or \$2,500 to go to a conference, and that's

also part of our professional development. So last year, myself and two others, I think we attended like three conferences last year, and so I'll be attending two this year. So that's kind of a big thing for me, especially for my faculty. I want them to stay ahead of the game. I don't want anybody to be stagnant. I don't want it taught the way it's always been taught. So it's important that I get them out there.

Interviewer: Medicine is always change. If you don't change with the you're not gonna be in position very long.

P1: Exactly.

Interviewer: That's great to have that support. So question 2b- How likely are you to stay with the organization if you enjoy the role and benefits, but you're not provided with opportunity for advancement?

P1: I will be here as long as I can. I can, and that's gonna be. When I decide, okay, everything's set for me, and that may be 5 more years down the road. I mean, my next goal is to become Dean somewhere. So once. I think once I hit that threshold, that I know things are handled, and I can trust that they'll be handled, then that's when I'll call it quits.

Interviewer: So question 3. A- Does your supervisor supervisor give you feedback on your work?

P1: Yes, constantly.

Interviewer: So second part. How often, in what format?

P1: It's usually through emails and just discussions. But he's not. He's more of, hey, [name redacted], you need to cut back on working so much. You got too many hours here to much overload, and then sometimes he has to remind me that you don't just have one program. You have 8 programs. So yeah, he's constantly trying to remind me as well.

Interviewer: Are you given the opportunity to provide feedback to your supervisor? And if you can, how readily accepted is it?

P1: He's always willing to listen to me. Yeah, in fact, we're doing self evaluations that we're all do today. And I only have three on my desk. So I'm sure he'll be calling me and saying, Hey, where's yours?

Cause I just remembered that I need to do mine, but he's he's always allowed to speak freely, and then, you know, on top of respect as well. It's all how you approach it, too.

Interviewer: Absolutely so. Question 4A- Is a job and work that you're doing what you expected when you assume the role.

P1: No, not at all!

Interviewer: Can you expand on what you assumed versus what reality was?

P1: When I became program director. I had no like, no clue. I knew some of the accreditation stuff, and I had to basically do the entire program, because when he left he shredded things so we had nothing, and we were under letter of review. And so I had to start from ground 0. So I made a lot of phone calls to CoA EMSP individual 1 and he between him and Co EMSP individual 2, they really helped me a lot. But when I took on this role I had no idea the amount of work it was gonna take. But once we got it done, I mean, don't get me wrong. There's still like a lot of work.

But all the all the things that had to be put in place, and I'm still constantly trying to get all my faculty on board with it as well, because they're used to doing things the way they've always done it and these are three of them that have worked for the fire department and you know how the fire department is, they do it one way, and we can't go outside that box. So one of my frustrations is getting them on board to what we need for accreditation. So it kind of feels like. And I'm gonna start delegating things now a little bit more to get them more on board of what needs to be done.

So as far as what I knew when I was coming into it, I had no idea I had no clue cause I didn't come from an accredited program. It was all here, and then even the stuff with the State. I had no idea that I had to report to them when he left. In fact, we were still operating courses, and then I got a phone call from the State. And they're like, Hey, we heard so and so left. And I'm like, Yeah, I mean, I have no idea what I'm doing. And they said, Well, you have to send us a thing that says you're the program director, I'm like, Oh, my gosh! I had no idea. So yeah, so I've kind of learned everything on that. And if I have questions, or whatever I have, I'm having a call the State to find out, and State Individual 1 and State Individual 2 have been really good about that.

Interviewer: What I'm getting, is it you learned some things the hard way you are able to reach out to both the national level and state level, and I understand, assuming that role, and then just not knowing what you're doing wrong until they're like hey, so you think it'd be better I know this the national level has some kind of walkthroughs as far as accreditation, re accreditation. Your resources matrix etc. Do you think that's something that the State might be lacking that like for new programs to say, Hey, just FYI, these are things that we need to make sure that we're tracking or turning it in or reporting like, etc.

P1: I really think that the State needs to do some type of mentorship, especially when new programs are popping up because they have no clue. There. I mean your instructors, or your even your advanced coordinator. Hey? You took the class, and you learned all this stuff. But how do you do it? How do you do a program review? What are they looking for?

Right. So I think a mentorship would be really awesome, and I've always reached out to programs that I hear popping up even some of my competitors like, Oh, hey, we're gonna teach our own class and City 1.

And I'm like, Okay, do you need help? Just let me know, you know, because I know what it's like to just be kind of thrown into it and not know anything. So. And that's one of the reasons why I



got onto State Board 1, because I had no idea what was going around on the State until I got on the committee.

Interviewer: And that's been opening as well. So it's interesting that you brought up mentors. That's the next questions. When you assume the role, the paramedic program director, did you have such a mentor either in your organization or outside that help with that State national requirements?

P1: So yes and no. So some of the stuff, when I had to do our review, our program and I contacted an old instructor of mine that taught me when I was a intermediate and he's in Texas City 1. And so I was like, Hey, how do I do this? I'm not sure how to put all this together. What do you guys, can I get an example? And so he helped me a lot to get put all that together, and then he's like, Oh, you gotta do this, and you gotta do this. So I kinda had a mentor, and if I hadn't had him I probably would have done something wrong. But now he calls me and he's like, Hey, how are you doing this program? You know, which is kinda neat.

But yeah, but yeah, I he was one of them like I said, I reached out to CoA EMSP individual 2 a lot. CoA EMSP individual 1 a lot of them at accreditation, cause I had no idea what I was getting into with that, and then I was scared like Oh, my God! What if I don't put this in here? What if I don't get the surveys back? What if I don't do this? And so they would always. CoA EMSP individual 3 was always really good about. Hey?

We're not here to shut you down. We're just here to help you with your program. And so when I started getting those things together and started learning more about accreditation, I was like, Oh, it makes so much sense cause now I can look at the program and say, Okay, what are we doing and it's not working. What can I do to fix it?

And so, and doing these site visits, I remember being so scared, and I was not the program director when we did our first site visit.

The other one was, and so he would make us literally memorize these little sheets. This is how you respond to this. This is how you respond to this. And so now I see it differently, being a site visitor, and you know I meet with the students, and I'm like, look if there's something in the program that's really good or something that's not, really, you know, not working out. Please reach out, whether it's your program director or it's us. Because if you don't tell us we can't fix it, you know you can go and complain about it later. But it really bothered you that much come in and voice it. So we know what to fix.

And I tell my students the same thing when we do our thing next year, they're just gonna come in. I'm not gonna tell them what to say. I wanna know what the issues are. And I tell them all the time. Be honest on those on those surveys, cause, if you're not, I can't fix it. So yeah, I just, I wish that there was a little bit more mentorship within the state just to kinda help some of these people out. And you know, wanted to reach out to that program with the EMT to amt to say hey? And I have tried to talk to him. But yeah, it's kind of on deaf ears. But you know, cause I wanna see these programs work. And I know that it can work because I've done it. I know that it works, but if you do it a certain way, it's you know, it's not gonna work. So.

Interviewer: Absolutely. So you said mentorship at the state level. I think at the national level, that'd be extremely broad and very difficult thing.

P1: Oh, yeah.

Interviewer: to do, but at the or is there at your organizational level do you think some type of mentorship, as far as I know, they won't be completely EMT or paramedic director related, but having that support within the organization that kinda shows you the ins and outs of how other directors were the things that they track. I mean accreditation, or they have their similarities and other allied health fields. Do you think that was provided, or you think that would be beneficial?

P1: I I don't think it would be, and the only reason why I say that is, we have radiology. We have surgical tech. We have nursing, you know.

We have a lot of the Allied health, and I've spoken to a lot of the their program directors. It's not the same. EMS is its own little animal. And so when I look at their programs, I think, Gosh! Your stuff is so easy, like nursing. You only have to do one day in Ob. How is that? You know? And it and we require so much more. So as far as mentoring. I don't think at the college here I don't think they would understand EMS. I tried to educate them on EMS, and I think they understand it a little bit more.

But that's because I interact with them so much, you know. And but it's good conversation for us, because, like respite, our respiratory program, they come to us.

My clinical coordinator actually is the one that does scheduling for our programs here. And then our university. So she's kind of our hub that helps get the students in throughout the year. So there's a lot of discussion amongst us all, and we all know we have our own little thing, and I think nursing has a better idea of what we do cause. They had no clue. What we do in fact, they're like, oh, you're just an EMT right I'm like, well, we're talking about paramedics. Oh, isn't that the same thing? No. So yeah.

Interviewer: Question 4B- What would you say the main satisfiers and dissatisfies of your job would be?

P1: Probably the biggest satisfier is, I get paid pretty well pretty good for what I do.

Dissatisfaction. Probably. I wish I had more this is gonna sound horrible, but I wish I had more admin support, even though I have 3. However, one of the issues I'm fighting right now is the college does not pay our Admins enough. And so my Admins are a revolving door. In fact, I've had this spot open for EMS we hired one gentleman. He lasted 4 days, and I was told that I can only assign them what is in their job. Description. That's why they're not staying is because I'm giving them too much work. And I said, Hold on a minute. He was here for 4 days, and I just had him filing. And I'm like I've got to get the pay increases for these Admins, and they did give them a paid increment, but it was 50 cents. So that's probably my biggest dissatisfaction is that aspect of not getting the support for my admins.

Interviewer: And that directly ties to the workload that kind of falls back on you, correct?

P1: Right, right. So now I've had to. Get the rest of my faculty together and assign them. Tasks to make sure things are getting done, because if not, we get way behind.

Interviewer: And I'm willing to bet if you're faculty or like mine, we're trying to cram as much as we can into an already tight schedule that be accurate.

P1: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And sometimes I think that they don't understand. They look. The college looks a lot at the nursing program 'cause, you know, nursing so great, and they get all the money and they get more of the incentives as far as pay, you know. Some of their people get paid an extra \$800 when they sign on. It's kinda like a sign on bonus and I'm like, Okay, so why are everybody else getting this right? So I've been told. It's grants, and I'm still the biggest voice for this program.

And my other programs as well. And the college does kinda listen to me, but when it comes to money it's kinda like, well, you gotta understand we can only do so much, you know.

So I just think maybe the dissatisfaction would be. You know not. I want to say the pay for us, but the pay for the admins that's, and I get the budget cuts and stuff because of low enrollment, but I just feel like maybe EMS was seen as a more of a valuable profession then nursing and surgical tech and cause we're just dumb firefighters over here and EMS people and cops, you know, they see us a little bit different way, but I'll just tell you once the once he became the Dean cause he comes from the police Academy he's also educating a lot of the administrators of the police Academy, the Fire Academy, the EMS. So that kind of helps with our public safety program.

Interviewer: So this forward, this satisfactory, dissatisfactory that's not the correct term. But would you say inequality across from nursing versus Allied health is identifiable.

P1: Yeah, yeah, definitely, a lot of inequality amongst the programs.

Interviewer: Question 5A- And you alluded to this a little bit. How satisfied are you with your pay you receive in relation to the amount of work that you do.

P1: I would like to get paid more, but just kind of seeing what everybody else across the State and around the country is getting. I mean I I'm just blessed, that I'm able to get what I get. Yeah.

Interviewer: What do you think that pay you receiving relationship relation to the cost of living in the city in which you live?

P1: I, yeah, that's a kind of a hard one, because where we are, the cost of housing up here has really gone up. But then I can't complain, because I'm still getting paid pretty well.

Interviewer: It's comparable to the cost of living comfortable could be better but it could be worse.

P1: Yeah, it's comfortable. It could be more. But it's comfortable.

Interviewer: So question 6A- Are you provided with the tools and resources, including training, to help you develop in your career?

P1: Yeah.

Interviewer: And you talked about the conferences and that kind of thing. And this is kind of a little bit different. So do you use any platform to document skills, clinicals, and that kind of thing.

P1: Yes, we do.

Interviewer: Would you say that Platform is fairly user friendly or is it cumbersome/time consuming

P1: So at first it was very difficult, and I probably could have figured it out on my own if I had time. But the company we use is it's platform 1, and they have been really good. They walked us through a lot of stuff. I have a computer nerd that works for me. He works also works for the fire department. He has basically thrown himself into that entire program and has basically got it. Everything working so for me, it works, and if we have any issues with it, I just I get Staff member 1 to fix it so that I mean they can send us, you know I can call platinum up, and they'll call me right back.

But to walk through it, and not understand how our program runs. It's kinda difficult then, for them to set up what we need. That makes sense and Staff member 1 understands our program, and he understands the requirements. So he's able to. He I put him in charge of that whole platform. Now, as far as the testing portion of it that's all me, because I wanna make sure that the instructors are using the right exams, especially when we're doing high stakes.

Interviewer: Absolutely so. Questions 6 B. Would you say the promotional practices in your organization are fair and transparent.

P1: Yes, very transparent. Before we had no idea what was going on. Yeah.

Interviewer: So great improvement in that area, for sure.

P1: Oh, yeah, yeah, definitely. And I'm very transparent. Anything I do, I make sure I get it to the dean the dean gets it to the VP. Or I'll let the dean know. Hey? I'm gonna send this to our VP. Here's what's going on, or you know the counsel. If I have something going on, then I'll contact him. And the dean. But yeah, I have a lot of transparency before, there wasn't anything.

Interviewer: Question 7A- Is there flexibility and autonomy in your work? And how do you feel about it?

P1: Yes, there's a lot of flexibility. For instance, you know they let me they let me have time off to go and do those site visits. So my schedule is pretty flexible if I decide. Hey? I'm not coming in which that never happens. But I just contact the Dean, and he's like, Okay, and I'll work from home. So, and I've done that a couple of times when my grandson got sick. But yeah, they're really good about that.

Interviewer: Question 7 B. Are you able to do the work assigned to you , as far as the amount in the time that you have, and you have the skills and tools that you need to successfully do that job.

P1: I would say, so, yeah.

Interviewer: How would you describe your work, life, balance?

P1: Well, I'm an empty nester, so I haven't children at home, and it's just me and my husband and he. We see each other quite a bit, because he works on campus as well. He's with the fire department. So there the fire department training is actually here on campus. So he's here all the time. So we see each other all the time, and he works on Monday through Friday. Job. So, yeah.

Interviewer: So question, 8a-Is your work appreciated by your supervisor?

P1: Yes.

Interviewer: How would you say you're recognized for a job well done?

P1: So sometimes they will send information like, if I like. I just got elected to the board for [professional organization] so they sent my name to the Board of Regents, and so they have me show up, and they say, Oh, here's what she's doing.

Interviewer: You have an opportunity to for professional and career development? And please explain that.

P1: Yeah.

Interviewer: Thank you pretty much. Describe that one already, so we'll move on to question 9 B. You have a learning plan such as additional college degree? And if yes, does your supervisor support you?

P1: Oh, yeah, definitely. Yeah. He gives me to hurry up and get it done. I actually decided to get my bachelor's degree when the other director was here, and when you tell me I can't do something, or you tell me that you know you're not as good as this other person, I'm gonna change your mind, and I'm gonna do it. So that's kinda what got me to where I'm at now. In fact, I got my masters before the other guy, his best friend, got his, and then his buddy

left. And now he's kicking himself, because now he's back on the transports he can't that, you know. Once you leave the college you have to start out at ground 0 again. So, yeah.

Interviewer: Are you satisfied with the responsibilities and challenges offered by your work in your organization?

P1: Yeah, actually, I am. I'm satisfied at this point where I'm at in my position. And where I'm at in life I wouldn't change anything that I've done. But there's I always have that I can do something much more type thing. So, and it's been pointed out to me by my husband that he's like you need to start thinking about cutting back on things, and maybe cause I'm constantly into something like I. They told me you need to try out you try. I was like, okay, and then, so then I made it to the board. But it was, like, I said. I'm happy of where I'm at and where I'm at with a college. But like I said, there's always some more in the horizon.

Interviewer: Do you have opportunity user your skills at work? I think we can hurry hit on that one as well so we'll skip to question 11a-. Does your work give you a sense of accomplishment?

P1: Yes, it does.

Interviewer: How likely would you be to stay with an organization if it didn't meet your expectations?

P1: I probably would not be here if they didn't support me, I would. I probably would have found something else.

Interviewer: So just out of curiosity, kind of going back to your early days as a director, Did you have that thought of. Maybe this. This isn't for me. Maybe the field is where I belong, or is it one of those things that I took on this role, I wanted, meet it head on, and I mean, did you ever have that thought of? Maybe going back to a different career, looking for a different position.

P1: I never had that thought, but before I became program director, it was really really difficult working in in that position.

P1: I actually had thought of and I think that's why I had volunteers so much just to. So, I could network cause that was in the back of my mind, and I know that he was trying to get rid of me. And so. I'm very stubborn, so when I found out that he was trying to get me to quit, I was like Nope not doing it. I'm going to stay longer. So my intent at that time, once the Dean's position came up, I actually applied. Nobody knows that but you and I. I even had told my husband. I'm not if I don't get this job, I'm probably gonna leave the college and find a different college. But my husband said, just hang in there, finish your degrees. Get what you need to get done. And so I think that's why I stayed.

But what really kind of opened my eyes to staying was once I found out that the college was really backing me up, when everything kind of went down when the other director was here, and they told me that they supported me 100%. That's pretty much where my loyalties kind of stayed. But before that I was under the impression by the old director that you know, and and I was

tenured at the time, too, but he had told me I can get rid of you. It. You have no recourse, type, thing. And then I started kind of networking with some of the Administration. He had no idea, but they said, No, he can't do that unless you committed a crime, or you know you did something horrible. That's the only way he can get rid of you.

So just having all those discussions with the president and the VP. And all that, they were a 100% behind me. But I think back then I contemplated going into nursing, and, in fact, took the test and everything else, and. Working in the hospital. It's like, no, this isn't for me. This is, I want to teach. Yeah, so yeah, back then, that was a little bit different. And yeah.

Interviewer: So final question. And I do greatly enjoyed this conversation. Sorry! It took a little bit longer than I anticipated, but so the final question, are there any other local, state or national factors that may impact your decision to stay in or vacate your current role as paramedic program director that we have not discussed that you'd like to voice.

P1: No, Nope, I as long as I have been kind of working and networking with a lot of a lot of people, a lot of places. I will say that when the National Registry came out and said that they're gonna allow the States to decide who's gonna you know? Do the National Registry whether it was, you know, state whatever whatever. I was really shocked at that, because accredited is nothing but a good thing, and it allows these schools to examine. There, what they're doing. On that same token, though, there are some schools that I think how the hell are you accredited? How are you doing this? And that's kind of frustrating to me, and I'm I still ask State representative 1, when are we gonna start looking at these schools that have the lowest pass rates? And these students that are going to them and taking their money, and they cannot pass the test. That is frustrating, because I believe in education, and I believe that everybody has an opportunity to learn.

But when you get these schools that are private and they're making and I'll tell you there's private school making a ton of money right now on that house, Bill and they're robbing these kids.

Interviewer: Yes, minimal accountability.

P1: Yup! Yup! And I think that's probably the most frustrating thing that I see with the state and we've got to fix it. We have to fix it, but until then I mean, there's only so much that I can do, and there's almost so much you can do. It's just. I sometimes feel like the state it falls on deaf ears.

Especially with this. You know, I got in my area. We have 120 kids in that house enrolled in that House Bill. I got six. And that other company that charges \$8,250. They got them all in our rack, and this is, and I've almost I have to keep my mouth shut when I'm in those meetings for. But when they came out and said, last Friday we've given out a 1 million dollars to this company. Wow!

Interviewer: And what return on investment will that have?

P1: There's 10 of them right now coming to me and asking, Hey, can we come to your program? I'm like y'all already paid you already paid.

So that's why I ask that question today of State individual 1 is, if they, if they are enrolled with that course, and they're not satisfied.

How can you penalize those students? Let them choose, you know they may have made a bad decision in the beginning, but now they're wanting to come, and they still wanna finish. They still wanna stay in the field, but you're gonna make them pay back \$8,200. I just that's frustrating, and it's all.

Interviewer: Absolutely. That's that's unbelievable. Well like, I said, thank you so much, for I know your time as you alluded is extremely valuable when you're spread pretty thin. But I can't thank you enough, and if I can ever return the favor, please let me know and I'll be more than happy, to do so.

P1: Oh, I definitely will.

Interviewer: It was a pleasure to talk to you, and I have 1 minute on my next interview.

P1: Okay.

Interviewer: I'd schedule a little tight, so I'll do apologize for having that kind of wrap it up. But thank you again. It was a true pleasure.

P1: Sounds good.

Interviewer: Thank you, ma'am.



## Appendix F: Interview 2 Transcript

Interviewer: So for the record. Can you please consent to being recorded both audio and visually?

P2: I can send to be recorded audio, and visually.

Interviewer: Thank you, sir. Do you understand that this interview is completely voluntary, and you reserve the right to withdraw at any point, or choose to skip any question that you do not feel comfortable with?

P1: I understand and agree.

Interviewer: Perfect. So first question was your current job, and how long have you been in that role?

P2: Okay, so I currently have two jobs which affects this one as I am program director. And for the for a consortium accredited program.

My full time job is I'm the dean of a community college health professions. And I have seven programs underneath me, including an EMS one. Although I'm not program director of that program, I definitely oversee it.

Interviewer: Busy man that's quite the span. Have you been a paramedic program director for any other organization?

P2: Yes, quite a few I don't, say quite a few like I can't hold a job.

I've I started as a advanced coordinator back in '93, and then worked at various community colleges. I have been EMS educator for the or I guess program director for a private ambulance service in Texas City 1. Since 1999. And that's the one that I'm program director for.

So we opened that as a private school, and then, of course, credited by the State, and then we course got the national accreditation.

One of the very few consortiums in the United States, and we're able to get that one. So I've been with them since 99, and then the rest of them working at Community College is full time instructor program director program, coordinator up to Dean twice. So this is my second Dean position here. So.

Interviewer: Very good. What made you decide to become a paramedic program director?

P2: Increased responsibility. I think it was a you do enough teaching, and then you say I need to work with more. I need things to come, the way that I think that they should go. I don't really agree with the way things are going now, and I need to be more in charge of what's going on. I have more control. And so you decide that. Yeah, I need to step up you know, it's when you go from a clinical to faculty member and faculty member to director, you know it's just I gotta step up things that should be done differently. I'm not in compliance with how things are being done right now. I need to see some positive changes.

Interviewer: Excellent. Do you know? And I know this is a few moons ago. But do you know what role your processor took when they vacated that director?

P2: The one that, okay, so we just change program here at the college. And he vacated because they took a job, as in a faculty member at a dual credit high school. So lesser stress for him, and and obviously closer to home, though those are his two reasons for stepping down.

Interviewer: Would that stress be the amount of work they're doing or workload, related?

P2: I think it's the reporting issue, you know. We have, we have so much things to do with Accreditation body 1, and the passing rates. The gathering of the documents, to making sure the documents are correctly ordered, and and the right format, etc. And so I think that was one of the major issues with them. But let me just go back and be a teacher and forget about that. So I'm training our next program director, of course, because I am a program director. So I'm training a new program director of how to put the files gather and how to correctly report on things.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So how long have you been in EMS?

P2: Since 1985. So we yeah, 37 years. Now, yeah.

Interviewer: Congratulations that's impressive. What other roles have you performed within the industry outside of education?

P2: Obviously I've been. I've been a paramedic for a long time. I've worked on the ambulance. I have been a manager and director of ambulance services operations manager for services. I worked at the [state-run institution] on the ambulance service, and then and then got into education and all started with, you know, hey? Can you teach an ACLS class for us? And you know hey, could you do a CPR class for, hey? We need a first take class, and then, you know.

Then it moved into doing skills examination. Then it worked into teaching. And then it worked into being certified as an instructor. So one thing I've done is like, I've been in Community college since 92, and but I've always had a job on the side working in the ambulance. So always made sure, I maintained. You know, hands in the field.

Interviewer: Which, and you said that the sponsorship style you do both a consortium and then a community college, or?

P2: Yes, so we have, because with a, as you know, with an accredited school, you have to be tied to higher education somewhere, and if you're not tied into higher education, then you have to have some form of consortium where you have an education program that's tied in with the government body. So we ended up hooking up with emergency service district of a fire department who happens to be Government agency, and we put the consortium together and actually past our accreditation would like two notes of correction. So it was versus the local fire department, which got like five notices. So we're kind of, you know. Oh, yeah.

So again, we're one of those. And typically when I go to one of those one of those conferences that that that Accreditation body 1 has locally went to the one Texas City 1, one to one in U.S. State 1, they typically will look and go it works like I from the consortium we have some questions to ask you, you know, like, How did you do that? So, yeah, it's one of the very rare consortiums that have gone through. But yeah, we have the partnership with the emergency Service district, which, as a government agency.

Interviewer: So for the program that you're the director of how many students does that program graduate on an annual basis.

P2: Well, we typically have EMT basic running about 40 a year. Our paramedic program has now not had a graduating class in 2 years we lost our paramedic instructor and very hard to find. Another instructor who is qualified to teach and willing to take what a private company will pay. You know. And again, one of the reasons why I keep coming back to higher education cause I get a little bit better paycheck here, plus spring break, plus Christmas break and on and on health care and all the nice benefits of working, you know, for community college.

Interviewer: So do you still perform any type of teaching role within your organization?

P2: Yes, mostly just guest teaching, though I don't have a full time. I will send them like I mentioned, when our program director left. The only faculty member we had was our clinical coordinator, who we needed to get him to step up to take that program director role. But there's a you know, higher education. There's that HR process that goes through forever. The hiring process background check, even though he's been with us for 9 years. Right, you know, and all of a sudden we've got nobody teaching a class and said, Okay, well, I guess I'll step in. So I spent 4 weeks teaching this semester, and then I frequently do just stop in, and you a guest lecture on pharmacology or medical mathematics, or something of that nature.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So your administrative duties versus instructional duties, what percentage would you give to each of those?

P2: Oh, I have 99% administrative duties and less than 1% teaching. If any teaching that I do, it's because it's voluntary or like I've been at this college for almost 3 years. And this is the first time I've actually had to add to step into the classroom to do it just to keep the program running.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So I know that added up to 100%. But outside your teaching duties in administrative duties. What other tests make up the bulk of your other responsibilities that you perform.

P2: Well, it's administrative, but but again, I have seven different programs. So it's divided between the seven programs. Sometimes one needs more attention than the other. You know I should know. So I divided my administrative time between the seven programs.

Interviewer: Are you responsible for the simulation used in your program?

P2: We do have simulation. We have simulation, of course. Our big simulation lab is nursing and and it's a good thing we have a very friendly staff who are working together, and the EMS spends a lot of time in the sim lab. Now, now my program. And I wanna say, it's out in Texas City 1. They are tied in with one of my instructors is for Texas university 1. The medical school there, so he brings all of his students out to their sim labs that they have, and of course. There's is made for doctors for the doctor school there, and so they get some really good scenarios out there at Texas university 1.

Interviewer: So you said it was lucky that you have that partnership with nursing. Would you say those I mean? Is there any quality as far as the support that EMS gets versus a nursing program?

P2: Well, we we were very lucky to get that CARES Grant, last year, and I'm sure your school probably did too. Right, and we were able to get a lot of things. So we have a lot of similar mannequins. We have our own er that's for the EMS. We have our in our house built out ambulance station in the back. We have a lot of the equipment of the EKG, rhythm generators. The Lucas a lot of different things that nursing doesn't have nursing, of course, is really set up more, as you know, bedside manner, type of thing which we don't spend a lot of time in the ambulance but they have a better childbirth Mannequin than we do. So it's a lot of we spend, I would say, of the simulation, probably 90% of the time with the EMS equipment. And then something we don't have. Then we step into the nursing lab. They have the incubator and the newborn baby, and things that we don't have.

Interviewer: Right, so are you, as far as the simulation uses that delegated to somebody else? Or do you have a direct control over the simulations?

P2: We been we've been trying to get the board to approve a coordinator for the same lab. We don't hasn't been approved yet by the board. So each program director is in charge of their own simulations and do it as they wanna do it.

Interviewer: Gotcha! How much time would you say? The simulations take up each?

P2: Less than 5%. Yeah, other than so let's separate simulation from scenario. Okay? Because I'm gonna be doing a lot of scenarios there on the floor. And you don't necessarily have to have a Simlab to do that. It could be a fellow student, it could be the mannequin lying on around. And again, you know, that's I'm just trying to differentiate the difference there between Simlab and Simulation. So they spend a lot of time with scenarios, especially so many of the National Register questions are changing. The scenario based. So they're really focusing a lot on doing the scenarios. And of course Capstone is nothing more than you know doing all of that again. Right, so!

Interviewer: Right, absolutely. So. I think I probably know the answers question I'm gonna ask you, anyway. So how many hours a week are needed to perform your job? Would you say? Less than 30, 40 to 50, or more than 50 hours?

P2: 40 to 50 is probably I've got it pretty well under control, you know. The first, you know, the first year you're here. You're working 60 to 80 trying to get to learn everything and make everything. But you know you still get things in a row, and you know when things are doing, you know how things, but that's almost like any job I've had, you know. It's so now we're down to 40 or 50 based upon recruitment. After hours to go into board meetings, or you know, other administrative duties as assigned right, that are outside of regular hours.

Interviewer: So just out of curiosity. Early on, when you took over the program director role. When you're doing that 60 to 80 hours, did you have any top of mentorship within your organization, or any top of mentorship outside that organization that you're able to reach out to help you with stay issues or accreditation issues, or even local issues, within your organization?

P2: Well, and you know I don't wanna make this sound the wrong way. But no, I didn't need it, because I was already a program director, you know, and the Texas City 1 program. So I already knew everything, need to be done here which said, I'm kind of doing the mentoring for our new program director. So he knows about how this is his first time coming up his report, you know, do in May right. It's the first time. And I'm saying, Okay, you gotta make sure you do this and make sure you have notes of this and make sure you change the document. So I'm doing the mentoring. I don't think I needed any mentoring because of fact that I've already been doing it for. Gosh! I think we got accredited in 2015. I think it's when we got accredited. So you know, we're working on 8 years now of submitting our reports.

Interviewer: So how many full-time educators or faculty members, including yourself, work within your organization that you're the director of.

P2: Oh, so just my division my division! I've got 19 full time, and probably adding all my adjuncts together, and full time. We have about 27.

Interviewer: Or do you feel like that's adequate for the demands of the program?

P2: No!

Interviewer: So, if ideally, how many would you add to, or how many do you think, or needed to be able to meet the demands?

P2: But just from EMS program I need another two, for sure. As I mentioned, my clinical coordinator moved up into the program director. And that's. So now we don't have a full time clinical coordinator anymore. I would love to have an adjunct faculty and a clinical coordinator. That's two more.

There, my nursing, you know, nursing and I'm sure it's just the same thing at your college. We're getting millions of dollars of grants everywhere. Donations from private people, hospitals donating equipment, time and money and and that affects the Adn program and nothing else. So my LVNs are going, "Where's my money?" And I'm going. Sorry you're not. You're just a step child. You know we have been step children is normal. We have been doing that for years, but all

of my programs that my respiratory therapy is probably the shortest of faculty members that you can't find anybody because the salary is just not there.

College cannot compete with work with what they're making in the workforce nowadays, so I could easily add, I mean, you could look at my job board right now. I've probably got 15 positions that are open that I could find right now if I had applicants.

Interviewer: Makes it tough, and that just adds to the burden of everybody else.

P2: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Does your organization provide an administrative assistant to help reduce the workload? Is it one more than one or?

P2: Yes, yeah, yeah, yeah. Actually, I have three. I have three now, because I'm the dean. Okay, so I have a dean's administer. I have a nursing that takes care of my LVN and ADN and I have one that takes care of my allied health, which is five programs. So yeah, if it wasn't for them. Yeah, my program directors should be lost in paperwork, and they're all you know. Application, competitive enrollment, interviews, letters of acceptance. Yeah, my program director would have no time for doing any teaching if they had to take care of all the responsibility.

Interviewer: Absolutely. Would you describe yourself as very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with your current role?

P2: As dean. I think that I'm satisfied. I think I'm satisfied as program director, as you mentioned earlier, I'd be glad to let it go if we could find somebody who would take over that program. I would turn it over to that in a minute. I have no regrets about that at all, and which kind of gets into your question of the one in five, you know, it's just not worth the paperwork for me. It's not worth the administrative headaches. I love teaching. I've been a very successful teacher. I've had very good pass rates throughout the years of teaching. EMS educator of the year 1996 at the time of long, long time ago, you know, past life, right. But being a program director for an accredited program, it a pain in the ass. You know, I don't think I have near as much problem with my other crediting bodies as I do with Accreditation body 1.

And I don't know. Maybe it's just kind of my imagination, but but I think things are smoother. I have seven programs, which means I have six different accrediting bodies. So, and accreditation body 1 just the hardest one to work.

Interviewer: So you got forgive me. I'm brand new to the chair position, so I have just a limited knowledge as far as other accreditation bodies. What are in your experiences, what are some of the issues or challenges that makes so much different than, or don't so much more difficult than the other accreditation bodies?

P2: A lot of the accreditation buddies are looking for retention rates, graduation passing the exam rates and job placement rates, which I think is really what the body should do, and I remember that when Texas first went to National Registry remember that was that '95ish somewhere there.

I'm trying to remember when they went to where Texas was not writing test questions anymore, gave the Texas university 1. Which was a disaster, and then went to National Registry. As a national registry stands on one thing that says street ready at graduation, right? And we care about our society and our job is to protect the society. I'm trying to remember that tag line that they have on their protecting the community, or something like that. If a person is able to pass a test and pass all of their national registry skills and be street ready basically when they get out there.

Does it really make a difference that they fill out a form a certain way, that they had to have, you know, Appendix G? Right? You know. That, says I have to have this many traumas, and I have to have this many of this. Then, this many of that, which can change from program to program, and when I get into like one of the things that you must have live, intubations. Okay, that's great. I got a hospital until Covid hits, and then nobody is allowed in the hospital and I'm going I just have to put a pillow over this guy's face from the stop breathing. The only way I'm going to get a tube here, you know. Yeah, you can cut that one out right, you know. It's the only way you're gonna get a tube.

Then, of course, back when I was that educator of the year, I was traveling all over the State during classes and the things that I would do at some of these very, very rural volunteer ambulances, they didn't have the exposure that I would have in a bigger city. So how do we tell them? You know, hey? By the way, you're gonna have, you know, 95 patient contacts. Really, you know, you know, we run 200 calls a year, you know.

How am I doing that? And so I think that that's more of what my fight is with Accreditation body 1. Is that there's, I understand the principle of what they're doing, I just don't think they're doing it the right way, so that's an issue that I have, or the other accrediting bodies. Even my Accreditation body 2, which is part of the same group of people there they're still looking for job placement, you know. Can you pass your national test? Are you graduating with the program? And they have two different levels of pass rates, so the incentive to get higher scores. So, and again, it makes it a lot easier to work with where we have the Accreditation body 1, which is really tight on how they wanna do their things. And it's not always the easiest group to get along with.

So, and I have nothing against the people I've worked with these people for quite a few years. I have nothing against these people. I just think that they it's set up to. Is it set up to fail you? I don't know.

Interviewer: So almost like almost micromanaging to a sense where we want to make sure that every single t is dotted, and when you could take, look at it, big picture, and look at placement, readiness.

P2: Exactly right. And what do we have to put on our web page? We put on our web page. What is our passing rate? What is our attrition rate? What's our job placement rates. You know those are all we have to publish, those on the web page right? I've no problem with that. But that's not what they're judging us on by judging us on is your paper done correctly? Have you fill out this log properly?

Interviewer: Have you searched for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job within the last year?

P2: No! Umm, probably partially because of my age. You know I'm at that age where you know I've got a couple of years left of work left in me, and I'm getting close to retirement. Okay. I don't wanna move and start a new all over again.

Interviewer: So that kind of leads into this next question. I likely. Do you think you'll be in the paramedic or paramedic program director role in 3 years?

P2: Unless I can get somebody hired out in Texas City 1. I'll probably keep on doing a distance only because the fact that if I leave the program closes, and so I would love to have I actually reached out to a couple of people who have retired. And I said, Hey, why don't you go to Texas City 1? Take over my program out there. Obviously, I'm not out there for the money, you know which is very limited. I'm out there because again I started this school in 1999. I don't want to say it closed down. I have a program director, you know, they've been able to hire some faculty who've got, you know, some degree. But remember, you gotta have a bachelors degree to take over as program director and so there is no one qualified willing to take over that responsibility.

So, so 3 years depends on. Do we hire somebody? Can we find anybody? And I've been looking for somebody since 2015 very actively. I don't have time, but I mean they pay for me to go out to a Texas City 1 once a month and see how things are going, and of course I keep up with all the accreditation paperwork, and which has been kind of easy since we have not had the paramedic last 2 years it's been fairly easy to do that. So I don't know what they're future is again, private ambulance service, and the only reason they started to school is because they need more employees. So not that they're looking to be a major education institution in the State, although they were when I was their full time years ago. That was back in the early 2000nds. When I was there full time.

Interviewer: So if you were to leave, you'd save. It would be due to kind of a semiretired or fully retired.

P2: Yes. Semi retired or Fully retired. If we can find a program director to take over out there, I would be retired. If we don't, then I'd be semiretired.

Interviewer: So question 1A- does your supervisor understand what's important to you as an employee?

P2: I believe so. I, the Vice President of Instruction is over is over me, and he's not very medical knowledge. So when I say you know, I gotta have this like we have a conference coming up right and I said have a brand new program director that gotta go, and he said we have to prove to me it's mandatory. Because this is out of state travel, and Blah and I said, No, you don't understand. He needs to go to this. Okay, can I put it into law and say that he must know he only has to do that one \$300 course, and he's done. But he has to go, and my vice president said, Okay, I trust your opinion on that one, and he's going. He's going to the conference. So that's one thing. So. Yes, I believe that he trust me a lot, because the fact that he knows that I'm the expert in this field and he's not.



Interviewer: How does potential advancement opportunities influence your loyalty within your organization?

P2: How would love to move up to the Vice President Position. It's not gonna be open before our retire. So one of the I was in Texas City 1.

I'm sorry I was in Texas City 3, as the director of a weekend college up there, and I worked up there for 8 years. Loved the job. Got my doctorate, and there was no place to go. There's no place like nothing. And I said I've worked too hard to get this. I need to go somewhere, and I found the job down in a different city, which is where I came down here for this job. So that's pretty much my last stop on the bridge there, you know. I don't. Yeah.

So I again, if they happen to say Hey, we have a new vice President position open up for health care. We have a vice president, student services, I would probably apply for it, and stay a little bit longer. Those positions are not opening up anytime soon, so so I'll probably retire right at this roll right here.

Interviewer: Right, so how important are new activities that expand your skills and meeting your job expectations? And that goes to like conferences, potential degrees, additional certs, that kind of thing.

P2: Our college has been really tight with the funds because of because of Covid. You know they first travel is restricted because of Covid. And then that meant that Covid caused the enrollment to go down, which meant that the college funds were down, which means that they don't really want to pay for. You can't do that online somewhere, you know. So a lot more of it's been pushed aside.

I did mention, and again to the Vice President, where I say, but everyone that works under me all needs professional development. We all have to have continued education. All of us have a certification, licensure, and something. We all need this. And I need to make sure the funding continues for this, and I need to make sure the funding continues for this, and I've been promised that it will. So they will continue so. Our all of my program, directors and faculty have opportunities to advance their themselves. Not necessarily within the college. For example my program director brings somebody in to teach the Phtls. Well, I'm sending him to school, so he's gonna be a program director for to be able to offer his own classes the only people that we have to bring in now, because he's a pals instructor also on the Bls instructor and ACLS instructor, the only person have to bring in now is our national registry rep for skills, testing, and of course it wouldn't do any good for me to pay for that, because you can't do your own students anyway.

Interviewer: So how likely are you to stay with an organization if you enjoy the role and benefits? But you're not provided opportunity for advancement.

P2: Oh, I think that's really important. It's you are gonna be stuck in a hole and say, you can't move outside of this whole, that is very discouraging for a lot of people. We've gone to a lot of different training. The last college I was at had a very active faculty academy that was into all kinds of teaching, and this happens in the health care field. As you know, they are. We all know

how to do our jobs. Wonderful on the ambulance in the field, but they don't really teach us how to be an instructor in a classroom, and how to. Yes, of course. National organization I got there, you know, Instructor course. But dealing with these students on a daily basis, it's a lot different. It's a different interaction all together. So I think that you've got to step in there and learn what you need to learn.

Interviewer: So does your supervisor give you the feedback on your work. And if so, how often, in what format?

P2: I have a weekly meeting with my vice president and everything that's on the table is brought up at that time. So that's frequent. But if something happens like we just hired a brand new LVN instructor like 15 min ago, I got the I got the email that said, go through people admin and do the workload and upload them, and on board them. And so I sent them an email and said It's in your queue now. Okay, I just left the dean's desk. And while we're talking at this email, it popped up and said, completed in your queue. Now, okay, I just left the Dean's desk. And while we're talking at this email it popped up. So he responds very quickly.

Interviewer: Nice are you offered the opportunity to provide feedback to your supervisor? And if you are, is it readily accepted?

P2: I don't think I've been offered the opportunity like, I know a lot of times when you do like your faculty evaluations, employee evaluations. There's a chance to do a supervisor we don't have that form here. We don't have that format, but I think that I work well enough for my vice President, that if I had an issue that I would let them know in a very professional manner, I don't fear that I would get fired for stating my opinion, or saying something I would have no problem talking to him, and just say, You know, there, I see an issue here, and I think we need to work on either. I'm not understanding, or you're not understanding or we have a problem with communication. And I have a I feel that we would be able to communicate. Well, so I don't worry about that.

Interviewer: So you feel like it's it wouldn't be fall on deaf ears that it'd be heard and.

P2: Yeah, he, yeah. He would listen definitely. Yeah.

Interviewer: So question 4a- is the job and work you're doing what you expected.

P2: The dean job is. Yeah, pretty much what I'm what I expected. I was the dean of of and public services over there, and and so I kinda knew what I was getting myself into. And so, yeah, I think it's pretty much as I expected it to be. The program director, you know, again, can take up some more of your time than what you expected it to take you expect that there's gonna be something a simple process. In our consortium, we have an agreement, of course, with with the with the Emergency service district, and that contract has gotta be reviewed, and I contract has to be updated, and there may be nothing changed, or there might be might changes but yet we still have bring it up. You know, every couple of years and go. Okay, review. It is everybody happy with this, and we have the EMS program, which is separate, but because of the fact that documents have to be different for the accrediting body.

So we have one advisory accounts meeting which puts them both together, and then we get complaints from Accreditation body 1. The minutes are not divided, you know, like you had to specifically talk about paramedics stuff here. But don't tell us about your EMT stuff and you know it's the same group of people not gonna hold 2 meetings to talk about exactly the same thing, and we make sure that there's representation from the local community. And you know, for the, you know, an advisory committee right? And and we have our consortium members that are all there. At the same meeting with us, because they're interested in the paramedic program. And so we discussed everything you discussed at a regular meeting. Access to clinical sites, you know, outcomes, employment issues any preceptor problems that you have, you know, and that it's the same thing, whether it's basic or paramedic same if talk, about.

Interviewer: That is the first I kind of heard of something like that. So what difference does it make if you're talking about all your paramedics stuff? And then you talk about your EMT stuff you covered, even if you separate the minutes, it's all in the same documents.

P2: So the differences. And again, this is gonna be, I'm gonna expand this and make it a little weird for you. We have, like a run sheet. Okay, where the students are going out during the clinical observations and clinical patient care. And it says, EMS Academy on the top that was kicked back by who said it must have the consortium name on top of that documentation. Okay. Well, the consortium name takes care of the paramedic program and Texas said You can't use that for your EMT basic program because it says the consortium name on there.

So we have two different bodies, which are running out of the same front door. And it depends. You know, we have to. We have the same. We have exact same documentation with different headers on the top of it, and and so, when we do minutes of our meeting, the Accreditation body 1 wants to see everything that's mentioned about what we did was our paramedic program. And we talk about the EMT basics have a chance to go to to a pediatric clinic and learn how to do patients assessments. And they were right back and say, we don't need the information. It shouldn't be in there. It's not pertinent to, to your accreditation, and so so that's been kind of almost a double work type of thing. Texas is obviously a lot easier to get along with, because they understand that both programs are the same.

Interviewer: So what would you say the main satisfiers and dissatisfiers, of your job would be?

P2: Flexibility, I'm able to come in as I needed to come in. I can stay late if I have something I need to take care of. By call the boss and say, I need to go so flexibility, because there's a lot of time where we do pinning ceremonies at night. We do recruitment events. We go to high schools and they're recruitment. So I think flexibility is one of the big things there. One of the bigger things with being the dean is the respectability, you know, is that people respect you, and not because you're like the mean hard ass person, but because you're helping them. You know. And my role. My speech is always my job is to help you do your job. You know, that's it. All I wanna do is make your job easier. What can I do to help you? And so that brings a lot of respect for everyone who's working with me, because the fact that I'm not here to have this power trip?

You know my job is up them, the more that they're successful, the more I'm successful. You know. So it's not what I do, and I make sure that they always get all the credit for what they do, and they do a lot. As I mentioned earlier. You know, the all seven programs work really good together. When we get we so far again. I've been here almost 3 years, and of my seven departments I've hired 4 new program directors. So they have all had to learn on the run as they step in that position, and all of the program directors are stepping in. They're helping them. Hey? Don't forget when you do this document, that the game once it's got to be this way, and we have somebody. This documents got me done this way. Here, so it's a really good collaborative department. It's really good freedom, that.

And again I tell my diagnostic medical sonography I'm not gonna show you how to run your program. I've never known a scanner machine before I'm not gonna tell you what you need to do. All I want to see is your numbers at the end, you know. Do you have success, rates or not? What can I do to help you succeed? You know, and I don't micro manage at all. They are the subject matter expert. We'll let them do their job. My job is to remember that we're a college, and we have to do those college reports. Then there's our individual accreditation issues so my job is to try to keep all that organized and know what goes into which pile at what time so I think the flexibility, the ability to be able to do my job without somebody looking over my shoulder and going, "What are you doing now?"

Interviewer: What would you say? The biggest dissatisfy would be?

P2: I can't from a program where we have lots of money, lots of money. That is our, as you know, Community college are funded by tax bases. Our tax base is phenomenal. And you know I when I was there, I can't tell you how many conferences I flew out to, because I attended all over the United States. Puerto Rico, twice just because I needed to go to a presentation somewhere. These are all paid for. I come down here I'm going "Can I get gas allowance to like go to this high school, you know, like no. Here we're in a poor community.

So that's been, I think, the biggest disappointment is that the school is very tight-watered, you know, with they go through their budget at each board meeting with board meeting once a month. We go through the budget. Okay? How many days, if we bring in no more money right now? How many days can we survive on the budget that we have? Yeah. So I think that's one of my major disappointments is the economics of of the college.

Interviewer: Question. 5. A. How satisfied are you with the pay you receive in relation to the type and amount of work that you do?

P2: I'm satisfied. I'm satisfied. I think, that everybody would like just a little bit more, just a little bit more. So I knew that when I got my doctorate I expected a little bit more. I didn't expect this massive pay change, but expected a little bit more, and so, by changing from the first school which little bit more expensive to live, to the second, where, it's true to live, and then getting the bump and salary it kind of like worked out that I end up with more than if I got the same salary here as the first school, I would not be pleased at all, but with the bump in the salary because of the doctor, and then moving down here that worked out okay for me. So I'm okay.

Interviewer: So I get comfortable, but could be better, but definitely could be worse.

P2: Yeah, but could be better, definitely could be better. Yeah.

Interviewer: So you kinda hit on this. What do you think the pay you receive in relation to the cost of a of living in the city of which you live?

P2: I'm okay with it. I'm okay with it. It's reasonable enough. I'm not. I'm not gonna starve here at all, nor live in poverty. So I'll be okay. You know, we're talking about salary. And one of the things is, the dean is, I know that that I have seven program directors, and maybe half of them make more money than I do. You know you could be offended by that, or realize that. You know they're just in that field, you know, like nursing right very short. They're gonna give them whatever you give them to get them where you know, being an administrator is not quite as glamorous.

Interviewer: So question 6a- Are you provided with the tools, resources, including training, to help you develop in your career?

P2: Yeah, I believe so. I believe so. When we need something for a equipment, we're typically able to get it as far as training goes, if I ask for something for training, it'd probably be provided. The school does provide the LinkedIn training, and with the LinkedIn subscription you can go in there and find all about like how to work with Microsoft word. You know how to get a certification in excel, or, you know, say, a whole bunch of free classes that are available through LinkedIn school I never heard of it before until I got here. But there's complete Academy that it's a subscription service, and you can get under. Learn all kinds of things about. So you know. So I think that the opportunity is there.

They help pay for your education. So you know, if you have a bachelor, want to go for your master's, that will reimburse your intuition. Rates or assist you with tuition rates on those. So so I think that they help with advancement on that.

Interviewer: Excellent! So this is directed more towards the director's role. Do you all use any platforms for skills, documentation, scenarios, clinical simulation.

P2: Yes we do.

Interviewer: Would you just describe to that platform as user, friendly, or time-consuming/cumbersome?

P2: No, I think I we have worked with others that for a long time, and those turned out to be the biggest nightmare in the world trying to track. You know, students are clinical sites. They can't get the thing to load up on their computer or on the laptop lost documentation that has been signed by preceptor that no one could seem to find anymore so we've been using this platform for a long time for the testing because the validation of the testing, because of the able to choose your parameters for your testing, and both schools use this testing for that.

We just changed the new platform for our clinicals, because it's so much cleaner and so much easier and when I get on the website to look at, you know, on Facebook or you know, Texas web pages it looks like everybody is having the same problem with that. You try to call the first platform and they state "Yes, we are aware of the issue, and we're working on it." And that's where it's been for 5 years now. So so, yeah, I said, I don't care what it costs. We gotta get. And it's very user friendly. They're able to transfer a whole bunch of our old information over from the first platform to the new one. So yeah, it's definitely been, It's cleaner. And the nice thing, and I'm not as salesman. Okay, just so you know, okay, but nice thing about you get to the end of it. And you push a button and it gives you everything you need exact format for your crediting body.

Interviewer: Question 6b- So would you say the promotional practices in your organization are fair and transparent?

P2: I think that it was fair. I think that that applicants were interviewed fairly and like, and again, because I've been a hard case for a lot. We've been on both sides of the table, you know, and so I understand how you know applications are read, how cover sheets are read resumes are read. How committees work together. You might be the most qualified person but if you're a jerk, you know you come across in the interview as somebody who's arrogant, and I'm sorry I just don't want to work with you. You know. And so I think that everything was fair, and I think it was equitable, and I think that everything was fair, and I think it was equitable.

I was told when I interviewed for this job. I got an inside message from one of the employers, who's working to try to bring me here, I was told when I interviewed for this job that they were going to offer me the minimum salary and I'm going 25 years in higher education. I thought that not going work, that's not happening. So they called me and I said that ain't happening, you know. So I made that when I was, you know, teaching as a faculty member, you know, a long time ago. No, and I said, Well, what's your counteroffer? So I make them a counter off. Further they counter offered, and we came to an agreement. So I think everything was fair and equitable. I think that they like what I brought to the table, and one of those nice things about it was that yeah, I didn't need a lot of training, because I've been Dean before I work with the branding agencies before. So that, yeah.

Interviewer: So question 7a- Is there flexibility and autonomy in your work?

P2: Yes, definitely, yeah, definitely.

Interviewer: Question 7b- Are you able to do the work that's assigned?  
Do you have the tools and skills to help you succeed in your job.

P2- I do. Yes, I have assistants. I can call on if I have a question about something there are resources that I can talk to. So yeah, I have resources to create the job.

Interviewer: Excellent! How would you describe your work-life balance?

P2: You know it's changed over the years. I think it has to do with my age. You know it's when I was 30 40, I typically always ran three different jobs, you know, like I would. I would teach at night I'd work at school during the day. I work on the ambulance on the weekends, you know, cause I really didn't have a life, you know. There was no life to it, and I think, as you get older, you're gonna go, you know. That someday I'm gonna be rich, and I won't remember how to spend the money, because my brain will be gone.

I think you come to realize, especially later on, especially within the last, I guess 5 years or so that I've kinda like you know, work. As a whole lot less important than life is more important, because I know again, I've been in EMS long enough to know that, you know life is gonna come to an end. You know? Yeah, it's time to start enjoying some stuff. So as I'm getting close to retirement, at least it stuff I find interesting. Yeah, it's time to start slow down to start doing more retirement stuff, you know.

Interviewer: So you'd say it's fairly balanced right now.

P2: It's fairly balanced. Now. Yeah.

Interviewer: Is your work appreciated by your supervisor?

P2: Yes.

Interviewer: How are you recognized for a job well done?

P2: I'm not a person that needs a pat on the back or that type of thing. I don't really like that. I would rather, when we go to board meetings, and they say, Well, you know, since P2 has been here, this program has achieved success in this program has achieved success, and we have, you know, people who are turning our reports on time. And these people are being hired, and we have new contracts and hospitals and new transfer agreements and articulation agreements. And you know, so I like to see that the division is shown as being moved forward, and they know that there's not really much us responsible for that, except for me. Who's been there doing it? I would rather they didn't throw this big party in, pat me on the back. I'd rather they recognized the division and kind of in the back of their mind. They would know why the progress is happening.

Interviewer: Let the work speak for itself.

P2: Yes. Exactly. Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you have a learning? Plans such as additional college degree? And if yes, does your supervisor support you?

P2: Our supervisor supports everybody who wants more continuing education, more advanced, so as I mentioned. They help with tuition. I got my master's degree at 95, and I got my doctor degree in 2020.

I'm done. And again, as I'm winding down my work years, it becomes less important.

Interviewer: Question 10a- Are you satisfied with the responsibilities and challenges offered by your program?

P2: Oh, yeah, yes, I am. Yeah. I have challenges. They keep me busy. If I don't know the answer, I know where to look for the answer. And again, as I mentioned, my job is to help them do their job. So one of the things that we set up this year, as you may or may not know, Aaas degrees are not really transferable anywhere. They're pretty much a terminal degree. The government of Texas has said, all AA and AS are 100% transferable by law, okay. But we end up with classes like like EMSP, that are not 100% transfer. And if you try to transfer it into a degree, you're gonna end up, usually losing a lot of credit hours there. So my job for this year was to try to find as many transfer accreditation programs like Get, who would fully accept 100% of our 60 hours AAs degree, transfer, so I kind of put that on the program.

So I need to reach out to these people and find out what you can do, and they kind of got a little bit busy, and I'm going. I'm gonna do this. So I did. And so far I've got 23 different ones. I've got since September that are signed contracts that have gone through the board and been approved that are now on our website. And now all the students know that when you get your AAS, your transferable, here's a list of places you can go. And of course, that's one of the things that Accreditation body 1, is to make sure that you have a transferability of your degree.

Interviewer: That's impressive. So question 10 B. Do you have the opportunity to use your skills in your work? Please explain.

P2: Yeah, I think I have the opportunity. I think it doesn't mean I always use them. But such as teaching as one of the things I really really love to do. Do I have enough time and effort to wanna do that all the time? No, not really. But I do have the opportunity. I could call up and say Give me an EMT class. I want to teach it next semester of course I'm the Dean. I can approve it so, but I don't know if I have the energy to be able to want to do that. So I do have that opportunity. But I'm not sure I have the want to anymore.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So 11. A. Does your work give you a sense of accomplishment?

P2: Yes, it does. Yeah. When I go home at night, I know what I've done, and I feel good about what I've done, and I feel like, you're not good when I go and do recruiting, especially high school students. And I say, you know, what did you do during the day? And you know the spouse comes on and goes. You know I uploaded three documents to this, and I'd run some code. And I type this, and I printed five documents you know. And what did you do? Holyshit, man. I ran a code on the first man and then I delivered three babies, and you know, like I was sure to you know, and so I said there you know how do you want your job to be what is, you know. So that's one of those things that that you say, and against one of my recruiting points, you know, is that make a difference in someone's life. You know, work out, do it.

Interviewer: I never heard that put quite that way, but with your permission, I would love to steal that line from you.



P2: Yeah.

Interviewer: How likely are you to stay with an organization if it's not meeting your job expectations?

P2: No, I think I would leave, you know. I think we're enough of a mobile society right now that it doesn't take much to pack up and leave, you know back, you know, 50 years ago, before my time, but 50 years ago, when people would stay in the same neighborhood because that's where Mom and dad and brother and sister's uncle, people are scattered all over the world now, in all over the United States, and and I think it's a lot easier to pack up a move, and we're a lot more mobile society, and you know which is why I said I've worked at different community Colleges, because when the time came and there was no place to grow, nothing to do, it was time to move on somewhere else. You know.

When you know I started off. Of course, as an adjunct faculty I became full-time faculty, and then I got my master's degree, and they said, and I was right when the AAS became in existence. Goes back in the olden days the paramedic was just continuing education course. The basic Amt was a college course. So I worked with the higher education coordinating board back in Gosh, 92 ish, to be able to convert it into an associate degree and gotta converge to an associate degree. So 95 I went, became the coordinator of the EMS program. That was great, but now where do you go from there and then I was able to move to where they had a college. They had four different branches, so they need someone to be the director who could be in charge of the other EMS programs that the other three campuses, while teaching at your campus.

So I did that, and so again, growth for that. But there's only three campuses where you're going to go from there. So they got a chance to be a dean, and so I went ahead and took the Dean position, and then I kinda hit that point and I realized that everyone in upper administration All had doctor degree in history, and English, and in real courses, and not in medical courses. So what am I gonna do now? And so that we're really getting students services. So I ended up moving to become Dean of student services, and which is a fun job. I loved it, you know, because you know, you're helping students be successful. You know it sounds great, but then, after working in for my doctortorate, you really to got me back into the academic field, you know, so so that's what got me here, back to that. So I think, yeah, that when it comes to a point that you're not able to advance there's nothing for you to do. It's time to move on to greener pastures.

Interviewer: Outstanding. How important is your relationship with your colleagues.

P2: Oh, very important, very, very important. That's a very high priority. When you talk about stepping into this job, 100%, I know what to do as a dean, because I've done it before. How do you submit that report? How do they work with the schedule? How they do workload division? How do they divide up work responses, man? If I couldn't call one of the other Deans to say, What the hell is this and I heard this form before if I didn't have that group there to be able to help me and again, we see this going on with me collaborating with our current program director and EMS to help him get along. And all the other program. Directors, yeah, collaboration working together as a team, I think, is vitally important.

A lot of colleges. I've been to have a student services versus, you know, academic, and you know, you know, you guys got Cootie's, you know, you have to work together, you know I've got people who are telling my students coming in, and this is off EMS telling you, you know, if you want to be a nurse, you have to go to Lvn school first, and then after that year. Then go practice, and then come back and apply for ADN in school for other 2 years. And I said, Stop it! What are you doing you didn't think about the health care feild. These people are gonna go out and make \$15 an hour working overnight shift on nursing home.

Interviewer: And get burnout and go find something else to do.

P2: Yeah. I said, no. If they were to be a nurse they need to start right off, in AND and do that one if you know. The LVN for those who are like I don't want a lot of work and I want a lot of homework on our responsibility. I just wanna work something. Medical field. Okay? Great do that, you know. So so you guys are recruiting all wrong here, you know.

Interviewer: But so how long is the EMS director been in that position? That's currently running under you. Now?

P2: He started in September. Yeah, but he's been our clinical coordinator for almost 9 years. So very aware of the program. Very aware of what goes on and obviously has deep contacts with all of our clinical sites as they've been doing it for so long, so it's easy for them to step in as a program director. The hard part, and I told them, is the accreditation issue, which is, you know, it's an uphill client for your brother I don't know any other way to tell you, but you're gonna get lost. You're gonna pull your hair out, you know.

Interviewer: So, moving on to the last group of questions. 13a- Does your supervisor conduct formal performance appraisals? And do they give you feedback on your performance?

P2: Yes, once a year, yeah, they do that. We do a self evaluation and submit it. And then they make their comments and send it back to us, and then we make whatever comments. And then we have a meeting together, discuss the final.

Interviewer: And the last question. So are there any other local, state or national factors that may impact your decision to stay in or vacate your current role as paramedic program director that we have not discussed that you'd like to voice?

P2: Talk. Talk, about national Registry doing away with skills, skills, examination. I think that might be a good idea. So I would be in favor of that. National accreditation, for Amt is also a thing that they're talking about, and that's gonna be double, triple the work to we are already doing you know. So it's not like we can take the our paramedic credentialing and dumb it down I don't mean that in a wrong manner. Right, that little bit, so make it. No, it's gonna be a complete rewrite, you know, which is doing the same thing. We did all over again, and I could see that, being a major major, major pain in the butt.

I haven't heard anything about national credentialling for basic and hopefully they will do that anytime soon. But that would be probably the biggest nightmare, because the fact that, especially in Texas, we have so much urban, and we have a whole lot of rural, and to be able to think that these people are gonna get the same standards, you know, 100 miles off in the country, it's not happen you know, it can't. We don't have that many instructors available which is kind of our issue right now. We don't have enough instructors out there. So those are two issues that I think are on the front that are gonna affect our program effect how we move forward!

Interviewer: So recap and kind of generalize some of this things that you said, just to make sure that I got him right. So as far as the national factors accreditation, as far as too much work in really not so much beneficial, as far as micromanaging, we're still getting the same results are still documenting those primary factors. As far as a state level that there's a miscommunication oftentimes in the forms, one want one thing and the other wants another. Is there any other State issues that, as far as like a brand new program director coming in that you'd be like, Hey, watch out for this. Is there anything at the state level that would throw up some red flags that you would?

P2: No! And again I've been working with stay for such a long time, you know, again going through my first, you know, even coordinating class at 93, you know, I've always had a close working relationship with the State setting up your programs doing stuff, studies doing you know, building programs from nothing, always had a good working relationship with them, and I don't see that changing. I think it's it's still been going good back in before your time. Okay. But back in the late 90s, ish, we had a coordinator retreat and what we did was we got together and talked about common issues that we have as coordinators we thought about combinations of we have with department of health and it was a great and actually I brought this up the state.

But one of the things we brought up was, and I noticed there was a working relationship with state, and when I was working up [region of state] area when I these people are super fantastic, I mean, they were right on there when I built the program over in Texas City 1 the people in the [region] Texas region are there. They were super fantastic. I get over to Texas City 3, Texas City 2 and it's like hard to even call people you know, hard to get anybody to contact. It's like they're super busy, you know. I get [region of state], and I know half the people in that office and they're like great ready to work with you, you know, and then I hear about other people who have problems communicating with their so I don't know I think a lot of it has to do with the region. I have not personally had any bad experiences with the Department of Health, and I know that other people have, but as far as Education services are mostly just looking, you know. Are you successful, you know? Are you stealing people's money? Or are you really educating them, giving them jobs? I think that's their main purpose. And I think that they've done a pretty good job of that.

Interviewer: Excellent. So if it was a brand like you're the new director, you have communication with the state is everything. Is that an accurate statement.

P2: I would say so.

### **Appendix G: Interview 3 Transcript**

Interviewer: Perfect. So I'm gonna start this recording. I'll ask that question again. So for the recording. Can you please give your consent to be in recorded both audibly and visually perfect?

P3: I do.

Interviewer: Do you understand that this interface is completely voluntary, and you reserve the right to withdraw at any point or skip a question You do not feel comfortable, answering?

P3: I understand.

Interviewer: Perfect. So what is your current job? And how long have you been in that role?

P3: I'm program director for paramedic program in Texas.

Interviewer: Perfect. How long have you been with that organization?

P3: For the organization, full time since 2006. I've been the director for 6 and a half years.

Interviewer: Perfect. So why did you decide to become a paramedic program director?

P3: It seemed like a natural progression from what I was already doing. As I get older, actual working in the field became less and less enjoyable. And I wasn't ready to get out of the business yet.

Interviewer: Do you know what role your predecessor took when they vacated the director role?

P3: Retirement.

Interviewer: So how long have you worked at EMS as a whole?

P3: 33 years!

Interviewer: Which other roles have you been born within the industry?

P3: I have been an EMT volunteer, then volunteer all the levels at some point. In a busy service field clinician. Get all this right. Promoted up to field training officer and then eventually to operation supervisor, and then did all that for about 16 years, and it was part time teaching. And the opportunity came up to become full-time teaching, and it all came together to right time. That's what I'm doing now. I also dispatched some.

Interviewer: Which best describes the sponsorship type of your organization. Would you say it's post-secondary, including community college and 4-year universities, hospitals, consortium, firebase, ambulance based or other.

P3: Postsecondary.

Interviewer: You all provide both the certificate and the degree, correct?

P3: Yes.

Interviewer: How many paramedics student does your organization graduate on an annual basis?

P3: Between 10 and 30 just depends on the year.

Interviewer: Do you still perform the teaching role within your organization?

P3: Yes.

Interviewer: So what percentage would you say you can contribute to instructional versus administrative duties.

P3: Administration takes up the majority of, let's say, 70% administration, maybe 30% teaching.

Interviewer: So I know that makes a 100%. But outside of teaching and administration, is there any other task that may consume a large portion of your time and required responsibilities that you must perform.

P3: Job Association, no.

Interviewer: Perfect. Are you responsible for the use of simulations in your program? Do you? Do you do those skills, scenarios, that kind of thing?

P3: Yes, I'm responsible to see that it happens. We have a guy that does the actual hands on part.

Interviewer: Got it, so it doesn't take up much time during your week. You have some other guy of oversees that.

P3: Yes, that's true. It could happen by default.

Interviewer: So how many hours a week are needed to perform your job?  
Would you say Less than 30 hours, between 30 and hours, 40 to 50 hours, or more 50 hours?

P3: I would say 40 to 50, however, less if I can farm some of that out and keep myself at the 40, but it I mean. Sometimes I have to go more than that, but so does everybody.

Interviewer: Right of the administrative duties that are assigned to you which do you find that take up the most time?

P3: Well, that's a toughie, cause it's all little bitty things like we're right in the middle of budget right now and then. Got high school tours and stuff that comes through, and college initiative things that we have to go do.

Interviewer: So you'd say it's seasonal.

P3: Yeah, that's good. Answer, cause I don't. There's not one thing.

Interviewer: So how many full time educators and faculty members, including yourself, are employed in your organization?

P3: 3.

Interviewer: Do you feel like that number is adequate?

P3: It is for us.

Interviewer: Does your organization provide administrative assistant to help reduce the workload?

P3: In a roundabout way. Yes, have a person I can call. They could help me, but they also got other duty.

Interviewer: And I'm willing to bet that is it just like a department wide admin assistant like Allied Health.

P3: Yup!

Interviewer: Would you just describe yourself as very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with your current role?

P3: Very satisfied.

Interviewer: What would be the main reason why that current level of satisfaction?

P3: Where I work again. We're very blessed here. They take very good care of their faculty. We have a lot of autonomy to do what we need to do, and a lot of support to get what we need done. So that's pretty much it.

Interviewer: So have you searched for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job within the last year?

P3: No.

Interviewer: Okay, how likely will you be in the role of paramedic program director within 3 years?

P3: Very likely.

Interviewer: So question 1A- Does your supervisor understand what is important to you as an employee?

P3: Yes.

Interviewer: Can you expand on that? How do they recognize that or show that support.

P3: Well, for example, we are trying to close on a house, and I have the freedom to do what I need to do to get that done. Things like that. He knows you exactly what we need goes to bat for us in higher level meetings. If I call him, he answers, and returns my calls as quick as he can.

Interviewer: So how do potential advancement opportunities influence your loyalty with your current organization?

P3: Very little. I'm not looking to advance anymore. I'm moving more towards my time to retire, but.

Interviewer: Been there done that, that kind of thing. No, I hear you so question 2a- How important to you or new activity that expand your skills in meeting the meeting, your job expectations, such as conferences, degrees, etc.

P3: Maxed out on the degrees that I wanna get. I have a master's degree, and that's plenty. Conferences never have really got a lot out of them. Go with if I need to, for some specific thing. But I don't chase at all. I don't have time to do all that.

Interviewer: Right, How likely are you to stay with the organization if you enjoy the role and benefits, but you're not provided with the opportunity for advancement.

P3: Yeah, I'm here to live, retire, or they get rid of me.

Interviewer: Perfect. So question 3. A. Does your supervisor give you feedback on your work?

P3: Yes.

Interviewer: How often, in what format?

P3: Well, we have an annual formal evaluation every year but him and I talk every week about something. It's pretty informal just how you doing. What do you need?

Interviewer: So are you given the opportunity to provide feedback to your supervisor?

P3: Yes.

Interviewer: How readily accepted is it?

P3: As far as I can tell, so far, 100%, it's not. I may have an idea he might not do it, but he it gives it its due diligence.

Interviewer: Perfect. So is the job and work you're doing what you expected?

P3: Yes.

Interviewer: When you assume the role of paramedic program director, did you have a mentor that help navigate the organization challenges, or those challenges associated with State or national requirement?

P3: I did my predecessor actually, before he retired, he stepped down. So, they promoted me so he was still here, and could help me in that very way, which was tremendous.

Interviewer: So you say, extremely valuable, and especially in the early developmental years.

P3: Yes.

Interviewer: Now, hypothetically, if he wasn't around. What would be some of the biggest challenges that you would have seen if you didn't have that support.

P3: Oh, some of the internal director things it has to be done, budget and stuff like that. I had no knowledge of, but as far as the Dshs realm of it, in this the roles of Advanced coordinator I already knew about that stuff. So I guess the internals of the new position. But.

Interviewer: As far as like accreditation side of it. How comfortable would were you with the reporting, your resource, assessment, matrix, and all that good stuff?

P3: I was very comfortable because I was the one who was assigned to get this program accredited by the 2-13 date. So I knew what I was doing now, having said that our first accreditation, he found out I didn't know quite as much as I thought I did, but that's all been corrected.

Interviewer: You don't know what you don't know until they politely tell you so.

P3: Yup!

Interviewer: What would you say the main satisfiers and dissatisfiers of your job would be?

P3: Satisfiers is, I still like dealing with students. I like to teach. And dissatisfier is all the call it the manusia of being the director prefer to have what I hope others see as an open door policy, and that having that kind of a policy means you get interrupted a lot. For stuff that I haven't got time for this, but I think it's important for the people who work and report to me. So I guess that will be a dissatisfaction. It's hard to get on task. Stay on, task and get in finished at my speed.



Interviewer: Right. There's just not enough hours in the day.

P3: Hmm, hmm!

Interviewer: So. Question? 5. A. How satisfied are you with the pay you receive in relation to the amount of work that you do?

P3: Satisfied. I feel like I'm well compensated for what they have me doing.

Interviewer: Okay, so what? What do you think of the pay you receive in relation to the cost of living in the city which you live?

P3: It's above that, fairly substantially.

Interviewer: So question 6a-. Are you provided with the tools, resources, including training, to help you develop in your career?

P3: Yes, absolutely.

Interviewer: So this kind of goes a little bit off track to that. Do you use any type of platform to help document skills, scenarios and clinical? And if you do, would you describe that platform as user, friendly, or cumbersome/time-consuming?

P3: We do use a platform. Is it cumbersome? Not as bad as some we have used in the past, and I won't name them, but they're they're technical support is spot on, so if we get stuck they can help us fix it real quick

Interviewer: So question 6b- Are the promotional practices in your organization fair and transparent.

P3: Yes.

Interviewer: Question 7a- Is there flexibility and autonomy in your work?  
And how do you feel about it?

P3: I have full autonomy to do what I need to do to get my job done. Of course there's oversight, but generally, if I need something I ask, and it shows up.

Interviewer: So not micromanaged at all.

P3: Not at all. No, in I'd quit if I was.

Interviewer: And I think you kinda hit on how you feel about it.  
As far as the ability to go, take care of personal things and do the work. How you see fit. So I'd say you're pleased with it.

P3: Very pleased.

Interviewer: Question 7b- Are you able to do the work that are that's assigned to you? As far as the hours in the day, as far as the scope, or having the resources needed.

P3: Yes, there are times when little extra time is needed just to get through a task, but for the most part I can do what they ask me to do in a regular kinda work week.

Interviewer: Perfect. So how would you describe your work-life balance?

P3: Oh, it's a struggle to keep from taking work home, I try not to do that cause. I just don't think that's something we ought to be doing.  
For the most part.

Interviewer: And you've been in this long enough to especially early in your career, where we've seen that transition in technology where now everything's on your hip on your cell phone. Do you feel like that's part of the issue as far as not being able to just unplug if you will.

P3: I think that certainly contributes everybody's instantly accessible. But limit who I give that kind of information to, and I let the faculty here. If they wanna give that their information like that to students that's up to them. But I learned a time ago. If you give everybody your phone number, it brings all the time.

Interviewer: Absolutely so. Question 8a- Is your work appreciated by your supervisor?

P3: Seems to be.

Interviewer: So how does he go about recognizing a job well done.

P3: Well, they will tell me. And then again, that formal evaluation process. That's pretty much like, say, we're really informal most of the time.

Interviewer: Having that open communication.

P3: So little. Yeah, little good job there, or whatever happens, all the time those things.

Interviewer: Question. 9a- You have the opportunity for personal career development? Please explain. And again I feel like we kinda answered that you so I understand if you wanted to go to the conferences that would be supported.

P3: It would within the constraints of overall travel budget for the [college name]. We do our own here at the college faculty, professional development, we have an annual event. They call it [event name] it's kind of a seminar kind of a mini conference that we do locally bring in other colleges from around this area, and we attend that. We have a whole department that center for teaching and learning. And that's their focus is to provide faculty with whatever we might need.

Interviewer: So hypothetically, If you were to want to further your college degrees, how accepted do you think, or how supported would the administration be of that?

P3: I think they'd be very supportive, they were when I got my master's. Not ever gonna get my doctorate, but if I wanted to they would.

Interviewer: Right, so as far as like flexibility in the works place, as long as you're taking care of your commitment to the students, to the organization, would they allow you to work on that?

P3: Yes, yeah. Sure would.

Interviewer: So question. 10a- How satisfied are you with the responsibilities and challenges offered by the work in your organization?

P3: I'd have to say satisfied, okay, everybody else. There are times when get me out of here I can't take any more, but that's just there's not a job on the planet that don't have days like that. Yeah, I'm satisfied, though.

Interviewer: Perfect. Question. 10b- Do you have the opportunity to use your skills. Is your work, and can you explain how or why, or why not?

P3: Skills as a teacher or my skills as a director?

Interviewer: I wouldn't think broad: paramedic skills, leadership skills, instructional skills.

P3: Think I can use it all very well. I've been it's a paramedic. I've been a paramedic way too long now to hopefully, I've learned how to be a paramedic by but now I've been in leadership roles in other places. And now here I've learned again hopefully how to manage different situations.

Interviewer: So, how how instrumental would you say that those earlier skills, as far as like the leadership roles that you had, how did it impact your early days as a program director?

P3: It helped tremendously, being a operation supervisor for ambulance service. I was responsible for what happened that day, that I was shift, and that was everything. I had, because that term is a little different in different places an operation supervisor where I worked was iron and fire capabilities. Whatever we need it was, take care of business and run the thing that help me develop and learn how to manage and work with people. And then. Now then, when you're teaching that's all you do is work with people and have to manage their crises. Have to manage all that, and try to get on to graduate at some time. So.

Interviewer: It sounds like that structure where you work previously. It seems like it kinda honed you for time management as far as juggling 17 different things at once.

P3: Yeah. Yes.

Interviewer: I would assume that was beneficial as well. Assuming the role of still juggling 17 things at once.

P3: Yes.

Interviewer: Questions 11a- Do you feel like your work gives you a sense of accomplishment.

P3: Absolutely without question.

Interviewer: So what's that? What gives you the biggest sense of accomplishment?

P3: I love to see when a student light bulbs go off. As an educator, I think you understand what I'm talking about. That's my favorite thing. Of course I'm glad that students graduate, and then we hear a few years later how they're progressing and doing well, that's satisfying as well. But it's that light bulb moment that I'm always working for.

Interviewer: So just out of curiosity. Would you ever completely remove yourself from the classroom, and still do the directory role?

P3: Yes. The reason I'd say yes is because they also give me some release time to do accreditation work and to do director work as our program gets bigger, I'm sure my teaching role will get smaller.

Interviewer: As long as you know it's going into good hands. You don't want, build something up, and then over just somebody that you don't trust.

P3: Right, yeah.

Interviewer: So out of curiosity. Can you elaborate on that release time that they give you to work on?

P3: Sure, sure. They give me 6 hours a year. They let me use it however, I want to. Typically I used the whole 6 hours every fall because we graduated cohorts every May and that last capstone semester I didn't need to be released. I needed to be teaching so that we got everything as it should be.

We have recently changed the design of our program now it's 1 year program. It used to be 17 months. It's now hybrid. So they're not officially given me any more release time, but because I'm not in the classroom as many hours. I have more time again to do this job. The director job. So I guess I get plenty of time now to do the administrative side.

Interviewer: And again out of curiosity, is the hybrid format synchronous, asynchronous, or a combination of both as far as the online portion?

P3: Is synchronous, but I'm not sure exactly what you mean by those terms. Sorry we just started this.

Interviewer: So like synchronous? Or is it like we're doing now where we have this type of communication? Or is it pre recorded? They're responsible for having all this done, and they come into class to check that.

P3: Oh no no no!

P3: Yeah, sorry. Yeah, we they come in once a week for an 8 hour. Skill, day every week. I hate that Marathon will knock out skills in 3 week, 3, 1 week. I hate that. Concept, anyway, but bring it in. Yeah, by bringing them in every week we're able to answer their questions right now. In timely manner, and if we have a student struggling, we can bring them in and go. Hey! Where are you at here? What's going on instead of well, we'll see in 3 months.

Interviewer: Right. So how important is your relationship with your work colleagues?

P3: Extremely important, and consider them to my friends. Best friend.

Interviewer: So you would say you have very tight in that group. I'm assuming.

P3: Yes, sir, would you?

Interviewer: So you talked about the open communication that you have with I'm assuming you're chair, dean, or folks. Is that same type of communication between the faculty members and yourself.

P3: I believe it is, and they've indicated they feel that way as well.

Interviewer: Good. Do they feel comfortable, bringing complaints to you? I mean, will they voice any areas of weakness or strengths?

P3: Yes, I do.

Interviewer: Perfect. So how do you expect? Question? 12. A. How do you expect your supervisors to demonstrate that they generally value your contributions?

P3: That's gonna be a weird answer coming from me. I think I've already touched on some of it. If I need something, and it's a need it's not a want. I get it. It's not even questioned anymore. If it's something I want, we'll discuss it and try to figure out how to get it. And the other answer is, Leave me alone. I don't need you here until I need you, and then, when I need you, you're there. Yeah, I think we're all pretty independent and getting and self-motivated to the point that if you get in my way now, you're causing me problems.

Interviewer: Just kind of going to 13 a. Does your supervisor conduct performance appraisals? Or do they give you feedback on your performance? And you said annually, and then this informally, on a regular basis.

P3: Yes, sir.

Interviewer: So 13b- are well that one kind of goes hand in hand with the formal evaluation. So 2 questions, for you, and they're very broad. And I'd like, for on the first one kind of thing back to your early days, what advice would you give to a brand new program? Director that assumes that role today to help them be successful, or some potential pitfalls or best practices.

P3: Get real familiar with accreditation ins and outs; reach out to the accrediting body and go to their conferences. I hated that I didn't wanna do that, but you got to because you can't. That's this where I got in trouble in the beginning I read their policies, I read their procedures. We got everything done and built in place, and when they came and looked at it, yeah, that's what it says. This is what it means. Oh, missed that part! So if you go to those conferences and stuff, they will explain that before you make them mistake.

Interviewer: Anything on the State level.

P3: Well, just speaking for Texas. Of course you have to be an advanced coordinator to coordinate the classes. That's pretty simple process. Yeah, just have to go down there and get the training. But you need to be pretty familiar with the administrative code that's relevant to us. Work very closely with your local state rep. They can save you a lot of headache.

Interviewer: And that is just. Let's say they assumed your role as far as your organization. Specifically, what advice would you have?

P3: Where I work is, can't think of a better place to work I'm sure your places is good, too. But just be sure to get your stuff done on time. Don't trying not to wait till the last minute. That's the wrong time to get things done because you speed through it, and you make mistakes. Just have to do it again. And you're not gonna have time for that. So get it done early so you think it's done? Sleep on it. Come back the next day, and find out what she's. Oh, I should have done that, and then turn it in.

Interviewer: So the last question I have. 13c- Are there any other local, state, or national factors that may impact your decision to stay or vacate your current role as a paramedic program?

P3: Director, that we have not to get discussed, that you'd like to voice. Oh, I'll just say accreditation is a two-edged sword for it, but it is a huge pain. I want to make a comment to them, so I don't feel bad saying it here. They asked how we were doing, or how how they were impacting us. My response was, it just cost me money to get the same results, cause we were doing fine before accreditation, accreditation didn't really change our results. It just made more work on me and more expense to the program. Now, having said that I am not against our accreditation, I think it's valuable. If we're gonna get to the profession to be viewed more professionally, instead of ambulance drivers.

Interviewer: So a necessary evil you would say?

P3: Yes, we're not gonna progress without some kind of national standard.

Interviewer: I couldn't agree more. So good couple of other things I heard from personal experience, as far as a accreditation required, I mean, yes, there are certain things that we need to track attrition retention. Job placement in our past rates. Credentialing pass rates. These are the key it EMS that they're looking for. Now, can you expand on your experience as far as the other requirements that they need? Would you say it's necessary? Is it over? If is it too much? Or what's your experience with the other areas outside those primary ones?

Interviewer: Well, your go out of giving you a different answer how to told you it's nonsense, its BS. But now that national is phasing out the out of hospital, the skills exam. Now it's critical. We got to. We've got to ensure and have oversight that we are all teaching that level of stuff.

Interviewer: So are you, are you with the skills being phased out? Or your addressing more like the appendix G, where we're tracking. Okay. I taught him the skills. I taught him how I taught him when we transition that to scenarios transition, that to hospital transition, that the truck and capsule.

P3: Yes, that's exactly what I'm talking about. It may not happen to very many schools, but I can't imagine. Somewhere in the nation, the education doesn't get challenged by somebody. Wanted these days, and that's going to be, especially if registry is not testing it. And that's what we'll be critical.

Interviewer: I couldn't imagine coming into this role without that mentor like it would have been just an absolute nightmare.

P3: It can't be. I don't think it can successfully be done. You just wanna have a huge turnover all the time, because there's so much that you don't know, and you don't know until they say, Well, you're not doing it right, and then you're still trying to teach. Still try to do this, and you're like Screw. I'll just go back to teaching and or go back to the field where it's but. Yeah, and I'm guessing cause I don't have anything to base this on. But I'm also, I think people hire program directors and expect them to be teachers, and then do the directing on the side. That mentality, scout flip because the directing takes more time than the teaching. But yeah, they they deal with you as an instructor, and I think that.

### Appendix H: Interview 4 Transcript

Interviewer: Alright! Well, thanks again for agreeing to do this, just for the recording, can you please consent to being recorded both visually and audibly?

P4: Yes, I do.

Interviewer: Do you understand? The this interview's completely voluntary, and that you reserve the right to withdraw at any point or choose to skip a question. If you do not feel comfortable answering it perfect.

P4: Yes.

Interviewer: So let's get started with your current job and how long have you been in that role.

P4: So I am currently the Dean for health professions/health sciences at Texas Community College 1. Well, actually, I guess we're multiple hats. So that's my primary. Well, I don't know. That's one of the hats, and so that's been about 9 months now. Also still, currently the program director department. Actually, technically, that's the our titles department chair over the EMS professionals program. And I've been the department heads since 2,004. So 19 years.

Interviewer: So going back to that program, director hat, what made you decide to become a paramedic program director?

P4: Oh, by default! Really it was a so the previous so Past Director #1, who was the previous program director, here, took a job as the basically we just we had added a new building in this part of that added a simulation center. So he took the reins of the simulation center, and I was the only other full-time faculty member. And so by default I became it. Now not to say I didn't wanted, but it wasn't like a that's, you know. It was never my goal when I started of the college.

Interviewer: Gotcha? So you kinda answered the next question, your predecessor took additional role with the colleges. Not believe these simulation specialists, type role.

P4: Yes.

Interviewer: So how long have you worked in EMS?

P4: Since, I guess, actually working so it would probably been '94 or '95. So, however, many, almost 30 years.

Interviewer: What are the roles within the industry? Have you performed?

P4: So started out. So I start doing, all the EMS stuff when I was in college at [university name]. Started out as a what they call the reck sports medic. So basically they had a whole bunch of intramural events. And so they would have a basically the EMT at the sites of a lot of those sporting events for the integrals. So they would have probably 20 or 30 flag football games going



simultaneously. And so they had a person there just to kind of handle the sprained knees, twisted ankles, and that sort of thing, and whatever you know, I feel too hard hit the ground.

And so that was I did that while I was in college, started to kind of volunteer with the organization in County Service #1, and then once I graduated, went to work for county based system just kind of North of Texas City 4.

Interviewer: Gotcha. Do you still perform any roles within the industry as far as on the truck?

P4: No, so just so, we have a bag. So our medical director allows us to treat patients here so cause we have, like the dental hygiene program, actually has patients, and occasionally they have some events. So I do that, but not from a actually riding on an ambulance.

Interviewer: Gotcha. what best describes the sponsorship type of your organization? Is it post-secondary, including community college and 4-year universities, hospital consortium fire based, ambulance based, or other?

P4: Yeah. So community, post-secondary community, college.

Interviewer: How many paramedic students does your organization graduate on an annual basis?

P4: So probably about, depending on the year. Now, we're probably closer to 10 to 15 paramedic students a year, and then probably 40 to 50 EMT students a year.

Interviewer: Do you still perform a teaching role within your organization?

P4: Yes, but very small now.

Interviewer: What percentage would you say that you contribute to instruction versus administrative duties?

P4: And so I guess this is so I'm gonna separate it out a little bit.

So as program director traditionally, when I was a before we got the Dean position, I basically carried a full time teaching load. And so the program director were extra duties on top of that the college gave us a 3 hour. So basically we get 15 equated hours that works that's a full time faculty, position. And then, which is what the department chair was, and but then I would get a release for 3 hours to do the administrative side.

Now the reality is. I took. I didn't really get the release. I basically got that was an overload in essence. And so we would. I would get a little bit of overload for it, but not really. It was other duties as assigned really is what it was.

As the dean I really did was able to kind of step back. And so now I get 12 hours of release time, and I'm supposed to be only teaching about 3 hours, which should theoretically work. But we've been short staff, and then we added extra classes, and so that also hasn't really kind of played out as it should have. But I think we're getting there. We're getting close.

Interviewer: So when you say you got those 3 hours of release time which turned into overload pay, you feel like it was adequate for the additional workload that came with the director spot.

P4: Yes, but no, so I mean I guess I've never been one that we're money, was the big driving. I mean. I do what I do because I enjoy it, and not even kind of go back to when I graduated college I had a my bachelor's degree was in economics. So I've basically graduated with economics in May finish the paramedic program in June. And basically at that point said, which you know, do I wanna go business industry? Or do I wanna go become a paramedic? And said, I really, truly enjoy the EMS stuff more, and as I look back I probably should have majored in all of the health and all of that stuff, I think I would have done better but I chose the pathway, of you know hey, I'm gonna do something I enjoy.

So kind of that's kind of where I'm at. I enjoy teaching also enjoy the challenge of kind of the administrative stuff, and so that doesn't.

And that's with all the program directors here. It is that kind of that extra. Thing that you have to do. There are sometimes where you kind of feel overwhelmed, and you got too much to do, and there are times where I'm enjoying it. And so I enjoy the challenge. But yeah, financially, is it there? No!

And I think, had I not been doing this for so long, if I was a new program Director and trying to learn the teaching part. I think it would be very overwhelming and very difficult to do, just because I think I pretty much put teaching on autopilot. I could walk into class, I mean, I would prep. But the perhaps minimal kind of like what I do last time, what I need to change. I felt very comfortable with the content, so I wasn't spinning the first, you know, when I started 20 years ago, I would spend 2 days to prep for one class day. You know, after teaching for 20 years, it becomes easier where you're walking in kinda going, I know what I need to do, and can do it and feel comfortable with what's prep. And was able to focus more on the department chair side. So yeah, yes, but no!

Interviewer: Perfect. Are you responding for simulation use that is used in your program?

P4: So, yeah. Past Director #1 provides the support, but we still do the individual cases and sessions. Past Director #1 really focuses on all the other folks more so than us. We tend to kind of walk in, set up our stuff, do what we need to do, and close everything down. So he's there to kind of help when something quirky happens. But yeah, we do our own stuff.

Interviewer: So, how much time each week, do you allocate to scenario, based, as far as putting them together, running them, debriefing, and the prep work that goes with the.

P4: So at the paramedic level it really is, we kind of really tried to move to a flip classroom model for all of it. And so from a traditional day a large portion is basically kind of online where they're doing the cognitive stuff kind of online when they come to class basically. They only come to our class on Tuesdays, but it's an 8 to 5:30. And so that's the one day where there, okay, we're required to be here the morning portion of that is probably covering, going over content, making sure that they understand the cognitive knowledge. But we're doing like case-based

discussions. We give them entry tickets, and we kind of go over those concepts. So it really is kind of a review. There's no real lecturing.

And then the afternoon is really all skills or scenarios depending on whether they're out in the account of the program. So it's a three semester program. The first semester is very skills intensive. Once you get into the next two semesters, it's all kind of running scenarios. For the EMT program. It's not a structured cause. There are days where it's all skills. And there are days where there's scenario stuff. And so there's probably, through the course of a semester, there's probably five to six good all day sessions, for scenario and stuff.

Interviewer: So what, just assuming that money wasn't an option, I get the restraints that are often put on the by organization that you work for. But you think it'd be beneficial to have somebody that just we kinda like in Past Director #1 position where it was just EMS specific where they could set up the skills you think that would relieve a significant portion of that strain or what it I mean you think that'd be beneficial.

P4: I don't know so much specifically for just for EMS. So I think I can kinda see. So it's nice walking in. Past Director #1 does a good, so we try to pick up. The two folks that are in the simulation center are very OCD. And are very particular about how things go back. So we think we put the room back together but they'll come back behind us and really kind of straighten it up and clean it up, and so that part's nice because we're every time walking into a clean environment where it's completely reset and we can get there. So I enjoyed that.

I don't know at a department level trying to get folks down. I mean, I guess you get from the concept of you. Do something, repeatedly. You get very good at it. And so if you had the same person doing scenarios for everything, I think you get good at it. But then also it doesn't help the other faculty progressed to get better, because I think, being able to do those scenarios with simulation. Also helps improve that classroom, case-based discussion. Because as your debriefing, or as you're going through the concepts and trying to make sure that your capturing the hey? You know. We're talking heart failure, we talk about, you know. Maybe preload, and after load, or all the pathophysiology and understanding all the nuances of what's the content I'm trying to get on the master in classroom. But also then reinforcing those ideas at the different points because if I'm teaching them in class, and I know they struggled with this concept, then I can spend more time in the simulation area going. Hey, now remember when you all struggle with this let's go back over that again, because this is the patient that we were trying to discuss there, so.

Interviewer: Excellent! So how many hours a week, and this is outside of the being in. I know what the chair and the program director have overlapping duties. At some that sometimes so how many hours a week, just in a director role does it take for you to perform your job, would you say less than 30 hours, 40 to 50 hours, or greater than 50 hours?

P4: How much well, so well, and I guess it's I'm gonna answer it this way, cause I think it's kind of a loaded question to me. Or can be loaded so how? What's the minimum amount of time I need to spend to get by versus how much time I actually spend?

Interviewer: Correct.

P4: So I would think. And actually, in a portion of my teaching time, I would actually say I spent more time as department chair program/director than I did as the faculty member cause. I would just walk in kind of do you know, cause I had classroom day, maybe 2 days a week, and the other days of the week. I was basically doing department chair things. Yeah. So I would say, probably 30 to 40 for the department chair. But you could. I you could argue to me. You can argue that the department chair/program director really could be a full-time position.

Interviewer: So how many full-time educators or faculty members, including yourself, if you're still functioning in education role, are employed at your organization or within your EMS department.

P4: So there, well, so there's me. We have 3 full-time instructors, and then a full-time clinical coordinator, and then I guess I'm gonna say half time, admin Assistant that we share her with respiratory care.

Interviewer: Gotcha. Do you feel like that? Number is adequate?

P4: Yes.

Interviewer: Perfect, does, your orders, and you said you have an administrative assistant that you split half with the respiratory care.

Do you have to split them anywhere else, or just between your to programs?

P4: No, yeah. Just so, yeah, she just covers. There's two programs that she covers.

Interviewer: Perfect, so would you describe yourself as very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with your current role?

P4: Currently so satisfied. And that's I mean, it's kind of like everything else. There are times we go through there. I'm just not happy that you go. I had a great day, I guess, at this point, as a more in the being in this slot. I missed the teaching. I miss being in the classroom and just seeing the light bulb so.

Interviewer: Have you searched for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job in the last year?

N4: Just well the dean position.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So nowhere outside of that. How likely will you be in the role of a paramedic program director in 3 years?

N4: I'm Curious to see how this whole, how the workload of the Dean role plays out. So traditionally, from the colleges perspective, we had a associate Vice President that was not a program director. Now they've kind of split the duties out with me and the nursing director to where we're both now, Deans. So she's over the nursing stuff which takes up a lot of her time, so

I carry a lot of the workload. Other health professions programs, so I don't know. I'm curious to see how all that plays out in terms of. College expectations. How much time do I actually have to do the dean stuff versus getting pulled back in at the department level. So, I don't know.

Interviewer: I completely understand. So you do see yourself with that organization. Just maybe with the less workload that's associated with the director role. So the first question 1A. Does your supervisor understand what's important to you as an employee?

P4: Yes.

Interviewer: So how do they show that understanding?

P4: They're very, and I guess one of the things I've always appreciated about the colleges that there they listen and we'll and support you in this and trying to find help find solutions right? So you know everybody wants one more money. Everybody wants new equipment, new right? But at least they make me feel like they understand the need, and can appreciate the need, and we'll look for opportunities to try to make that work. It doesn't always end up. But at least I feel like they, you know, just by their following backup of Hey, here's where we're at with your request, or I understand your request and we can move that forward. There are time, you know. If they disagree, then we can have those conversations, and even just kind of with them, kinda saying, Hey, you know this? Yes, you want this piece of equipment, but so does these other 20 people want these other things. So not gonna promise anything. You know. Yes, we'll include it. And you know. Help me! Help me understand why this is valuable for you.

Interviewer: Perfect question. 1B- How do potential advancement opportunities influence your loyalty with your current organization?

P4: Really, don't. I guess I've never been one that's really kind of trying to move up. I mean, I guess. Yes, there's a little bit of that. But I guess I'm just kind of obviously kind of been generally happy with where things are. I don't like necessarily like change a lot I guess that's also part of that other side of that. We're not pushing out, moving out. I mean, I get, you know, same organization for 30 years. That's. And I think some of that goes back to the family, too. Of just you know. Yeah, so could we move to, you know, I'm getting close to retirement. You know, we're part of Trs. Your last 5 years of the key years of what you get paid. If I were to move to of the bigger cities, we would get paid more. And so those years would be there. So that's but families here and that's important to my wife to be close to them. So, yeah.

Interviewer: 2A- how important to you are new activities that expand your skills in meeting your job expectations.

P4: So yes, but I think the cost, so we have, and I've been one that would just go seek those. So we don't always have a lot of travel money to go to conferences. We get a little bit of that, but we also have other resources. So when I found stuff like MRAT, or I listen to podcast and I can read books. And so I think I get that and seek stuff out on my own, but I'm using my funds and my money typically from a lot of it. The college supports it a little bit, but not terribly much.

Interviewer: How likely are you to stay with organizations if you feel the role, if you enjoy the role and benefits but you're not provided with the opportunity for advance. You said the advancements, not everything. Family live location being happy. Correct?

P4: Yes.

Interviewer: So question 3A- Does your supervisor give you feedback on your work?

P4: Sure. So I'm gonna answer that two pathways. So my prior boss, when I was department chair, we have the AVP. We would sit down regularly, and I would get that information. And then I would get a formal eval every year as Dean. I haven't really, which we've been scrabbling, struggling. There's been a lot of other structural changes. So my interaction with the Provost has been limited. We're now starting to meet every other week were I'm getting a little more interaction from her and a little more feedback. So I think it's it's getting better. But she's always been available. But it's just the way the schedules have worked out. We're doing what we need to do. She's doing everything she need and it seems to be working.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So going back to the earlier, you said you had one annual evaluation, and you sit down. How often was that? Sit down! Communication with your past boss?

P4: Weekly, I mean, I would just I mean we would just basically have to walk by that office to leave the building. And so anytime I was coming in or going at the door was you know what she was there, we would stop in and you know is how's it going? And just so.

Interviewer: Perfect question. 3B- Are you given the opportunity to provide feedback to your supervisor? And if so, is it readily accepted?

P4: Yes. So when the traditional. So as my prior boss, we had a very good relationship, and I could, I felt, very comfortable challenging her and pushing back and go. I disagree, help me understand. My current boss, I can probably do the same. I just don't know that we've I don't haven't developed that relationship enough for just felt comfortable just going. I completely disagree. And just, you know, word it probably a little more politically correct, currently.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So of course, question 4A- and again I know you've been doing this for a long, long time, and I know you're right now is dean. But if you could kind of take a step back into that chair/director position when you first took over that role was that job in the work, what you expected to be doing when he took that role?

P4: Yes, but then I think there's a lot of stuff that was being done.  
So I guess I had worked here for 3 years prior to becoming department chair. As I took stuff over there was stuff that the department preview that Past Director #1 had been doing that I didn't realize that he was doing so I also had the benefit that he was still here, and could go easily and talk to them.

Interviewer: So could you elaborate on some of those things that he was doing, that you didn't realize?

P4: I think just the like. The evaluations. How often he went to go, watch, or observe other faculty teach and interaction with students. Just all of the college. The structural workload reports, though, we have to turn in this report and turn on that report, and you know the. Like all the stuff of the State, the course approval.

Interviewer: And you are accredited. When you took over. I'm assuming.

P4: No, we were not. So. Yeah. So that actually works. So like, we got that. Probably 5 to 6 years after I started his departure. So we were. They set everything up, and we're in the process of trying to apply. But we just never did so. We were doing everything we needed to do and as if we were accredited. But it just we weren't.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So you're a key player in that accreditation process. So you guys see how that I mean, you're intimately involved with it. From day one I would assume perfect. You get on this one as well. A little bit when you assume the role of paramedic program director. Did you have a mentor to help you navigate the challenges associated with both the State and national requirements?

P4: Yes.

Interviewer: Now, hypothetically, if Past Director #1 wasn't there, I mean, did you have anybody else that you could reach out to? Or is there any other mentors that played a key role?

P4: So they're probably yeah, cause I guess one of the other. So when I started here, there is Past Director #1, and then another guy with whom I was close to, and so I probably could have reached out to him for questions. So he left. The yeah, cause he because he should have been the department chair, or he would have been the department chair. So I guess he'd lost some time between the 3 years that I was there. So there are times where I could reach out to him, and we would still interact so I guess that would have been possible. But he wouldn't have necessarily known all of the department's side and so I really didn't know anybody else. I mean, I guess I've met some folks from like ACC. But what didn't know enough to reach out.

Interviewer: Perfect. So again, this is not necessarily directed at the dean's position. But what we're some of the main satisfiers and dissatisfiers of that chair/program director role?

P4: I think just a different challenge from the classroom. So trying to kinda like being able to set goals and to kind of accomplish them working on things to improve across all classes. So trying to kind of work on like moving from the traditional lecture based process to flipped classroom model and so trying to get everybody to kinda come on board with that, to understand the value of that. And so those are the things that kind of enjoyable and fun, and I saw it as a challenge. I think, did I answer that I'm trying to remember what?

Interviewer: Yeah, so that's I feel like the satisfied. We're answered. Was there any dissatisfaction or things that led to dissatisfaction with the job?

P4: Oh, under, yeah. So I guess. And it's still kind of happens. Just the continual push back. So things that, like ANR would use to do, they would push back on us that now we have to kind of do so, and even a or admissions and records, and even HR. Cause, like now. So we used to just send all of our paper payroll sheets to Hr. Well, now they push that back down theoretically to the individual level. But as department chair I still have to go in and approve every one of them. So they're not doing it. I'm doing it. And with the admissions and records, they kinda did something similar, right? So with grades, we used to just send them a spreadsheet. Here's the great in our system. Well, now, we're doing that. And now we gotta verify that. So that's just the. It seems kinda like departments are at the lower level, and everybody else is pushing the workload on us saying Y'all need to do this. So that's the frustrating part.

Interviewer: Question 5A- How satisfied are you with the pay that you receive in relation to the type and amount of work that you do?

P4: Uh far. So I think from the college when I started, Texas Community College 1 was kind of more towards the top of what the community colleges were paying. When you look at like the TCTA sheet we've moved from like you know, upper upper echelon to the lower echelon, and so we're getting paid. Less every year, and especially now that with all the inflation and everything it's, I'm starting to really fill the pinch. And so I would. It's okay. Cause like I said, it's not all about the money. But yeah it could be better. Can't say that I'm satisfied.

Interviewer: Gotcha so kind of off of that. What do you think of the pay you receive in relation to the cost of living that you live? And you kind of hit on that a little bit already. Starting to get tight was inflation continues to climb.

P4: Yeah

Interviewer: So question 6A- Are you provided with the tools and resources, including training, to help you develop in your career?

P4: Yes.

Interviewer: And can you describe some of the tools, resources, or training that's provided?

P4: So I think, as over the years I've been able to go to enough like with the instructor course. So we've been through those. They'll send us to like the credit as department chair, once the accreditation conferences started going, we were able to kind of go to those conferences and training, especially over the past 3 or 4 years. The college has really come on board in terms of, and recognizing just the need for a new what a new faculty member need, and what are the resources they have, and kind of what's the onboarding process. They've increased those and what they're offering.

And so now there's a lot of especially now, with everything kind of moving online, there's a lot of opportunities there. And so if I we're, I think it's, I forget what group we, there's some group that the college uses that's got a lot of videos and stuff about just how to teach and how to be good instructor. And there's hundreds of them, and you can go find whatever you wanna do



online learning, you just wanna do face to face learning. You get a lot of those, but it's really kind of probably more geared towards more towards like the level arts like where it's the traditional just kind of classroom. There's not a lot of how do you teach in a lab setting psychomotor skills, that sort of stuff. But yeah, the other stuff is there.

Interviewer: Excellent. So this is kinda off topic from that question. This is more out of curiosity, really, than anything. Do you use a platform to help document skills, scenarios and clinicals?

P4: So, yeah, you want the long answer. So we used Documenting Platform #1 for years. Last year we just got to the point I just got irritated with them. So you know, we everybody with that platform went through that that struggle of where everything started to fall apart. We were kind of managing that what the kind of the thing that pushed me over the edge was they made the promises so early on. When we moved to the new SMC I guess at the beginning of the year, long before it was required.

This app at the time we'd call them, and they said, Yes, we'll have reports out to where you can run the reports and do what you need to do to get them successful. Great, went to one conference, and they, you know, we kept saying, where's the report? Where's report? Where's the report? They're like? At least be patient. We're working on it. We get you. We hear you. And then I went to one conference, and they basically kind of said, Hey, we're completely redoing everything we're moving to this new platform. And if you're only old platform, you're not going to get the report. I'm like, I'm done, you know. And so now for the past couple of years I've been having to do all of those reports manually, and so we moved to Documenting Platform #2.

We're still trying to, you know. I'm not happy with Documenting Platform #2 either, but I'm trying to figure out is it just something I don't understand, something I'm not doing right. There's a lot of assumptions that I had moving in with Documenting Platform #2. Thinking, just because of my prior history with Documenting Platform #1, so I'm not sure if it's me making some assumptions about how to set things up or do things. Or is it just that Documenting Platform #2 can't do things. For sure they can't. I don't. I like the fist apps process where you enter a patient better because it records it seems much more like an electronic record. Then Documenting Platform #2 is more of a process. So yes, not happy with Documenting Platform #2. I'm gonna sit down, work with them some more, and try to kind of figure all this out. But we may be moving from Documenting Platform #2 too.

Interviewer: Question 6B- Are the promotion practices in your organization fair and transparent?

P4: For us. It's been that way. Yes, I think there's other parts of the program where what appeared to happen was it was someone's best friend.

That wasn't necessarily the they didn't seek out all everybody's opinion, and just hired the person that they thought should be hired. They're friend.

Interviewer: So would you say, like the good old boy system? Or was it so?

P4: Yes, yeah. And so, like, I said, our chain has always been good but the liberal arts chain constantly as problems, because it is, it's very much appears to be that good old boy system.

Interviewer: Question 7A-. Is there flexibility and autonomy in your work? And how do you feel about it?

P4: Yes, I think there's a lot of flexibility. I can generally come and go and do what I need to do, adjust my schedule and flex it to kind of meet my needs. I have not had micromanagers by any means, and so they kind of let me do what I need to do. And the way I want to do it within reason, I mean, there's certain, like we're using this software to do to track all institutional goals. I mean. So, it is what it is. Sometimes it's like, sometimes it's good, but but you know, what are your goals? And how do you achieve them? And how do you want to document it? That's on you. But we're using this tracking tool.

Interviewer: So question 7B- Are you able to do the work that's assigned to you? So do you have the tools, skills, etc., to do the job that is assigned to?

P4: Yes, I mean, our times were like as a new department chair, I'd have to go figure out how to do stuff, but I would just kind of go learn. It's kind of the same thing as Dean's like. I'm having to do these workload reports. What in the world is a workload report we'll go figure it out.

Interviewer: So I'm gonna ask you this question a little bit different than I have been just due to your tenure. So right now, how would you describe your work life balance? And could you compare that to the work-life balance 2 to 3 years after you took the chair's left director role?

P4: So I tend to be a workaholic. So I tend to throw everything at work. Where I have to learn is to be able to be able to put it down, because, like I can, I'll go home and I'll just kinda keep. We'll have dinner. We'll talk. We'll put something on, and I'll start kind of working so it's on me to be able to shut that off to make sure that we're spending time with the family.

Now, my wife's good about actually, the family has been good about. Okay, hey? We're gonna go over here. We're gonna go do this trip. To kind of make sure that we get that. But yeah, I think mine just by. I'm more of an introvert. And so I'm much happier. I mean even if I wasn't working. If I wanted to read a book, I'd still read it. I mean, it's about I'm gonna do stuff personally, individually, not. I'm not a social, lets sit around and talk. So my struggles kind of been the opposite of making sure that I have enough balance with my family.

Interviewer: So question 8a, is your work appreciated by your supervisor?

P4: Yes. Yeah.

Interviewer: How are you recognized for a job well done?

P4: So I think the annual evaluation would always kind of show that. But even just through our conversations. Hey, Thank you. You're doing a good job, or you know, that was a good decision. I appreciate what you're doing. So it's spoken words of appreciation. But then also in the annual evaluation.

Interviewer: Excellent, 9, a. Do you have the opportunity for professional and career development and hit on that one? I feel like you. Can you have some money allocated for going to different conferences, etc.?

P4: Yes

Interviewer: So do you have a learning plan, such as additional college to degree. And if yes, does your college or supervisor support you?

P4: No, so at this point I'm not. I mean just if someone would pay for my doctor, I would do it in a heartbeat. I'm just looking at it from the perspective of a financial thing. Where I don't see the return on investment there. Now, had I, and I think that's just kind of part of one of the mentors previously had just given me the idea of Hey, your bachelor's is good and you don't need to kind of move on. Even though I kinda knew, you know, hey? If I got my master's I'd get more money if I got a doctor I'd get more money. Didn't truly appreciate how much the doctorate is needed in the college system until kind of too late, and then so I think, had I started all of that when I, when my family was young, it would have been better. But yeah, now I think I see my own kids in college. And so I'm gonna pay for her to go to college as opposed to pay for me.

Interviewer: For for sure. So if you did decide to go back, how supported with the college, be in?

P4: Oh, I think very yes, absolutely. I mean, there's some formality to it of what do you want to study? Why, what is it? But I think from the college side they're trying to decide. Is this a degree in your fields? Is it appropriate? How much are we gonna pay for that degree as you kind of go along, cause we get paid. So every year we turn in our hours, and so we get pay for educational beyond our current degree. And so it's kind of a instead of it being a giant step. Once you earn your degree. It's a series of small steps along the way to kind of pay for it. And so yes, absolutely and always, actually, everybody's always encourage that, except for that one mentor.

Interviewer: And you just out of curiosity. You said it's a gradual incline, is that just to help relieve the financial shock of hey, now he's has his Master's degree or is that more incentive for the employee to work towards it.

P4: I'm not, you know. I never thought of it from the college side that way, but I guess I've always just kind of seen it as and appreciated it, because, as I spent you know the I guess the 3 years it took me to get the Masters, after that first year I was able to take that money, that extra money that I got roll back into my education, so I didn't borrow as much, and so I basically kept living at the same level that I was and just kept was able to you know I ended up only having 3 or \$4,000 in debt for a master's degree, because I was able just the way it all worked out. To roll, that through.

Interviewer: Question 10A-. Are you satisfied with the responsibilities and challenges offered by your work in the organization?

P4: Yes, yeah, I think they.

Interviewer: Can you elaborate on some of those the satisfactions secondary to the responsibilities? Are challenges anything specific or?

P4: Yeah, cause. So I think as I've grown in the organization, you get a like, they ask you to serve on different committees and ask you to serve in different ways. And I think that just kind of helps continue to grow and to challenge me and helps me understand different aspects of college experience. So one, you know, one of the next faculty council president for 1 year, and so I said on the Executive Cabinet, so you know, every week the all the big wigs would meet. So I was able to sit in with them and just learn how. How? All that side works. Where are all the discussions? What are they thinking about when they build the budget and get all of that? So I think that's so that knowledge and welcoming in and hoping, you understand, and just getting to know those developing all those relationships kind of helped or brought that satisfaction, enjoy.

Interviewer: So, question, 11A- Does your work give you a sense of accomplishment?

P4: Generally. Yes, so I think so. I'm you know, happy when we see folks graduate, and I'm happy to help try to solve problems. There are times where it's I guess frustrating too. I guess. I think the satisfaction, joy of kind of seeing things progress, and folks be able to, you know, as a community college, the mission to see help folks graduate to help improve their lives and to make a difference in their lives.

Interviewer: Gotcha, how likely are you to stay with an organization if it's not meeting your job expectations?

P4: Yeah, I would think I would tend to leave.

Interviewer: How important are you relationships with your work colleagues?

P4: I think that's a large part of what makes being at work joyful, I mean. So if you get along and everybody's kind of you're appreciating each other and supporting each other through the ups and downs, it's good. So if it's a cut throat, stab in the back work environment, I think I wouldn't enjoy it as much.

Interviewer: Okay. Question 12A- How do you expect your supervisor to demonstrate the genuinely value your contributions?

P4: Yeah, I think just expressing some. That so expressing of appreciation is not high on my, I guess, whatever those little the love language list, or whatever you want to call you know, my, how I perceive things so you know they don't have to tell me every time that I'm doing a good job I'm okay with that. So. But yeah, an occasional hey? Good job.

Thank you. We appreciate what you're doing. And actually my boss does a lot. I mean, that's kind of part of what her thanks and for the past couple of bosses have been that kind of boss. They've been very, very good about just that acknowledgement.

Interviewer: So what do you? What support do you expect supervisors to provide you in order to achieve the next level in your career?

P4: Helping me understand, I guess, just kind of that continual growth. I think, as long the way is, you know, as I move from faculty department chair, just having those conversations about. Here's what we're doing. Here's the goal and just giving you know, what can I do to help? Here, why don't you pick on this? And those assignments kind of continue to build this department share kind of the same thing? What are you looking at from from the next level? And even now as dean. What are those you know? How do you?

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As dean, I'm not dealing with student issues as much. It's much more the departmental level issues and trying to kind of and it's much more of the faculty issues and challenges about alright. So now, here's a problem. Or here's a potential situation. How do I best deal with that? And having those conversations and trying to kind of help mentor me a little bit more.

Interviewer: So here's the last couple of questions. What advice would you give to a brand-new program director who's coming into that role to help navigate some of the challenges at this State national or even local level already? Common pit bulls? He ran into or any best practices that you would provide?

P4: So, I think, reach so one try to find a mentor, find someone who's willing to kind of help you and meet with them regularly. You know, cause, and I guess that's something I never really did well, at the beginning. It's just kind of understanding but what a good mentor can do, and having kind of a more formal official mentor process and kind of working through something like that would be one. Just as a department chair. What are the things you're dealing with?

But then to kind of just meeting with all the like, the folks at at the state level with. That's registry you know, and Accreditation body 1, They want to help you. They want you to succeed. They are not the big, bad wolf that you know. So I think once you kind of meet with them, and just kind of talk with them, and just have the, Here's a challenge. What are your suggestions? What's your thoughts? How do we do this? You know they're there to support you, and it takes a while. But I think the very first couple of times they're gonna give you kind of just more reserved answers. But I think once you develop that relationship more, you kind of get more of the okay here's the official stance. But here's some other thing to kinda think through a little bit more.

Interviewer: And you hit on the formal mentorship, I mean at the institutional level. That's great, I mean. But at the state level, do you think a formal mentorship type program would be beneficial if that could be established? Or how would you? How recommended to establish such a mentorship?

P4: I do. Yeah, because I think. from our state perspective. I'm not sure what. Who who would, from a formal perspective how to do that? Well, I don't know that there's organizations, because I guess there's the Texas Educator group. I don't know that they have the. Cause like other program Director #1 will do that. I mean. So you call Other program Director #1

up. He'll talk to you but I don't know if that group has the structure necessarily to kind of do that, I think it would need to be much more of a hey I'm looking for someone. Is there someone that I can call, and someone I can trust and I think it's going to those meetings. And just talking with folks to where you can develop that to where you feel like you can call them up and talk with them. And just kind of have those conversations. Yeah.

Interviewer: Just out of curiosity is there any advice that you would give to that same individual, as far as how to navigate some of the national requirements or the accreditation requirements? I should say.

P4: Yeah, so. So when I did my self study, I had someone sent me theirs, and so there were Differences for sure. So, but at least I had a is there oftentimes where I struggled with what are they really asking? Yes, there's the question. But what? Why are they asking the question, How am I supposed to address it? At least that led it to. I understood where they were trying to go with it, but then also was just able to call and reach out.

Interviewer: And I'm just going informally. Ask you this question, based off your experience and your tenure. With the other words, that your other accreditation bodies say you dealt with in that chair, position, or even in the Dean position. How would you compare Accreditation body 1 to the other accreditation processes? Would you say. It's similar, easier, harder. Somewhere in the middle.

P4: I think our group, the EMS group, has been much more open book and supportive then a lot of the other ones. So when and cause like with nursing, nursing things, and I think they're getting better. But nursing was a like a adversarial position, so you would come in and they would try to they would try to find stuff, trying to find something to write you up. Where I think accreditation body 1 comes in, and going. Hey! Meet the bar! But here's this, you know, you would have these other conversations along the way, they would try to kind of be supportive and you know you could ask them. The word things and phrase things of Hey, maybe reach out to this college because they do that really. Well, alright! I've seen this college, and here's where they sent me their stuff, and I'm gonna give you their stuff. I mean they would do that to try to help you help you get better. The goal, the goal of it of each one was, we're gonna make you a little bit better each way. Not just kind of evaluate you. All of the programs. And so there what used to kind of be more difficult isn't as stressful.

Interviewer: So the final question, are there any other local, state or national factors that may impact your decisions to stay in or vacate your current role as paramedic program director that we have not discussed that you'd like to voice.

P4: The only thing that I struggle with as a profession where? Is is it? I think it's but you know, is it degree or not? I mean, where are we along the way? I don't. There's a part of EMS that wants to kind of maintain the to me minimum standards, minimum expectations. Lets get them in the door and get you out, and it's a butt in the seat mentality. And we're just gonna burn through, you know, it only takes you a year to get through it. We're gonna burn you out, kick you out the other end and we'll pick up somebody else. That's I want the profession to grow to become more kind

of, I guess, similar to What I see perceived from Australia and England, where it's much more of a true profession and we're working moving towards a bachelor's prepared.

I mean our stuff, but then the US needs to change a little bit, but that to me is this struggle, and what frustrates me is, where? Where are we on that continuum and I don't see us. I feel there's more especially in our area. Like we change from a four semester program to three semester program cause we were fixing to go out of business because they didn't care about. You know. Hey? Just get him in! Get him out! We'll, you know, if they can pass the registry. That's all we care about, and that wasn't our philosophy.

## Appendix I: Interview 5 Transcript

Interviewer: Alright! So, first and foremost, thanks again for your willingness to participate again, just for the recording. Can you please consent to be being recorded both visually and audio?

P5: Yes, I do.

Interviewer: Perfect. You understand that this interviews completely voluntary, and you reserve the rat, withdraw at any point, or choose a skip a question if you do not feel comfortable.

P5: It's fine. Yup!

Interviewer: Perfect. So what is your current role or current job? And how long have you been in this room?

P5: I am currently at Texas Community College #1 as a program director. I have been here for, I think, 8 months.

Interviewer: And prior to that, as far as program directors related, whether you're experiences.

P5: Prior to that I was at Texas Community College #2 for 18 months, and prior to that I was at Texas Community College # 3 for 30 years.

Interviewer: Perfect and all in the director role, correct?

P5: 20 plus was a director at Texas Community College # 3.

Interviewer: Gotcha. What made you decide to become a paramedic program director?

P5: The guy who was the program director was demoted, and they said, You're the program director. And literally, that's kind of what it was that I was kinda thrust into it in the spur of the moment, and then kind of realized, I have a lot to learn and started learning it, and the time wasn't a whole lot of resources on the whole process. So the state was very helpful. I found that the State is your best friend when it comes to being a program director. Found some other people across the State, and the nice thing about Texas that, I will say, is you could pick up phone call any other program director, and they'll help you out. So I found those resources very early, and was very glad to have.

Interviewer: So when you said you figured out you had a lot to learn what we're some of those things that you didn't anticipate coming into it?

P5: You know, and it's always one of those things that everybody looks at. It's real easy to judge when you're an instructor. You have your class, you have your students when you're the coordinator, the program director, whatever your college calls, you have all the students, you have all the responsibility. You do with administrative issues, with scheduling issues, with



disciplinary issues, everything that you could possibly imagine going wrong at a program is now on the program director and instructors don't always see that most of the instructors who moved into the world of program director usually have an Oh, my God! What have I got me into moment? It is vastly different from being an instructor. I don't know how to fix that. I don't know how to get people better aware of it. It's just the way it is. You're now over all of your other full-time personnel. You're over all of your adjunct personnel. You went from having a class of 24 to a program of 100. It wasn't necessarily massively overwhelming, but it does take your breath away when you realize what you are now facing as a program director.

Interviewer: Perfect. So, and again, if you don't feel comfortable answering, that's fine. Can you elaborate a little bit on? Why the individual's demoted or no?

P5: Unprepared to be there. You know how colleges think we had a person who applied for a program who'd never been an instructor, never been educated, but he had a master's degree. So obviously he was the better of the other four choices, and turned out they were wrong. But once you get a position at the college, you don't just push you out. They just demoted you and put someone else in. So that was really the situation. That person is still there today, he firmly admits that he was not prepared to be a program director and doesn't want to be one now. I think he learned his lesson.

Interviewer: So how long have you worked in EMS?

P5: When [name redacted] and [name redacted] were still rookies. Maybe not quite that long. As I went through EMT school in 1979. So they'd been around 9 years.

Interviewer: What other roles within the industry have you performed?

P5: Been a field paramedic on emergency ambulance. I've been a flight paramedic. I've done continuing education training for non EMS related entities. I've gotten to spend a little bit of time in the Middle East doing some training with [organization] as programs in [country]. Training, with the [Middle East country] Air Force, done a lot of volunteer work with professional organizations in EMS and continue to do that as well. It's been a good, valuable saying to spend time in my life!

Interviewer: That's impressive, you said you're still volunteering for different organizations, can you? Elaborate on that just a little bit.

P5: I volunteer. Obviously, I am on the board of directors for the Accreditation body 1. That's volunteer. I volunteer with the National organization 1 who actually sponsors me to be on the Accreditation body 1 board. I volunteer with the Texas Association #1, and kind of because I was its founder. So I have to keep going. I do the volunteer behind the scenes we're putting on our educators summit, and you know, if somebody needs something, I tend to volunteer, for I spend a little bit of time volunteering, and it keeps me medically capable volunteering with a group called [organization]. Taking veterans to see memorials in Washington, DC. Awesome.

Interviewer: So what best describes the sponsor top of your organization post secondary, including community college in 4 years, hospital consortium fire based, ambulance based, or some others.

P5: Yes, with the college we are a post secondary institution.

Interviewer: Perfect. How many paramedics students graduate your program annually?

P5: It varies, and it's been increasing. I think the last class we had 16. I've got 22 in the Paramedic class right now.

Interviewer: Gotcha, do you still perform the teaching role within your organization?

P5: Yes, 100% more. Yes.

Interviewer: So, what would you say the percentage of the time that you contribute to instruction is versus your administrative duties?

P5: I spend four, 8 hour days in the classroom teaching. I spend one, 8 hour day doing administrative roles. So, because we're kind of short-handed a little bit on teaching more than I should. I should be in the perfect world. Teaching 15 hours a week and administrative the other 25 hours.

Interviewer: So outside of your teaching and administrative duties, what other tasks make up the bulk of your responsibilities you perform?

P5: Say that again. So.

Interviewer: Or is that so out of outside of the teaching in your administrative duties, as there any other responsibilities that you perform that consume a significant amount of time?

P5: Not on this campus and I'm not sure I wouldn't be doing more if I wasn't teaching as much you know, other than the standard meetings that all faculty have to go to. I serve on one committee, which is a standard for all of the college faculty. We have to be on a committee. I chose one that did the least amount of work. But yeah, for the most part, that's it, you know, in those administrative things that I could change minute by minute. Do I have to work on schedules? Do I have to just grade test? So I have to write tests that's always variable. And how much of that is actually directly program director, we're a small college. So I don't spend an awful lot of time with that. When I had a bigger college, I was definitely spending a lot more time in the administrative duties, because I had more to do and I think that varies from school to school. At least from what I have seen.

Interviewer: So are you responsible for the user simulations in the pro in your program?

P5: If they're gonna be used, I'm responsible for it. Yes.

Interviewer: So you put in the scenario and all the back work?

P5: Correct. And I was fortunate. I brought some of those scenarios with me when I came. We don't have a high level of simulation, like most people think of a simulation centers. We do scenarios with simulation. Capabilities. It's not massively high fidelity.

Interviewer: How much time would you say you commit to the simulation and prework, and all the stuff that goes into it?

P5: Probably about 2 hours a week, just in prep. Getting things ready for my adjuncts to actually do that work. We have part time instructors who will do most of the scenarios, so I kind of set them up with their schedule and what they're gonna do that day, and I would love to have more time available to do it to make it a little more intense. And once I get a little more settled here, I probably will be. But simulation is one of those things you really need a specialist to do, and I have my and one other full time faculty member. I'm definitely not a specialist when it comes to that.

Interviewer: I agree? How many, how many hours a week are needed to perform your job duties? Would you say less than 30, 40 to 50, or greater than 50?

P5: I get them done in 40, mostly because I've done this before, and I can do it in 40. I actually could probably if I wasn't on overloads because of having to cover another area that we kind of had an opening in relatively conservatively, could say I could get the majority of job done in 30 hours a week and then have time to work on special platforms that's really the only thing I'm missing now is I don't need the special projects that I wanted to.

Interviewer: Of the administrative duties that are assigned to you, which takes up the most amount of time.

P5: Reports, the mostly because every time I think I know what they want, they change what they want. So you can't just use last year's and modify it. Make it better. You have to kind of review it, and in some ways I guess that's probably better in the long run. But it does take probably the majority amount of time, and I've I don't know that I would actually say it takes the majority amount of time. It gets the most confusion and frustration. This is not enjoyable you know the things that are good. I don't mind doing, and I don't really see him as taking time. So that's the downside. I guess that I would say is it just seems like I spend an awful lot of time doing things. Maybe aren't as important to me as they are. Others.

Interviewer: Gotcha, and when you say reports can be a little bit more collaborative.

P5: The State reports that we do for number of graduates. Are they employed? Budget work. Really just kind of all the deep college administration. I don't know. Maybe we should not call them all reports, but all the things that have to be done to put the catalog together, to put the classes on the schedule to you know what the State know how we're doing those are the really the things that take up the most amount of I would call it disruptive time, because your normal flow of I write this test, I grade this test, I prepare for this lesson, I meet with these students all of

a sudden. Here's this thing that I have to do, because some college administrator forgot it's due Friday, and it's Thursday afternoon.

Interviewer: How many full-time educators or faculty members, including yourself, are employed with your organization.

P5: I have two of us, so I am one of two.

Interviewer: And you said, correct me if I'm wrong, you have a position open that you're kind of filling in or.

P5: No, we had an opening. The person who filled the position was doing a part-time job with us. Her part time responsibilities were actually a full teaching load. So we kept her doing what she was doing. She just did it full time rather than part-time, so, in addition to our teaching load, share has other administrative things with the school, but that left us with another hole that I'm hoping adjuncts will pick up and fix. Kinda like this young lady did. But we haven't found that yet. Lot of talk that they want to. Not a lot of action, that they're going to.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So do you feel like that? Number is adequate.

P5: How do you answer this fairly? We're getting the job done for the amount of students we have. It's not, and you know, remember, you know, colleges like I do. There's a magic formula for loads and the way this college has been built. The loads are not equal throughout the semester. So there's one semester we definitely need them. And there's one semester we don't and another where we are ok. So we definitely could benefit from this other person. If we had that other person, we would be able to grow a little bit better and I think that's the downside. And again, kind of the way colleges think. They think you should grow, and then, rather than hey, let's plant a seed, and then maybe it'll grow. So we're not an agricultural college. We don't think about planning seeds.

Interviewer: Does your organization provide administrative assistance to help reduce the workload?

P5: Some would say it takes 15% of the load off, but not a heavy amount. We're doing more of this at this college that I wasn't at other colleges. Were doing our own registrations, own advising. Our administrative assistance, answer the phone, and then forward it to me rather than answering questions themselves. And some ways, again, we're a smaller school that I was used to at the other places, and it's working. And it's okay. But if we grow much more, it's gonna be a problem.

Interviewer: Is that administrative assistant as are just shared across the division? Is that the same with y'all?

P5: Yep here. That's yeah.

Interviewer: How many the part or programs share your administrative assistant?

P5: Oh, that's a good question, I would guess at least eight. I think there's eight different programs. We've got sonography, radiology, radiography, CT, surg. tech. We're close to close to eight.

Interviewer: So it'd be hard for that one individual to have all the answers for each individual program.

P5: Correct. Yeah.

Interviewer: I know you're brand new at this organization, but would you describe yourself as very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with your current role?

P5: I'm satisfied with it. And keep in mind. I have a different perspective than someone else. I think someone who came in here, brand new might have a different opinion, because they don't see the things I knew. I mean all these reports and things I knew were coming, somebody new may not know that. And I think so. I see it kind of from a different angle, than a new person would.

Interviewer: So what are some of the main reasons for your current level satisfaction?

P5: In reality, I just know the outcomes I know in the long run. It's all about meeting student needs and trying to reach those needs. And I've been here long enough now, you know, if you'd asked me this 4 months ago, I probably wouldn't give any a different answer. I'm down to the point at this newer organization that the students are starting to kind of buy into things. They're starting to see a light at the end of the tunnel. The paramedic students have figured out their 7 weeks away from being paramedics. And they're starting to think like paramedics. And to me those are the satisfying things. The rest of the stuff are all the building blocks you use to get there, and I understand that. And I know you go through those hardships to have that nice successful outcome. And to me. That's what it's all about.

Interviewer: Excellent. So the next questions have you search for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job within the last year?

P5: Yup, I did, and got one. Yeah. It actually, I didn't really search for it. Was an opportunity that came up, and someone asked me about it. And I said, You know, it's time for a change I've been in [specific region of] Texas for a long time. The program I was at I would have stayed at for a long time, had no dissatisfaction with them, but this came up. It was a chance, and the person who relieved me there was headstrong to do it has done a wonderful job. So it was a good opportunity for me to move.

Interviewer: This out curiosity. Was there anything that was more attractive than I mean? What would what would you say the main reason we're for going from [specific region of] Texas down again to your current organization would have been.

P5: Oh, there's a beach which I have not seen, because I've been so busy. But you know the opportunity to come down here and work with some different people, and just kind of see a different world. I was very, I guess a good term, for it would be inbred. I knew Texas City 3. I grew up, didn't grow up in former. My EMS career grew up in Texas City 3. I knew the EMS syst EMS. I knew the chiefs when they were in diapers. I was very comfortable with that. It was a good opportunity to change a few things and see what a different part of the world is like, and that's been interesting. This is not Texas City 3. The work doesn't have a beach, so there's some good things about being here. There's some challenges to. No, I knew that when I took on the role.

Interviewer: Do you see yourself in that same role in 3 years from now?

P5: No!

Interviewer: Where do you see yourself?

P5: 3 years from now I'll be 65 or over, and that's my magic out. That's it's time for me to retire and go find something else to do.

Interviewer: Question 1A. Does your supervisor understand what's important to you as an employee?

P5: I believe so. Yes!

Interviewer: How do they show that understanding, or that what's important to you?

P5: Right now and again in 8 months. I haven't really faced a lot of challenges to find a lack of support. But the ability for me to come here and keep in mind you know I came here a little different than some people. When I came, I was already on national committees, so I already had things I did with the State. I had all these things on my bucket list and on my agenda, and I said, I wanna keep that up. And they have said absolutely no problems. So I'm not fighting to build a reputation with the support of my administration. My administration has given me that support from the start, and continue to embrace it with really with no concerns or questions asked. You know I can't really ask for more than that.

Interviewer: So question 1B- how do potential advancement opportunities influence your loyalty to your organization?

P5: Again. I'm a unique thing, as I'm getting to the point, I'm looking at my advancement as into retiring. So, I'm not worried about that.

Interviewer: Perfect. So. Question. 2A- How important to you or new activities. I expand your skills in meeting your job expectation.

Well, yeah, even though I'm not necessarily gonna be the long-term guy, I'm looking for new things. I want to set the program, anyone who follows me in my position, I wanna set up so any

future educators here for success. So if there's opportunities that come along that will improve what we deliver and how we deliver it. I'm very eager to do those new training.

Interviewer: Question 2B, how likely are you to stay with an organization? If you enjoy its role in its benefits. But you're not provided with the opportunity for advancement? We kind of hit on that with you being so close to retiring.

P5: And you know I can go back in time and tell you that those weren't necessarily my biggest concerns. My advancement and I've made a lot of conscious decisions over the years not to try to go off to be the dean.

I didn't want to be a director of a department. I wanted to run EMS. That's my passion. I want to improve EMS in this state and in this country, and I've had the opportunities to get involved to do those things, working with very good people, and that's kind of where my passion is. So the fact that someone says, You know, if you work here a few more years you'll be that's not my drive. If you work here a few more years we'll let you go to more meetings, and we'll let you get more involved in the national politics. That's my drive, and that may be a little different from some people who are career minded, that is how far up the ladder they go. I'm more, What kind of difference and impact can we make within the industry that I choose?

Interviewer: So question 3A- Does your supervisor give you feedback on your work?

P5: Yes.

Interviewer: How often, in what format?

P5: Currently they're written evaluations that are delivered face to face. And I just did my first one apparently we do that annually. The infrequent, or, I guess, informal evaluations that occur on regular basis just in conversation have been positive as well.

Interviewer: Perfect. Are you afforded the opportunity to provide feedback to your supervisor?

P5: Yes.

Interviewer: How accepted is it readily accepted? Is it?

P5: So far very well accepted. You know I'm not telling them the need to change everything about the program yet. Might becoming, but they've been willing to accept the fact that you know this new kid who came in isn't a kid and isn't new, and they listen. If I was the new kid. 25 years old and still went behind the years. But just got my bachelor's last week. I might have a little bit different opinion on that. But the last 2 schools I've been at have been very positive. What kind of things that they see me seeing in the program and moving to make adjustments.

Interviewer: Question 4A- is the job and work what your that you're doing, what you expected.

P5: Not as much as I'd like to say, yes. I'm finding more challenges in this area than I thought I would. But that just means there's more of a challenge to the work through.

Interviewer: And can you explain or expand on some of those challenges?

P5: Just dealing with the outside local EMS community is not what I'm used to. You know I'm used to being in Texas City 3. I make a phone call and I can get a ladder truck delivered to my office in 5 minutes if I need it. I can't get people around here to answer the phone. I'm just a new kid at the college. They don't seem to have an invested interest in me, and that's not as much fun as it used to be. I'm gonna win.

Interviewer: So the initial question, when you assume the role of paramedic program director, did you have a mentor to help navigate the organizational challenges and those challenges associated with both state national requirements and the first part will be just with the new that Texas Community College #1 organization?

P5: So with Texas Community College #1. I really haven't had a mentor in EMS. Here I have had for understanding [Texas city] and this college. Several of the faculty members, and my director have stepped up very well to help me understand the culture here within the college. I've had a couple of my adjunct instructors have helped me understand the culture of the local EMS community. So I've had the help that I've needed. It's it. Yeah, I'm still relatively new. And still kind of trying to fit in the new guy in a new area. But, I can't say that I would just completely 100% thrown to the wolves with no assistance.

Interviewer: Now the second part of that, if you can think way back when when you first assumed the director role for the first time, did you have that same individual or individuals that provided that mentorship?

P5: I did. I was very fortunate. The dean, I had at the time, and we didn't call him dean's then, but that's essentially the role was very big on accreditation. He believed in the EMS program, and I have no idea why because he had no reason to. But he was phenomenal. My director, who is directly under him. So between the 2 of us was also very helpful in the understanding the college role. What was different, what I needed to do, and both of them encouraged me to get out and start leaving the college to really kind of get involved in the local and the state EMS organizations.

So they were very good at that, and through that I found other good mentors. Really that kind of showed me that Texas is not as big as we think. It is, and it's not as disjointed as we thinking so, I'm in Texas City 3, I had help right across the county line and was a phone call away and always happy to help. Again a phone call away and happy to help, and when I went through accreditation I called both of them. They sent me their self studies, and says, Here's how you do it. Let me know if you need to help and I've always been very grateful for that, and kind of think that's a role that you have to give back. How do you help other people and I was fortunate in that, and I'm hoping that we can make others fortunate in that, too, if they just ask. I think that's the biggest problem that EMS has.



Interviewer: I agree. So let me ask you this, at the national level, I mean it'd be a little bit harder. I think at State level would be pretty doable as far as forming some type of mentorship, to help navigate new individuals' on who to contact. Would you say that'd be an accurate statement?

P5: I think so, because people don't know that it's actually still out there. The National organization 1 is a good resource. I don't think it's as active now, but when we first went through the accreditation process, where everybody had to get accredited. That was when the President, had organized a mentorship program that you could call someone happen to be me and I would set you with the mentor somewhere in the country, and forged some really good relationships. I know some of those people are still close today, even though they're five states away. So those that help is there.

And what I find sad and I think it's unfortunately true here in the Texas City 4 area the programs don't get along as well as we should. In [specific region of] Texas, we all knew each other we went to dinner together every once in a while. There was nothing happening in the schools, but the rest of didn't already know that now, if one was struggling, the other schools all knew about it, and we helped them rather than try to kill them, so that we'd get their students.

You know. EMS, education is like 7 11 shop. You don't pass one to get to another. You know, Slurpees are only so important, and I think the same thing with most EMS education. People don't cross county lines. They're just so many willing to drive so far to get educated, especially when they're department sponsor. So working together is really something that's but it's very nature, something that's very helpful. Most of us will do it without batting an eye, and you know, for free we'll give up people's time to do it. It's just a matter of remembering that those people are out there and giving them a call, and I do at least once a month, if not twice a month. Get a phone call from someone somewhere in the country. Just wanting help, and I'm always willing to help, and that's probably why people know to call me. But I'll also set them up with people a bit closer. So, you know, if you were, they're in in [Texas city] and needed some help. I'd probably call someone I knew in [Texas city] who might be able to help you. Could she be a little closer and get together and talk to them. It's all matter. Just get the job done. I think mentorship is something we do need to promote more. You're absolutely right. That's something that's very beneficial. But people know that we can all do this.

Interviewer: So what are the main satisfiers and dissatisfiers of your job, and I know you're brand new. You could think regional or right now, or more, of a global perspective over the course of your career as well.

P5: The main satisfying things are always the students. That's the thing. It's the outcome. What I want to do is put out a student who's happy to be a paramedic, happy to take care of patients we'll take care of them, regardless of who they are to me. Those are really the big things, and it also is the dissatisfying thing. When I have students that they don't want to listen to me because I'm working the field anymore. And I'm getting old and I don't understand their world. They just don't think I've ever been there. Those are really the dissatisfying things. But in the end, you know, if you get five good students coming out of the class, that's very satisfying. I think that's why I continued to do it is to see what we can do to mentor those students, especially ones that

say I might want to be an educator one day, cause now we're just passing that torch along to good people. That's to me what it's all about. I know other people look at it differently.

Interviewer: Perfect. So question 5A- Are you satisfied with the pay receiving relation to the type and amount of work that you do?

P5: No, and yes. To me. I would love to make \$150,000 a year. Who wouldn't? I haven't done relatively well in this industry.

I'm not the richest guy. I don't have a yacht, don't even have a boat don't have a pool anymore. But what I have gotten out of it has had its rewards and other ways. You know this industry has paid for me to travel the country and parts of the world because of what this industry has done for me, and they pretty much pay for that. So I would love it if I made a whole lot of money. But I'm satisfied with what I'm being paid. I'm also not raising five kids at home, you know, with a wife that doesn't work.

Unfortunately works on. Unfortunately, on how you put that to not have to worry about those things.

But I think those are the challenges for a lot of other people as colleges, don't, so it's a nice way to put this, because my doors open, colleges don't pay crap. I find that a very interesting thing. We've got two programs on either side of me in the offices right now. Both got open positions, actually, with one just the other has an opens. This, I said. You know. Why can't you fill this position after 2 years? They said in that industry they could be making twice what we pay as well. There's a simple solution to that. But colleges won't, hey? They look at things of what you're an English teacher. Everything's based on what an English teacher makes you know our schedules, the way our computer stuff is all built. Everything is based on English classes. We are considered. Have a hard time getting biology fit in those schedules. So that mindset isn't quite there again. That's what I knew coming into this business. And I accept it because it still gets done when I set out to do it.

Interviewer: Perfect. So question 5B- What do you think of the pay you receive in relation to the cost of living in the city in which you live?

P5: Well, I live in a city that's very poor, so I think it's low. I think that's yeah. Colleges don't pay crap. They need to change a fee structure when it comes to the thing, and I don't wanna make a sound like the college doesn't try. They do give Allied health instructors, nursing instructors, and a few other instructors kind of a little bonus on top of what they would pay other instructors. Yes, it's nice. I appreciate it. It's not enough to really make out for the differences we can make if we worked in the industry.

Interviewer: So question 6A- Are you provided with the tools, resources, and training to help you develop in your career?

P5: I am. Again, if I was a newer guy, I don't know that would be as obvious, but I would say, because I've known the two people who are here that place before. They? Yes, if you take advantage of them, they're here. There you have to fight for them. You have to find them, but they're there.

Interviewer: Perfect. So this is kinda off the topic. But just more of my curiosity than anything. Do you use a platform to help document skills, scenarios, clinical and that kind of thing?

P5: Not well we do have. We're using Documenting Platform #2 for clinicals. Use a little bit for the skills. The students find those things so cumbersome that it is not good thing. I'm trying to develop little bit easier to use platforms that I have at some other schools, and just having to readjust them here, just taking a little bit of time. Somebody. I don't know if you knew some doctor who was really into stuff like that that wanted to build some kind of platform through a little easier to use. We are, what's a nice one for, We're goofy in WMS. We like to have one stop shop. We'd like to get a textbook that comes with it. If you buy Documenting Platform #2, you want to do your business. If you want it to do everything, and Documenting Platform #1 has never been good a lot of it, and I think if we had just a skills tracker that wouldn't do the other things we'd be in better shape Cause I think there needs to be a better way to track the skills than to have to write a patient report every time you leave a lab. And that's become a burden on students. So I don't use what we have, much as I guess I do use as much as I want to cause. I don't, but I don't have what I want to use in general.

Interviewer: So would your other faculty and adjunct faculty describe it as just as cumbersome for them to use it like the students?

P5: Well concerning our fact, that we are the ones that don't.

Yes, it's hard for. Yeah. We have adjunct faculty, and actually, we don't even call them. They're part time. They come in, they teach lab, and they go home. Giving them additional paperwork, documentation to justify obviously is not necessarily what they want to do. And right now we're having a hard time getting enough of them here to teach labs. Much less give them more work to do that they don't like. So I think that's part of thing that's very cumbersome, having something that's very simple, isn't there?

We were developing when I left the other organizations, a little barcode scanners, zip guns. And they could just easily zap the skill sheet that the student had. And then zap it into a system. Say, I approved this. I saw this, so they don't have to sign it. They just zip the same. And it signed it for, and in the end. Now the students have got a better tally of the skills that they had completed. We had to by seven different USB. Driver. Little coders that we had to get. So everybody could have one when we were doing skills. It's just a process of getting the equipment and setting it all up and getting people used to it.

Simplicity is the key, and it's simplicity, simplicity on the side of the user, which means the person who develops it has to work their tail off. People want the simplicity on the development side, and they don't realize that it makes it much harder on personal.

Interviewer: Sure. So you said Simplicity's key, and I completely agree. Do you feel like some of that complications tied back to Appendix G or accreditation requirements. You think that that could be simplified we're instead of making sure that every t's crossed and i dotted, that we could look more globally at the end outcome, especially in like your more formative type scenarios and

not so much at that and then really hit the summit of once hardened document, those more holistically, if you will.

P5: And I think you're absolutely right. Then, as much as I'd like to support everything Accreditation body 1 Does, the appendix G numbers actually came from the National credentialling Exam. That was part of that paramedic psychomotor portfolio. We were gonna get rid of psychomotor. We had to have a way of tracking it. And they actually admitted to me they came up with that in the bar, and this makes sense. So all the stuff with what we would refer to as a appendix G is not appendix g. Which now the student manual conferences so new ones that took effect. January one, massively simpler to use than what we had before. It's a matter of just simply tracking numbers. A few of them on the clinical side versus a lab sign for the most part it's just tracking numbers, and I think that's massive improvement.

When the appendix G was first literally given to the Accreditation body 1 and said here's what we have to do, it took 3 years trying to develop the algorithm to actually start tracking it. It was a nightmare, very grandiose in thought, very difficult to implement, and it was actually even difficult to track. So the simplicity fell out on every single area, whereas I think the new way is going to make it all lot different or lot simpler. We haven't seen it in actual practice yet. People are starting to but very few places have actually seen an end result that one couple have. I used it as soon as it came live. I adopted it, and we use it. Seeing other people, try to use it. I think it's gonna be the real measure of how well it is, but it seems to be much simpler and easier. So tracking what we have. That was a beast, and we'll just leave it. And it was a beast.

Interviewer: Are the oh question. 6B- Are the promotional practices in your organization fair in transparent?

P5: They seem to be very transparent, very open. There's a process that you go through to get your change in rank and tenure and move on up the chain. That part is very clear.

Interviewer: So, question 7A- Is there flexibility and autonomy in your work? And how do you feel about it?

P5: You know I don't know that I've thought about the flexibility. I can tell you I've been more flexible. My first college we had classes start at 8 o'clock in the morning. We had classes that ended at 10 o'clock at night. There were times up to the 10 o'clock at night. There were times I was teaching during the day. They were times I was teaching at night the flexibility worked with the other faculty members. We picked which classes we wanted to do, and it was very flexible. There were times I didn't get to the office, so 11 in the morning, there were times I got to the home before 4 in afternoon. Here. I'm here 5 o'clock. Oh, sorry 8 in the morning. I'll leave the 5 o'clock, so that flexibility isn't there. But I only teach daytime classes now. So there's by saying, Stay until 8, or coming in late and working late. Why are you working after 5? So that flexibility isn't there. The flexibility to be able to do what I want within the classes is still I still have the flexibility to teach the way. I want to. You know the schedules a little more rigid. Compared to most people who work 8 to 5. It's an 8-5 job.

Interviewer: Perfect. Question. 7B- Are you able to do the work that's assigned to you? So do you have the tools, skills, etc., to get the job done.

P5: Yes, sir. Yes, we've we have the support to do that. I found some nice little treasures here. There's wonderful people in admissions who help us with those issues. There's people in the quality improvement offices that help us with those things. We don't have that as a lack at this school, so I can't say anything bad about that.

Interviewer: Perfect? Is there anything that you see that would potentially be a benefit? That you don't have at the moment that you'd like to see potentially in the future.

P5: I would like to have more academic advising that helps with the registration of students. That's the one thing that I feel bad about. If I'm teaching 4 days a week and I'm getting emails from potential students like, kind of get passed by the wayside, and I think we're losing students because of that. So I think that's really the one thing that is kind of missing is that we should have somebody who helps us with that background role better.

Interviewer: So how would you again? I'm gonna ask this a little bit different. So your work life balance now, how would you describe it?

P5: Oh, it's terrible! I get up the morning I come to work I go home. I'm tired I eat something. I watch wheel of fortune. I go to bed. I keep thinking of my grandparents every time I go home, because that's what they did, you know. I'm new to this community. I don't have neighbors and friends that I hang out with on a regular basis. My family and friends are still away. I go home every three weeks to go see them, so it's a little different than that I would like it to be. I don't know that I would say that's that is the big problem. My work, life balances that I'm new to a community, and I don't have a lot of things to do outside of being at work.

I think I was pretty good at that when I wasn't in this situation. When I was in Texas City 3 I felt I had a very good work-life balance. When I was at Texas Community College #2 I had to drive an hour to work, and an hour drive home, so I lost 2 hours of work-life balance, but overall my weekends were mine. My evenings were still mine. I think it's still worked out, and I think that I'm finding the routines that it's it's working out.

Interviewer: So how would you describe your work-life balance when you first assumed the role way back when, when you first stepped into that paramedic program director, would you say it's similar or vastly different, or.

P5: I don't know the comparison is there to say whether it's similar or different. We had a program that was relatively well established. It just needed a few tweaks. The guy who was running it wasn't doing a bad job, he didn't run into the ground. He just didn't really know what he was doing. It worked out relatively well. I still have plenty of time to spend with my daughter, with my other activities, so I would actually work with two full-time jobs at the time, and was able to balance those with my family. Here, I'm in a new community again, the people that you would just kinda go, hey, let's go do something to have that off life balance part, not the work balance, really. Aren't there? But I also don't go home and spend all my time working on projects

for this school. So I go home, get bored, go to bed, it isn't that I go home and work on projects here until midnight, and then go I think that it's kind of unfair to say that it's the work that's causing the changes it's the new community. It's getting to know people and finding the things to do, which, little by little, it will improve.

Interviewer: Question 8 A. Is your work appreciated by your supervisor?

P5: Yes, because he does want to have to do it himself.

Interviewer: How are you recognized for a job well done?

P5: Well, I still have a job. So here, you know, I get I've been here 8 months. At past jobs the Vice president of the college actually helped me with graduations because he wanted to help out, and he was just a really nice guy. I felt like the Dean was always the and gracious, even though there were no full formal awards. I was actually educator of the year. One year on the Chancellor's list of excellence another year. So I've had those awards. That's not exactly what I was working toward. But that was nice to be recognized, made my mother very proud.

Interviewer: Question 9A- Do You have the opportunities for professional and career development? And if so please explain.

P5: Yes, I do again. I don't know that a new guy coming in would be given the same things, but the fact that I've already kind of established some of those relationships and have those opportunities to do things. They've been very good about letting me keep those up. I have a suspicion, so this is pure conjecture from this school that they would want to develop other people as well, and I'm gonna say that because I've known the other people that were in this position before me. And I feel like they gave them those opportunities, and the person that we hired beginning of this semester, they are wanting her to go and get other developmental opportunities as well. So I think that's something that they do support.

Interviewer: Perfect. So I know they answer this question. You said you're getting close to retirement, so I'm assuming that additional college degrees or advancement your education is probably not something that you're looking into.

P5: No, there will be a doctor [name redacted]'s a few years, but I'm hoping it's my daughter. I want her to go back to school and get her doctorate in psychology, because she actually wants that. And I would support that 100%. I got my masters degree when I was 52 years old. I did the math. If I got a doctorate school is gonna pay me \$600 a year more, and I have to work 25 years just to pay it off. If I was a younger guy and I do promote it to younger guys to get your degree now, and keep working on it so that you can make something of your career. I was dumber when I first got into this business. It was kind of a flute didn't get my education right away. But then, when I did get it, I realized this was a good thing. I think different now, I can pretty much talk to somebody and listen to them to find out what kind of level degree they have. Not always right, but I'm usually pretty close.

It's amazing how those degrees do make a difference, even. You know people who don't think it because I'm a paramedic, I'm good enough. It shows so I do promote those things very well to younger people. I want to be often, get those degrees and improve our industry, and actually improve that. But it's not in my future. I would have loved to have done it 20 years ago. I'm good with where I'm at.

Interviewer: So that individuals that you just brought on that you said that the college would look at developing her or them. How, if they wanted to go back to college, how supportive would that college be of that?

P5: She is going back to college. She has her associate degree, is working on a bachelor's degree, and we're already talking to her master's degrees and potentially doctorate. So, yeah, very!

Interviewer: So, Question 10A- Are you satisfied in the responsibilities and challenges offered by your work, in your organization.

P5: Let's see, I don't know if I'm gonna satisfy with the challenges. I'm almost tired of them. But yes, I think that may be one of the things that maybe the most frustrating is, I've already built one paramedic program with a really good reputation and good outcomes and worked as a team and we did it. And now I find myself in a few years away from retirement, trying to do it again. And I kind of feel like. Was it James Taylor or Zachory Taylor? The President had a kid at 75. I wanna it's not time for me to birth another baby.

Interviewer: Question 11A- Does your work give you a sense of accomplishment?

P5: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: What would you say? What would you say? That main sense of accomplishment would be?

P5: Seeing the students go out and make something of themselves. That's what it's all about. Last weekend. I don't know if you knew the medical director we had Texas City 3 for a long time, he passed and I had to speak in his memorial. That was hard. But seeing all of the people that are standing up there talking. Yeah, I'm looking at the people who came up to talk to they're all chiefs and assistant chiefs, and you know battalion chiefs, and they were all in diapers when they went through paramedics. So you know, watching these guys come through school makes themselves become very good paramedics, and you know, be in this position. That's a great thing. John Wayne said in the movie the cowboys that you always want your kids to grow up to be better than you are, and that's the sense right there, that's what it's all about.

Interviewer: That's awesome. So how likely are you to stay with an organization if it is not meeting your job expectations?

P5: That's a hard question to ask, because I'm tenacious and mean. I'm the kind of person will continue to change the organization rather than just leave it. It was kind of my demise at Texas City 3, because I kept telling the dean, who was new and had no idea. I went through a period

where the administration was supportive. I could do no wrong, and within 2 years we changed every administrative position above me at least twice, and now I could do nothing right, and rather than just leave, I kept trying to change things, and that didn't work very well. But for the most part, you know, I will slowly take my time to kinda change some things. You been around me at the state level things. I will just continue to keep pushing until we get we're gonna keep making a difference. I'm willing to fight the long fight if I have to. Because I think that's what gets us what we need to do in our industry. I realize that's not for everyone. I did tell the President this college, he said, Yeah, how long are you gonna be here? And I told us if you got somebody who wants to be here 10 or 15 years hire them. Wouldn't bother me because I've got 3 to 5 years or 3 bad days. Yeah. He hired me anyway.

Interviewer: So how important are your relationships with your work colleagues?

P5: To me, it's very important these are team members. I realize I'm the guy program director. You have a title. You have a role. You have that I have to be able to do something but I'm not gonna do it as a dictator. I'm gonna do it as a partner. And to me the relationships I have with our administrative teaching assistants have a say, my other full-time factor has to say, our adjuncts have a say, my students in some ways. Have a we're going to do this as a team. There will be times that I have to make a final decision, because that's a position I'm in, and I will. And it won't always be the popular. But the relationship with my co-workers is essential to the success of this program. It's the way to go.

Interviewer: So. Question 12A- How do you expect your supervisor to demonstrate that they generally genuinely valued contributions?

P5: You know. Just a simple thank you is enough for me. Just tell me, thank you for what you're doing. And when I say I wanna try something new support it, I think that's the best we can get. Anything else is just reaching from the stars.

Interviewer: Question. 12B- What support do you expect? Your supervisor to provide in order for you to achieve the next level in your career? And with that being retirement. I don't know how you answer that.

P5: You know what that's really the hardest question. When I interviewed for this position the president of the campus asked me what I thought the biggest change in the administration would be, and I said, I think we need to stop thinking about the students start thinking about the faculty. And he said, well, you know we don't do that with here with regular or other faculty members here. I said, Yeah, I know, especially for this position. We gotta find the next guy who wants to be the program director. You know. I'm telling you right now. I'm not gonna be your long-term guy. So, who is? And I think that's the thing they have to support.

Who's the next guy we have to plant seeds, grow them in house, so that, you know we have a nice, really perspective on who's gonna be the next person running your program. If you don't, you start over every time you hire a new person, and I think that's the biggest challenge we do not do enough instructors development in our industry and in educational programs in general. So how do we do that? That's when I said I left the last college it was in a good shape, because I



had a person who absolutely wanted to do that, and she's been a phenomenon. She since she got there she has completed her accreditation self-study, and she did it in 2 months. Most people take 6 and then say they needed more. They sent the self study or the annual report out, she had it done in a week. Just a phenomenal individual that wanted to do it, and then listen to everything I said that the program director is. Where do we find more like her? Those are the challenges. And I think that's what the support we need from administration is to find those people.

Interviewer: I couldn't agree more. So last set of questions, you hit on your supervisor provides performance appraisals annually, and then informally on a fairly regular basis.

P5: Yes.

Interviewer: So before we get to the last question in with the perspective from various areas of various different organizations, what advice would you give to a brand new program director who's coming into that director role to help navigate some national issues, state issues, or even potentially local issues? Or do you have any common pitfalls you've seen, or any best practices that you would provide?

P5: Oh, good grief! You opened up a really big door there.

Interviewer: Yeah, it's a. It's a big of a loaded question. I think.

P5: Oh, it is so! Let's start with simple for a new program director coming in, and I tell this to people quite often, but do not do this alone. There are people in your community, there are people in your state, there are people in this country who will help you; make phone calls. They're not gonna do the work for you, but they'll show you how to do it, and they'll tell you how to do it in a way that is a little easier. And they'll tell you all the mistakes they made, so you don't have them. Don't do it alone. Get help.

Number 2, and it's a little bit comical, but I think it's still appropriate. Oh, friend, that sits on the committee with me, who use the term. Semper Gumby. Always be flexible. We're always gonna be making changes to what we do. And we have to be prepared for those things. I think those are the 2 biggest things to just remember is be flexible, get help, and after that it's learn your trade. You spend a lot of time trying to become a good paramedic, now spend a lot of time trying to become a good instructor and a good director. There, they're different talents, and they take different skill sets, and one of the worst things you can do is an educators think that 10 years in the field means you can teach it. It only means you can teach the part, you know. What about part don't you know, and those are the new learning that shouldn't be new. But it is that they have to do.

Interviewer: Excellent. Are there any other local, state or national factors that may impact your decision to stay or vacate your current role as a program director, that we haven't discussed that you'd like to voice?

P5: Well, the stock market drops much more. I'm gonna be staying here forever. You know not directly that I would say, are the big impacts. You know there's nothing's gonna say, you know,

there's a new scope of practice that going to make me go away or make me stay. Those are the thing that's part of the being flexible. You go with what the world has provided you. That's our mission. There are a lot of things, I think, coming to our industry that are kind of exciting.

Whether you brace them or not. Decide you wanna be against them. You know the the pros and cons of everything are always interesting. I always get a kick out of what the latest controversy is, and how many people actually understand it, and the number of people who will fight against it, even if they don't understand. It's those things I don't know been interesting to me since I first started going to Austin for state meetings back in the '90s. People will talk about anything they don't understand. The more they don't understand, the more they talk. Overall. Yeah, nothing's gonna affect my way of doing things. But then I look at things different than some other.

## Appendix J: Interview 6 Transcript

Interviewer: Cool so again. Thank you for taking the time out of your morning to sit down talk with me. Just for the record, you understand that this is completely evolving, and that you reserve the right to withdraw at any point as well as skip any questions that you don't feel comfortable answering.

P6: Yes, sir.

Interviewer: Do you consent to be recorded both visually and audiology?

P6: Yes, sir.

Interviewer: Perfect, so how long have you been in your current? What is your current job? And how long have you been in this role?

P6: I am the program director, and I have been here. Let's see, I was brought on as an instructor. Well, now, take that back as bronze as a coordinator in December of 2018, and then became the program director. Sometime in late 2019.

Interviewer: Perfect. So what made you decide to become a paramedic program director?

P6: It started as an instructor, and I kind of backed in. If my first school, I'm actually originally from Florida and so I don't have the Texas accent and my family's from Ohio before that in Pennsylvania. So I got the Midwest, but I kind of backed into my position first. My graduated college in 2008. I was gonna be a microbiologist, and that's where I got my bachelors in. And I was, gonna you know, cure cancer and do infectious diseases. And it was going to be awesome. And then the entire economy went to hell in 2,008, and nobody wanted to hire microbiologists.

So I have three generations of paramedics and firefighters in the family, so I went to Mt. School and got a job, and just kind of stayed, and then eventually it got to the point where they said, you know, we need instructors. You need to have a bachelor's degree and say, Hey, I got one. Let's go, and I'm if you would have asked me in high school, or even in college, if I would have been a teacher, I would have laughed at you. It was no but I, and then the old program director at my first school quit, and they said they needed somebody, and I did it, and just again I just kind of stayed. So this. It's I always liked problem solving. And there's a lot of problems always.

Interviewer: Were you a program director somewhere else before this role.

P6: Yeah, and school in Florida.

Interviewer: I got you. How long are were in that position?

P6: I was. It was right. About a year. It was a private school. They actually closed it because another company bought it out, and the original owner who sold him the school, apparently had a lot of money and bad debt that he didn't disclose, and when they came knocking, they just

decided to cut ties and close it all off so. So said to hell with that and got my Texas reciprocity. I got my Texas instructor and.

Interviewer: Very nice. Do you know what happened to the individual that was in your role before you got it?

P6: I know we got fired, and I don't know. That was in Florida. . No, in the Texas school. He just he stepped up into the VP role. So he promoted up.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So how long have you worked in EMS?

P6: Would have been 2,008, so would have been graduated in 2,009.

Interviewer: What other roles have you performed in the industry?

P6: I was a I was the training Coordinator for the County EMS system, and that was one that oh! Assigned all the new hires through orientation gave them to their ftos, scheduled the student riders from the agency side did all the continuing education, coordination. I did that for the County EMS system. And then it's then my other school that I was at, and that's really been it.

Interviewer: So what best describes the sponsorship type of your organization? Would you say post-secondary, including community, college, or 4-year universities, hospital consortium, firebase.

P6: We're a hospital consortium.

Interviewer: How many program, or how many paramedic students does your program graduate on annual basis?

P6: 400 or so. Yeah, we did. We did 100 my first year. We did 2 50 last year, and then we that's not just Texas numbers. It's probably closer to 200 majority of those in [region of] Texas.

Interviewer: So as a director of something that large I mean you just oversee all of it. Is there, like assistant directors underneath it.

P6: Yeah, I've got four managers that work for me to clinical managers and two education managers. And then I've also got a lab coordinator and then we've got a logistics coordinator. So all in. There's six, all in their six managers.

Interviewer: Do you still perform a teaching role?

P6: Rarely. I'll record videos every now and then, but I haven't been in a classroom in probably a year.

Interviewer: Gotcha. Was that just due to the workload? That's I mean, with that broadcast of a scope, or was it? I mean, would you still like to have more time to teach? Or are you good, with more of the administrative side of it?

P6: You know I wouldn't mind going back to a classroom every now and then, but I wouldn't wanna do it full time. I taught full time for for years. It's it's a lot of talking.

Interviewer: For sure!

P6: Yeah, now I work for home, and you know I can roll out of bed, roll into the shower, and you know, be good to go.

Interviewer: Nice. So you'd say 99.9% of your time spent on administrative duties versus any type of instruction.

P6: Yeah, I like, I say, I do do some videos. I make it a point every Friday afternoon to send out a weekly message a weekly update to all the students. You know what's any major stories that have happened in EMS? Any major trends across the school. I do a quick review on a random topic, so I do make it a point to spend, you know, 2 hours a week sending something out to all students. But you know we got plenty of good instructors, so I don't. I don't know to do it anymore.

Interviewer: It's a good idea. So you said you have a simulation specialist that oversees that. So you don't do any of the simulations yourself?

P6: No, no, I mean I can. I have, but I'll walk to the campus every now and then, and just check it out. Now we got we got a simulation guy that we hired from university up in Minnesota who used to do the simulations up there. He's a rock star.

Interviewer: So is that specific for EMS? Or is it shared with other allied health?

P6: No, it's specific to EMS.

Interviewer: That's awesome. So the programs that are around the nation, is it a similar practice where they have simulation specials for each one, or is it dependent on where they're at?

P6: It's dependent on where they're at. Yeah, it's dependent on where they're at. We do a lot of travel. We do a lot of flying. We do a lot of shipping with the mannequins, but it's, you know, we put the good people in charge of overseeing and training, and then we can take a an average instructor and turn them into a good instructor that way.

Interviewer: How many hours a week are needed to perform your job? Would you say less than 30, 40 to 50, or greater than 50 hours?

P6: Greater than 50 a 100%. Which is why it's taking me 6 years to do my dissertation.

Interviewer: So of the administrative duties that are assigned to you, what do you find that take up the most amount of your time?

P6: Student discipline and follow-up 100% student discipline, follow-up.

Interviewer: Could imagine having 400 students, those problems. You just need somebody designate just for that. To put out those fires, I'm sure.

P6: That's that's yeah. That's actually one of the. When I said I had something going on right after this, I'm actually interviewing for a person to do that full time.

Interviewer: Nice. That'd be a life saver, I'm sure.

P6: Yeah, we have our Accreditation body 1 visit coming up next year. So I'm really, really pushing the documentation really hard on everybody. When they say, you know, this person's laid on four assignments. And I want to discipline them. And it's like, Okay, well, your three assignments too late. And that kind of crap is what just takes up all my day.

Interviewer: So, you can answer this one or two ways, or both, if you want. How many full-time educators or faculty members do you have with your organization?

P6: We just have those managers. Everybody else is part-time.

Interviewer: Gotcha nice. Can you say that one more time, as far as the managers?

P6: Yeah. So we've we've got two education managers two clinical managers to logistics, slash lab managers. And then we have a I'm missing one. Oh, we have two of administrative managers that handle student services and withdraws, and you know that kind of stuff. Sponsors, payroll, blah blah blah no. And then it's we have a director of operations who helps kind of oversee the facilities. Director of admissions, and then me over all the education. Everyone else is part-time.

Interviewer: The 2 admin assistants their specific to EMS, as well. They're not shared.

P6: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Would you describe yourself as very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with your current role?

P6: I would say, very satisfied.

Interviewer: So what's the main reason for that current level satisfaction?

P6: The flexibility and the it's gonna sound cheesy. But the influence, I guess you know, with such a you know. My school in Florida. I had five campuses. We had six, but one closed, and you know each campus would have 100 students a year. So that was, you know, 500 students that we had. That was paramedic and EMT. And you know, that was a huge amount of influence. I really felt like I was making change in the state, and then they just came in and corporate shut it down. And it's really, really hard if you've never been there before, it's really really hard for me to go

from fairly important, even in a limited area like EMS education, right? Having a fairly important impact to next morning, not having any and literally going back to the county, saying, I need to get on an ambulance. That's really really hard to do. And thankfully the county was able to move me up through the training rings pretty quick.

Right. Now I have that back, and very, very few people get second chances, and I'm not going to throw that away.

Interviewer: So have you search for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job with you in the last year.

P6: Yes, it's always been either dean positions or presidential roles. It's always been promotional positions. I'm not interested in the lateral move, but you know it is still EMS education. The only thing that pays worse than EMS is EMS education. So it's and it just it is what it is. Paramedics don't make any money, so you can't charge enough intuition, and you know you can't charge these guys \$20,000 in tuition to go make 20 bucks an hour. We're always gonna be limited. But you know, in in a traditional college setting when you're a dean of a Health Sciences department, right? Then, that's one more step up, and then once you become a dean of a entire college of health, right? So I have applied for those positions got rejected from all of them, because nobody wants a PhD candidate that want a PhD. So. But you know you figure you shoot your shot, you interview one. Maybe something happens. If not, I may try again when I get the PhD. Who knows?

Interviewer: Nice. So how likely do you see yourself in your current role in 3 years?

P6: I mean, I don't see a whole lot changing, except potentially, some more infrastructure at the school at this school.

Interviewer: So you'd say you're fairly likely to be there in 3 years or less.

P6: I think so. Yeah. And a lot of it's gonna depend on the school and the consortium. Because we're strictly EMS, the consortium handles, you know the nursing and other stuff. But you know, who knows if I move into something where now I'm looking at nursing as well, we're looking over something else as well. Then you know you never know.

Interviewer: Sounds good. So that's kind of wraps up the informal questions. 1A- Does your supervisor understand what's important to you as an employee?

P6: I would sure hope so after 3 years I have made that very clear.

Interviewer: So how does your employer show that understanding?

P6: It was. It was funny you mentioned that I actually I have scrolling back through the teams. Where was it? Oh! Oh! There it is! So it was actually one of the one of the applicants for the positions I was the only one out of the interview panel. I was the only one that liked this guy and the other people on the panel didn't like him at all, cause he's a nerd right. Where, you know he's a, you know, pushes up his glasses, and I was talking to the supervisor by, you know. Hey? We

got 2 more interviews, this, and I was like, you know, I really like this guy. And he was like, really, I was about to send him an email to tell him no, because nobody liked him.

And I, oh, I said, Dude, I really like this guy, and they're like, Oh, he was terrible! Da da, da, I said, can we just give him a second interview? Please let me give him. He was in a he was in a formal environment. I could tell what's getting him talking about something that he cares about. I mean the souses got a master's degree. He's he's a, you know, Academic. And you know, it's not gonna with a bunch of paramedics and firefighters that's not gonna jive. And he said, You know what? Okay? We'll call him back for second interview. And I said, Thanks, that actually means a lot, you know, just the fact that he was able to 180 on literally within an hour, telling this guy he didn't get the job. Do you know what? Let's bring you back and give you another chance?

Interviewer: So how do potential advancement opportunities influence your loyalty with your current organization?

P6: I mean, we're obviously not getting smaller. We're just, We keep getting people EMS is going to continue to need people. I'm probably the only person on the planet that doesn't think EMS has a recruitment problem. I think we have a major retention problem, because there's there's plenty of paramedics out there, but none of them want to work for the conditions that they're being expected to work for. And I mean I have. I was just looking through Facebook before this and one of the guys who was a brilliant paramedic and an fto, and everything. He's working at little Caesars now. He's managing a little season because he just he makes more money. There is a store manager in the little freaking drive through, hot and ready, and it's it's yeah. I mean, that's what it is.

We we've got paramedics that are just not wanting to work in the conditions for that the pay they're getting, and they're going elsewhere. So I mean, the industry's not gonna get smaller. It's not gonna stop it. At one point the the dumbo's in Washington are, gonna figure out that this has to be funded on the level of police and fire. So I don't see a whole lot changing. I really don't see much. I mean, I'm kinda you know, as a program director. You're almost at the top. Really, it's just into deans and stuff like that. So I may end up there, but I don't otherwise see all that change.

Interviewer: So question 2A- how is how important are new job activities that expand your skills and meeting your job expectations.

P6: I mean, I guess important, I'm always but I mean I'm always reading journals and articles and implementing new things. So that's just always been a part of it. So I mean, I guess it's important. But that's the primary driver for most of that.

Interviewer: So it comes from self motivation more than.

P6: Yeah, I'm sure I piss off a lot of people by always pushing, pushing the envelope. But.

Interviewer: How likely are you to stay with the organization if you like the role and benefits but you're not provide with room for advancement?



P6: I mean, I like, I said. There's really not a whole lot else to advance. Maybe we move into another healthcare field. Maybe we start doing cnas. I don't know, but no I mean I'm this is kind of all that done my career. So I don't have a whole lot of desire to leave. Now, if you would ask me this, you know, couple of years ago, then I would have said no, but when I was working for the county as a training coordinator, I couldn't wait to get out of there but now that I'm back in primary education and you know students will actually, in theory, at least listen to you, and not, you know. Come in and say, well, you should do it this way. You should do it this way.

Interviewer: So question 3A- Does your supervisor give you feedback on your work?

P6: Yeah, we actually just had our annual reviews. So.

Interviewer: Nice. So the next follow-up question was, how often, in what format so annually as a formal.

P6: We do. Our formal reviews are annually, but I mean we talk. We talk every day.

Interviewer: So you get that feedback on a regular basis?

P6: Yeah, and a lot of it is, he's, you know, he just kind of lets me do my thing. I call him more than he calls me. Put it that way.

Interviewer: Are you the opportunity to provide feedback to your supervisor?

P6: Yeah, I'll like all the time I call him more than he calls me.

Interviewer: And is that feedback readily accepted.

P6: I think so. I'd say I've noticed a definitive change in him in the way he's done things. He's he used to. He used to be a little more fast and loose with accreditation, and state requirements, and kinda I've reeled him in, and I've gotten him to the point where he's more willing to ask permission than bank forgiveness.

Interviewer: So question 4A-Is a job in work that you're doing what you expected.

P6: No, not at all. I mean I it's kind of a loaded question, because I took this job. I took the job as a program director, like 5 months before Covid shut the world down.

Interviewer: So when you assume the role paramedic program director, did you have a mentor that helped navigate the organizational challenges or those challenges associated with state or national requirements?

P6: So it was mostly the state. I was lucky because the former program director, like, I said, he's the one that got promoted up and hired me and is my supervisor now. So it's nice to have a former program director who is your supervisor but you know I like I came from Florida. This was my first, I've never touched a patient in Texas. I've got my lp, but I've never worked as a

patient here. I came straight over and moved my instructor cert over. And the way that Texas is like four states in one. And it's just he's really helped me navigate that part of it.

In, for example, in Florida, you you have to be approved by the Department of Education and the Department of Health. In Texas, you can dodge the workforce Commission if you don't offer degrees, and since we're consortium we can dodge the Workforce Commission. So in Florida you are approved as a school. You get your annual renewal as a school, and you do not have to submit any courses so there's no 30 day window. There's no course application fee. You just it when your renewal comes up, you say, here's the students that I graduated. Here's their results. So this 30 day window to open a new course was a huge learning curve.

We would be like, Hey, let's start a new class in a week, and like, Wait!

No, can't. So it was a lot of learning of the Texas rules and navigation. I'd never even heard the word jurisprudence before I moved out here. But there was Florida trauma, or criteria, and they use a red and blue system, and you know that I was like, Oh, when do we do? The Trauma Alert test, and like what? So it was definitely a switch to learn new stuff from a state perspective. They really helped me learn all of that.

Interviewer: So going back to your early days in Florida as a program director. Where did you have that same mentor, or was?

P6: No! Oh, God, no! I had to figure everything out on my own. No cause. That program director got fired for something.

Interviewer: So they just pulled you in and said, Here's your program, good luck.

P6: Yeah, pretty much thankfully. The State EMS Coordinator at the time was a super super helpful.

Interviewer: So based off what you said as far as preparing Texas and Florida as a state agency, now given, they both have their stipulations and their nuances if you will, would you say one's easier to navigate than the other? Or would you say they're comparable or?

P6: Florida is harder to get started, but once you're there it's incredibly easy. Florida works in almost off of an audit system where it is long as a student doesn't complain, and as long as your pass rates don't drop below 70 your good to go! I don't want to say they don't care, but they don't ask you anything right. Whereas in Texas it's much more.

Constant communication, but it's a lot easier to get started, so.

Interviewer: And as far as getting started, you're saying the program is a whole or individual class.

P6: Yeah, the program is all like changes to the program. And things like that. Like if we were to hire in Florida, if we were to hire a new admissions person, they would have to get a Florida background check. They would have to go through all this. We'd have to pay \$200. We have to wait for State approval, you know, just because they're a new admissions person. They would have to take the I forget what it's called fair practice fair sales practice something rather make

sure not doing predatory admissions, you know all of that. So I'm sure the Workforce Commission probably has a lot of that. But again, we don't offer a degree, so we don't have to answer to that.

So it's a different. It's a different way of regulating right Texas regulates more as it goes. Course, numbers isn't that there's no course numbers in Florida. You just you graduated from that school, and you know, whatever whatever the school designates you, they are, there's no state course number to worry about, whereas here we have to track all that. So and then, we have to get audits and new records, audits, and all that. And that's not a thing over there with once you get past that initial hurdle and do your annual submissions. So it is. It's a different way of regulating. It's a different way of looking at it. With which one's better. I have no freaking clue. They both think they're the best.

Interviewer: So what, and you kinda hit on your satisfiers, what's your main satisfiers and dissatisfiers of your job?

P6: I mean the dissatisfied is just the time and the workload and the infrastructure. You know, we could always use more people always, you know, we could. I, if I had unlimited funds, I would hire, you know, 10 full time instructors tomorrow, and I could probably find 10 good full time instructors that could start tomorrow. But just the revenue's not there. We can't charge as much as we need to cause they just don't get paid enough, they would never make it back.

Interviewer: Question 5A- How satisfied are you with the pay that you receive in relation to the type and amount of work that you do?

P6: So I mean, this is the most I've ever been paid in my life. But things cost more than they ever have in my life. So I mean, it's I always think back like 5 years ago, and be like man. If I could. You know, if I could just make this much. Just make this much. I mean my first job at Florida as a program director. I was making \$33,000 a year. And granted. That was 2012, I think something like that. 2013 but I mean that was from the Tampa Bay area, which is not cheap, and then so I don't know.

I'm not uncomfortable, but I always feel like I'm doing more work than I think a lot of people do.

Interviewer: So you'd say, it's okay, but definitely could be better.

P6: Yeah, yeah, and like, I say, we do get our annual raises, which really helps. But you know, when inflation's topping out at 7% or whatever a year, you know, your 4 or 5% raise is like great.

Interviewer: Right. So in this kind of goes with what you're saying, how do you, or what do you think of the pay you receive in relation to the cost of living in the city in which you live?

P6: I mean, it's like same thing comfortable, I guess. You know I'm not gonna have a I also got three kids. So, but there ain't no amount of money that can that can make that comfortable. You know my wife's in sales, so it's, you know, good months, bad months.

Interviewer: So question 6 a. Are you provided with the tools, resources, including training, to help you develop in your career?

P6: Yeah, I think so. I mean, I'm going through an online education doctorate. So that's I'm gonna learn more there than I am in anything that you know, that national agencies can put out.

Interviewer: Just a side question. How supported is your organization with you progress, your career?

P6: As much as I would have loved tuition reimbursement, I mean they do give me time to do it. I actually this, I have 4 hours blocked off on Friday morning. This is actually research time. Normally, of course, I've got interviews today right after this. But you know I they're so flexible I'm able to work on my dissertation during work hours while the kids are all at school, which really helps because nothing gets done once they get home.

Interviewer: Do you all use the same platform as far as like documentation of skills, scenarios, clinicals.

P6: No, I take that back. We we do have one operation in in the military guys that do. They use a commercial one, but everybody else. We're on our own system.

Interviewer: Would you say the promotion practices in your organization are fair and transparent.

P6: Well, I mean I'm the one making most of the decisions. So I hope so.

Interviewer: Gotcha, 7A- is their flexibility and autonomy in your work. And how do you feel about it?

P6: Yeah, I mean, that's really the best part about the job is the flexibility. I mean, I can essentially, I can do 90% of my job from my phone.

Interviewer: question. 7B- Are you able to do the work that's assigned to you? So do you have the tools, resources, and skills to succeed in your job?

P6: Tools are, yeah, with, I mean, with the exception of you know, more staff. Then other than that? Yeah.

Interviewer: So kind of going back. What you're saying earlier technology is great, but it can impede on your time off as well. I mean everything's tied to your hip pocket with your phone. So how would you describe your work-life balance?

P6: It's more work than I would like right now. But I mean we're also we still haven't I don't see recovered from Covid, because, you know, beings, we were hybrid before Covid actually saw us with a growth period.

And it's it really hasn't slowed down so we're kind of in a growth cycle right now. I mean I do get. You know, I spent 2 hours yesterday playing Skyrim during the middle of the day, just to purge my brain of things. So I mean in terms of that. Yeah, it's nice. I just I just work a lot of

hours, but I mean, it helps that I do enjoy doing it, so you know I can take meetings literally laying in bed on my phone. So that makes things easier to stomach.

Interviewer: So you said that you're in a period of a growth cycle. Is that for the foreseeable future you hope, or is it?

P6: I mean, it's happened every year since Covid. We've added 150 to 200 students pretty much every year. So.

Interviewer: I am sure that the senate bill 8 stuff helped.

P6: Huge are, we have already enrolled more students since Sb8 launched. Then we did the whole year prior. It's silly. It's absolutely silly, I mean [region of] Texas. [Region of] Texas is just blowing up.

Interviewer: Like, I said. It's a good problem to have until you don't have the resources that the help to do it.

P6: Right

Interviewer: So is your work appreciated by your supervisor?

P6: Yeah, oh, definitely, he's made that clear.

Interviewer: So how are you recognized for a job? Well done?

P6: I mean, mostly informally. And besides that, the formal annual review, but those are just. Those are mandated by the organization, so.

Interviewer: So question 9A- Do you have the opportunity for professional career development? And we kinda hit on that one as far as they give you time to work on your dissertation.

P6: Pretty much. Yeah, it's right now. It's the PhD.

Interviewer: And that answers next question 2, 9 B. Do you have a learning plan such as additional college degrees? And does your supervisor support you? And I feel like we've covered that one. So we'll move to question 10A- Are you satisfied with the responsibilities and challenges are offered by the work you do in the organization?

P6: Yeah, I think so.

Interviewer: And again you said, the primary challenges go hand in hand with student issues, and the time it takes to do those.

P6: Yeah, and just you know, it's a big ship we're driving. So you know, if you wanna turn right. It takes 2 weeks to turn right. Or you know, anytime you wanna make a change to a paramedic

class, it's gonna take, you know, a year before you actually see whether or not it worked. And it's just. You know, normal stuff.

Interviewer: So question 10 B. Do you have the opportunity to use your skills and your work?

P6: I mean, I think so. Yeah, you talking like, patient care skills. No, I mean I was. I was adequate medic at best, anyway.

Interviewer: So question 11A- Does your work give you a sense of accomplishment?

P6: Yeah, I think so. I mean, there's a you have to pick and choose your battles. I mean, we're never gonna finish right we're education's never gonna have an endpoint. But you can finish a project. We just wrapped up a project of getting off of documenting platform, which was a huge win, and you know that was a 2 year long process, and you know we have a process where the new books just came out. So we have to update all the curriculum, and you know, that's a small win. So you just you learn to take the wins where you can get them.

Interviewer: So how likely are you to stay with the organization if it meet, it does not meet your job expectations.

P6: Well, so I mean this one is my previous ones that haven't I really didn't have another place to go because I was so young right, and nobody wants to hire, a you know, 25 year old to manage anything. So it's hard to answer, because it's I've never been in that position with the resume that I have now right the resume I have now I'm pretty sure I could go get another job doing something somewhere right reasonable. But yeah, that's really hard to answer.

Interviewer: How important are the relationship with your work colleagues?

P6: That's what makes or breaks it. And it really is same thing. It's like a partner on the ambulance. I stayed on the ambulance 3 years longer than I probably should have, because I had a great partner, you know, and the day that he turned in his resignation turned in mind.

Interviewer: And it sounds like you have a pretty cohesive team that you're working with now.

P6: Oh, yeah, yeah, I love these guys.

Interviewer: Question 12A- How do you expect your supervisor to demonstrate that they generally value your contributions?

P6: That's like the like. The Supreme Court's definition of pornography. You know I can't define it, but I know when I see it.

Interviewer: So based off what you said previously. It's more that intrinsic you're doing a good job, keep it up. I recognize I'm valued.

P6: It's, yeah. It's more just knowing that when you can ask for something it gets it gets done, maybe not right away. But you know it gets done right at some point, you know, and just knowing that that your suggestions I will eventually get implemented.

Interviewer: So what do you expect your supervisor to provide to you in order to achieve the next level in your career? Besides retiring, so you can move into his position.

P6: Yeah, right? No, I mean just growth, and eventually new positions. You know, we're yeah. I mean, I don't know. That's hard. I don't have a good answer for that one.

Interviewer: Question 13A- In this last group of questions, does your supervisors conduct performance, appraisal? And you said yes on annual basis, and periodically, and kind of more infall fashion. So question 13B- And that also has been addressed, as far as you're able to voice your concerns. And not it doesn't fall on deaf ears right?

P6: Right. Or if it does, then just straight up, say it, you know. Don't leave me on like there's been times I've said something, and he's like dude. That's just not gonna happen. You know, I can plan around a yes, and I can plan around a no. But I can't plan around limbo.

Interviewer: So before we get to the very last question, and you're background and coming from Florida. I value this answer probably more than most. What advice would you give to a brand new program director who's coming into that director role to help navigate some of the challenges that you ran into on the National, State, And even local level, any pitfalls that you'd warn them against, or any best practices that you'd offer to ensure that they're helping ensure their success.

P6: Go to the advanced coordinator class. I've learned so much out of that class, cause they I only lateraled over as a cause. Florida doesn't credential directors. They only credential right instructors. So I lateraled over as a basic coordinator and then had to go to the advanced coordinator class and man. I learned so much in that class. So I mean, that's new positions is... even the accreditation body 1 workshops, you know, as dull as they are to us, for a brand new person. Those are are gold, because you can. Let's see if I can give you a quote. You can want what you want, but it's not necessarily what the people who are going to be grading wants. You want right, you know. What you want is not necessarily what the national body wants, not necessarily what the college wants? Not necessarily what freaking state wants, and knowing what it is that they want, has been so much more important in changing the way that I do things coming from that background. So that would be my biggest piece of advice is, learn what it is that you actually are being graded against, and then work towards that.

Interviewer: So again from your Florida background, a lot of the comments I've heard so far is that national versus a state. Now a lot of it does align, but a lot of it, as far as I won't use any names, but a lot of. Seems to be a little bit more in depth than maybe needed. Would you say that the national accreditation body and Florida not merge together, but was more congruent as far as what they're grading you on? If you will? Or do you feel like Texas, or would it be comparable?

P6: So I would say that Florida's requirements are more aligned with the institutional accrediting bodies like I have to send financial reports to this. There had to send this financial reports to the State of Florida. I had to send admissions, practices to the state of Florida. I had to send job placement data to the state of Florida, so there was a lot now, but that was for EMT as well. So the State of Florida aligned a lot more with the institutional accreditation requirements. I don't think anything aligns with the national requirements which I guess that's the point. But no, I haven't noticed, it's not like really a school in Florida versus running a school in Texas is easier to run or one of them is easier to go through the national accreditation process. Neither one of them really helped.

Interviewer: So any pitfalls, if for individuals trying to get reciprocity, or whatever to come to Texas to teach, outside of the 30 day window, was there anything else that you'd recommend that kinda cut you by surprise that you haven't mentioned yet?

P6: Nothing. Is I? Wanna say nothing. But it's not exact science. So having, you know, having people here who knew the system really helped, and who knew people really helped because like I said, Florida, there's a one time instructor class. And then your credential doesn't instructor until they change the requirements. And that's it. There's no, you know, Advanced coordinator. There's no administrative ongoing thing. So that was very hard to transition, because when I did my instructor application, they were like Well, you've been you've been a paramedic for about a week. It's like, well, no, I actually here's my reciprocity license. And they're like, well, how long have you been teaching? And I was like, well, here's my initial instructor licensure. And they're like this is from 2014. When did you renew? I'm like, well, you don't until they haven't changed the requirements until the new. What are those? The new, the guidelines or standards in the education.

They don't change it until the education standards change and they hadn't since, like what the 90s. So it was, and it was very hard to convince the State that's what I was doing in Florida was equal to a Texas license instructor, and even a coordinator. So having someone on the inside who knew somebody at the state, and could call up and say, Hey, here's the deal that really is like, okay, let's actually look at this and see what's the same. It sounds like I might have been the first person to try to reciprocity directly to a Texas coordinator from Florida. It very well, I may very well be the have been the first one, because no, there was familiar with how the State ran, but being able to actually sit down with the state and say, Okay, here's exactly what I did. Here's exactly how this works. Here's the rules in Florida. They actually called the State Department of Health, and went kind of went back and forth, and then I was able to reciprocity and get the State Department of Health, and went kind of went back and forth, and then I was able to reciprocity and get that so knowing people, huh!

Interviewer: So how I mean, that sounds like so having that network. And there's been a little bit of discussion about a mentorship program at the State level where we have the people that's been here since, it seems like it started that could do just that not maybe not provide every single answer but say, hey? Look, this is a person that you need to talk to.

P6: Yes, that I mean, that would be huge cause I mean not like I said. I didn't even know what a the state agency was. I never heard that acronym before. It just it didn't exist so it's and then



someone's like, Yeah, you just called dishes. And I'm like, do the dishes. What's the? It's so. Yeah, I mean, just someone who can, someone who can teach you. The language would be, it would have. I don't know that I would have done it without that I don't know that I would have been successful. I would have probably had to work it work on an ambulance for what is it, 4 years? And then, you know, get my instructor that way. Had we not been able to actually get someone at the State to sit down and go through everything, and actually declare that reciprocity.

Interviewer: So you're. How would you describe your interaction with the State from your perspective?

P6: It's been great. I haven't had any issues at all. I haven't worked with the Workforce Commissioner or anyone else, but I interaction with the has been great.

Interviewer: As long as you know who to contact. Is that's the hardest part.

P6: I'm not even now that I'm already coordinating, that I've been through the Coordinator class. It's, you know. It's like a bit of coordinator this whole time, because I was able to quickly translate. You know what I was doing there, to what needs to be done in Texas, and it's you know. All I needed was that in the door to actually say, Okay, yes, we can get you into a class. And you know, go from there.

Interviewer: Outstanding. So question 13 C. And this is the final question, are there any other local state or national factors that may impact your decision to stay in or vacate your current role as a paramedic program director that have not been discussed that you'd like to voice?

P6: I mean nothing really in any of our control. I mean the SB8 was a huge thing. The, I don't know if you remember, Governor Abbott signed that bill to let people do clinicals on duty as a second man on the truck. You know. That was a huge, disruptive change cause? All of a sudden I had to start communicating with agency medical director. So I mean the only thing that would probably do that is, if there was some massive political disruption.

I mean EMS is kind of the bastard child of public health and health care. We're basically an essential service that no one wants to admit is an essential service. We Bill like a hospital, but we act like a fire department. So it's. Eventually, it's going to change, and if it does change, that may make EMS education a completely different animal, and it it may not be it may not be valid anymore. Who knows? But you know, I see there's if anything is going to make a major change. It's gonna be some sort of external political disruption in funding or something I mean, we're seeing it with SB8, and how each we've got you know, you interact with one rack versus a different rack, and they've got completely different ways of doing things. There's gonna be a it's gonna come from that direction. If something does change.

## Appendix K: Interview 7 Transcript

Interviewer: So can you please consent to be in recorded both visually and audio.

P7: Yes, sir.

Interviewer: Do you understand that this is completely voluntary? That you reserve the right to withdraw at any point, or refuse to answer any questions that you're not comfortable in answering beautiful.

P7: Yes, sir.

Interviewer: What is your current role? And how long have you been in that role?

P7: I'm a program director for, and do you want me to say who I actually work for?

Interviewer: That's okay.

P7: Okay, so, I've been a program director at this current position. For since June of 2021.

Interviewer: Perfect. So what made you decide to assume that role of program director?

P7: I've been program director since 1998. For 3 different colleges. With this place my current employer being my third employer as a program director. I've kind of consider myself to be kind of a fixer. So I go into programs, I've either seen the program from the beginning or go into programs that have had some difficulty, whether it's with Accreditation body 1. National credentialling Exam pass rates, curriculum, programs ability to provide quality content and instruction, initial education and continue education and the opportunity my current employer just kinda came in at a time that I thought, you know, this would be a really nice place to work.

Interviewer: So you said they. You consider yourself a fixer going into these programs that either struggle with whether it's with Accreditation body 1. National credentialling Exam pass rates, curriculum, programs ability to provide quality content and instruction. Where one of these the primary driver for to assume your current role?

P7: Well, I didn't. I didn't. The role that I have now, I had no idea it had been established program for probably over 20 years. It's one of the first certified with Accreditation body 1 sites in Texas. So I was hoping that this was not gonna be the challenge that it turned out to be. They had 3 previous program directors. They did the best they could with what they had to work with, but the curriculum was outdated, equipment was outdated. Obviously the institution didn't put forth the time. The effort and the money into maintaining the program. Because, you know, if you can get away with minimal support, then obviously, that's what's gonna happen. You're gonna receive minimal support, so I was hoping this, this was gonna be not quite the challenge, and not quite the fix fix that I needed. But it's turned into that.

Interviewer: I got you. Can you or are you comfortable answering where the Pass medical director went or program director? Excuse me.

P7: The past one, he retired, so he took the position originally. On like a temporary basis to just try to get them over the hump for try to put that fix in. So he basically just kinda maintain status quo. And then, of course, everybody loved the big C, Covid hit. And you know that changed some dynamics of initial education, obviously teaching clinical field in internship, you know, situations and things like that.

Interviewer: Excellent. So how long have you worked in EMS?

P7: I've been EMS since 1985.

Interviewer: What other roles have you assumed within the EMS Industry?

P7: So I was a paramedic. I was a operations manager for a medium sized city in [region of] Texas, where I ran a 911 service, and then also a VA Contract. So I did that for about 5 years I was a peace officer, kind of lost the adrenaline rush, and I went into to be the police. I did that for about 9 years, but my passion has always been EMS. So while I was still at a deputy sheriff, I was still had my hands, and doing some initial part-time education, and that initial part-time position turned into a full-time position where we I actually created the initial EMS education prior to initial increase national or state regulations. And then, of course, we transitioned to follow those guidelines.

Interviewer: Excellent, so what best describes the sponsorship type of your organization? Is it post secondary, including community, college, or 4-year universities, hospital based consortium bar based ambient space or other?

P7: We're gonna be other. We're considered a vocational program.

Interviewer: I got you. What was that is, I mean, who's what's the sponsorship type of it like?

P7: Who sponsors it. So we're the really accreditation agency. So we need education, a higher education source to allow us to continue through the national accreditation agencies eyes where there's potential college credit. So the program that I'm with now we do not offer college initial college credit for that. This this was the first place, every other place I've worked was actually a higher educational institution, community colleges.

Interviewer: How many paramedic students does your organization graduate on annual basis?

P7: So if you consider our satellites and then our programs, we're somewhere in that 150 to 225 range.

Interviewer: I'm sure that does keep you busy. Do you still perform the teaching role within your organization?

P7: I do not. In this role I do not.

Interviewer: Okay, so this next question is not pertinent as far as what percentage of the time you spend instruction versions, administrative duties? So outside of kind, of the more traditional administrative duties, are there anything else that you didn't really foresee, taking up much of your time that takes up more than you wish?

P7: Well, so like every other place that has a program director. We were initially very short staffed, so not only did I manage the instructor role. I was the instructor for a little while initially, when I started the position here. I was also the clinical coordinator, because we lost that position, and then I we have another grant for rule and frontier type folks. So I was the program administrator for that grant also.

Interviewer: So are you responsible for the simulation you used in your program? As far as like scenarios, skills, or anything like that.

P7: So the way our program is designed, we have gotten away from the traditional skill sheets and all that kind of good stuff. We're more along the lines of small group discussion, interactive student, interactive, not the I'm trying to think what they call it. It's not virtual learning, but it's we put a little bit more responsibility back on the student to have that initial information before they walk into the classroom right?

Interviewer: So more of that flipped class design?

P7: Right, so it's a flip classroom, but we're not spending the extra \$300 you know the publishers are charging. It's all internal. So we're scenario based training where, as they progress through the course, they're going to check all those boxes of airway management static and dynamic, being able to do assessments in those things, so we don't have set up stations like old school days he used to set up an airway station in a cardiac station. We're not doing that, we we're in a facility that's probably state of the art we call it first responder Disneyland that has many, many resources. Fire based has EMS based rescue based FEMA related courses. So we have a lot of resources along with ambulances that we actually use to do that my motto is trained like you fight. So we teach these guys to be a paramedic. We're looking for clinicians versus a technician when they come out of the program.

Interviewer: That's awesome. So you said you have actual ambulances, not the simulators.

P7: Well, we have a simulator, too, but we have ambulances that we use also.

Interviewer: Do you have? Are they? Do you own them or your program? On how many do you have? Just out of curiosity?

P7: Yes. We have one, that we, we own, own, one it's on loan to us. It's basically on it, you know, as needed basis of availability basis. Then we have access to a third ambulance that I'm working on hopefully. By September we'll have access to a third ambulance.

Interviewer: Very cool, so I'm willing to bet I know the answer this question, but how many hours a week are needed to perform your duties? Would you say? Less than 30, 40 to 50, or more than 15?

P7: Yeah, more than 50.

Interviewer: Gotcha, so of the administrative duties that are assigned to you, which you find that take up the most amount of time.

P7: It's gonna be kind of a toss-up of. We think of administrative, a lot of it is unfortunately get to be just processes for the grant with supporting the satellite campuses and then just supporting the staff for the curriculum for the the EMT and the paramedic classes. So right now we're just running one paramedic class. We have three EMT classes going that's on our field, and then come May, or September, we'll have two paramedic classes and two EMT classes running. So a lot of it's just supportive right now.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So how many full time educators or faculty members function in the education role or working with it?

P7: Okay, so we have a full time lead paramedic instructor. We have a full time lead EMT instructor. We have a full-time clinical coordinator slash lab coordinator, and then we have a full time EMS instructor. So four full time staff.

Interviewer: Gotcha, do you feel like that? Addict that numbers adequate?

P7: No, no, because we because we run scenario based training. If you can't, it's a minimum if you have 24 students, you have four to five different stations at any given point. So are wages, we call them wage instructors, agent faculty pool is very limited and inconsistent, and the other thing that we're finding right now we're working on there's a lot of those adjectives wage instructors are not up to the current standards of how are we training EMS professionals right now. There, there that 20 year individual who, as retired or is, you know, just kind of. Does it part time for to make the boat payment, or whatever it is, you know they've got going on.

So we're struggling right now to find adequate wage instructors to meet those needs of what we're trying to do, cause I don't know many programs that are primarily just scenario based. You know, a lot of folks are still doing the traditional, you know, set up a an airway station kind of thing, and you know, you have five groups and if you're running a live dynamic scenario, ideally, you would want to instructors for each one of those scenarios, one being on the safety side and then the other one would be, you know, to initially help with that initial one, you know that help with that foundational knowledge.

Interviewer: So just a couple of questions off of that in an ideal world. If money wasn't an option or an issue, how many more full-time faculty members would you like to have?

P7: So the structure would be at least two more full time for paramedic, and two more full time for EMT. That would be ideal, and then add another right, 12 to 15 wage instructors or adjunct personnel for that.

Interviewer: And one issue that we run into personally, is, it's very hard to compete with the increases that the paramedics are making to have them come in on their they can pick up one over time, shift and make what they'd make out here and four or five shift so. Is that part of the issue as well as?

P7: Yeah, I think you know, historically, EMS doesn't pay. Well, you know, obviously on the EMS side, for the communities, and we pay even worse, you know a lot of times for our wage instructor help. Now, when you get into the metroplex, you know they're in that 50 \$60 right? You know an hour range, but I'm not in the Metroplex. In a kind of the, I guess central Texas, where we don't have those resources. You're right. It's hard to compete in ours isn't necessarily competing with the private services it's the firefighters that you know. Those guys get called back. You know that's a \$1,000 day, and it would take them, you know, 3 days to make what you know what they would make for us.

So the other thing that I found is we just don't have that instructor base anymore that has that passion, that passion is gone for wanting to train the future of EMS. It's more about, what have you done for me lately? And, what's in it for me? It's that hearten and desire is just not there anymore like it was 10 or 15 years ago, definitely, 20 years ago, that heart is not there anymore. You know what's life work balance is good, but you know as well as I do sometimes that life, work, balance, life, kind of takes over. You know your ability to have to take care of a job. And that's just kind of the way it is just a different thought process of of those in the work environment now.

Interviewer: So would you describe yourself as very satisfied, somewhat says, satisfied or not satisfied with your current role?

P7: So I'm gonna say, I probably had the best job ever and the reason I say that is because of what we're the finished product that we produce is not only gonna hopefully, not for a long time, but maybe help me. But it's helping those members of those communities knowing that we put a good product out. And they're gonna be ready to go when they hit the doors and not have to worry about being retrained or being reprogrammed. And things like that so create a clinician versus a technician. Is the rewarding side, and you've been doing this long enough, to. It's nice to have that brand new EMT, that the lights come on and they get it, and it's even a more rewarding experience when that light comes on for that paramedic, and they get it. And seen those individuals' 2 or 3 years down the road where they've progress through the ranks, whether it's through the fire department or through a private agency where they've even gone and maybe further their education into nursing or maybe a PA or gone to Med school, and you know that you gave them that foundational base of that love for medicine, and that's probably the most rewarding thing to me.

Interviewer: So you would say, very satisfied.

P7: But yeah, then, now are there days of the week when I'm not too terribly satisfied? Yeah, you know about on that 70-fifth hour. So sometimes I'm not too terribly satisfied. But you know every day is a new adventure.

Interviewer: So does your organization provide administrative assistance to help reduce some of that workload?

P7: So, the administrative assistance are pretty much the backbone of the kind of the program cause obviously they're taking. And you know they're doing the hard work, the registration, the contacting of students, those type of things. Ideally, we could probably just to manage what we have, We could probably use another admin to kind of split some of those duties, so we do have administrative support. It's just that we're we've overwhelmed our coordinator, you know, our administrative coordinator, she's definitely overwhelmed with the amount of work that that's involved with the process. Not only just internally through our program, but you know the registry requirements. You know the national requirements, you know, and then, of course, we've got five satellites getting ready to have six satellites that we you'll manage also.

Interviewer: So have you searched for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job within the last year?

P7: No!

Interviewer: How likely are you to be in the role your current role within the next 3 years?

P7: This is my last fix, so I have. If I can stay upright. I have probably 8 good years left in me, maybe 10 but I'm not a young man anymore, so I can't keep doing it, you know. 14 or 16 hour days we're we have some processes in place where we're trying to work on some of our deficiencies, to where my job's not gonna be a 12 hour day or a 16 hour day. Hopefully, you know, that's an ideal world so I don't see my, this will be my last program director. My main goal in life is to prepare the individuals' that we have here now, and prepare them to be the next generation of initial education educators.

You know, that's my goal is just to mentor those folks, for because I don't think we have a really good process in place right now, for that. And it's scary just looking at the instructors that we have that are coming in that heart, and desire is not there. It's just not.

Interviewer: So you'd say retirement your next step hopefully, that's awesome congratulations.

P7: Yes sir, on the beach.

Interviewer: Very well deserved, so that kind of wraps up the more informal questions, if you will so question 1A- Does your supervisor understand what's important to you as an employee?

P7: Yes.

Interviewer: How do they show that understanding?

P7: So pretty much an open door policy with our administration. I've never been told no, you know, if I've needed something, or really requested something now, it may not be, it's a yes, but it may not happen overnight. Like, I said. We're in the process of rebuilding, you know, a substantially large program that has the potential to be very large because we don't have those borders like community colleges of service areas and things like that. We can operate anywhere in the State of Texas. So our ability to help underserved communities, the potential is there. We get requests all the time, not only for EMS, but also industry. Law enforcement. You know those type of things. So there's lots of different courses that we use have the potential to assist with. We just don't have the manpower.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So question 1B- How do potential advancement opportunities influence your loyalty to your current organization?

P7: So as far as advancement opportunities, I'm pretty much good where I'm at. I you know you can only go so far within organization you know I'm not going back and getting my masters degree. I'm not gonna go back and get a doctorate. I'm too old that I'm just not doing that. Not that we would necessarily need that where I'm at here. You know, academia, you know it's it's, you know, kind of published or parish when you go into universities, those type of things. So we don't have that situation here. I'm pretty good with where I'm at. Could I move up into something bigger and better? Potentially, yes, but I don't have any desire.

My desire is to try to promote and help those within, and bring those them to the level where everybody can do everybody's job. You know everyone knows my job. Everyone knows the paramedic lead instructors, job, Coordinator's job, you know the EMT instructors job, because if somebody you know breaks a leg and you're out for 6 weeks 6 months, whatever and you just have one person that kind of holds all those different components and now they're not available that puts you in a huge bind. And I've seen that so many times throughout my career that I'm not scared anymore to let go and to allow those opportunities to those that want to have that knowledge, to provide them, that knowledge. You know, 15 or 20 years ago, you know you didn't do that because you were afraid they were gonna take your job. I have that thought process. Now that if they think they want this job, you know, grab a root and growl, man, come, get you some of that. But it'll change your mind pretty quickly of, you know. You can always do better, obviously, but you're only as good as the people that are working with you.

Interviewer: Absolutely. So how important, how important are to your new activities that expand your skills and meeting your job expectations? And this could be, go into conferences present that conferences or other learning activities.

P7: Yeah, so we're pretty proactive as far as going to different seminars conventions, webinars, those type of thing. Anything, professional development, you know, we're very, very proactive on that. Well, not only for myself, but for my staff. And again the nice thing about medicine is it's always changing. So you know, new technologies, new methods, and those type of things. That's probably the hardest thing that I'm having to deal with right now, because we're not affiliate with the major university. So we have to reach out and find the latest research you know, of airway management. You know how to manage cardiac patients. That's our biggest challenge and the



way that we're going to be able to do that is, by providing those professional development opportunities to our staff. Again for me to learn the newest, latest, and greatest technologies is a great idea. I need to have an understanding of it. But I'm not gonna be that subject matter expert? Those are the folks that that are working within our team that are going to be those subject matter experts.

Interviewer: In your organization, they back that kind of education and provide the funds?

P7: Oh, yeah. Oh, yes.

Interviewer: Excellent, so how likely are you to stay with an organization if you enjoy the role, and it's benefits, but you're not provided with opportunity for advancement. I think you kind of hit on that, that you're looking to move up.

P7: Yeah, and it's not because I'm not yeah. And I'm not saying it's an age thing. But I'm good with where I'm at. I don't have dreams and aspirations of running something, you know. I programs, you know, at on the medical director side, I ran a 911 service, you know, for population of over 120,000 people. So you know anything that you could do if I ever set a goal. I've met those goals.

You know, in law enforcement. You know one of my things I wanted to do is I wanted, to, you know, be a detective, and you know, just help the community and things like that. I start out in law enforcement as a narc. You know. So I went to school for 3 months, I'm sorry for about 3 weeks, and then I was put in working for a Drug Task Force, and I went under undercover, looking almost as pretty as you are. For about 14 months. It wasn't conducive. I had little bitty kids back then a wife that didn't appreciate me being gone for extended periods of time. You know, days and weeks and things like that. And you know, just I'm back in where I used to live. And now I look like a scumbag, and you know people start talking when you're in a little town, and things like that. So it just wasn't conducive, so had had a good varieties of life experiences, you know everything that I've set goals to to do.

I've met those goals, you know. Could I have done better? Obviously I could have done better with some of those goals and made it a little easier on myself. But now it's that last fix like I said, get this squared away. Get this handle off to some individuals who are gonna have that heart and desire. And just, you know, build the future of the program and the future of, you know initial EMS education.

Interviewer: Outstanding. So question 3A- Does your supervisor give you feedback on your work?

P7: Yes.

Interviewer: How often, in what format?

P7: I wouldn't say daily. We kinda have the same managing style as far as we're not micromanaged. You know expectation is there. If you complete a task, you're not gonna get a pat

on the back saying a good job. But you know the thank you, and we appreciate you. Those type of things are very common, but I've found that a lot of individuals' nowadays it seems like you need to constantly be praising them for doing their job, and that's something that I struggle with as a manager to provide that positive feedback, because, you know, I understand you want that. That positive feedback of hey? You know you did a good job, but I try to perform. I do that as often as I can. Thank you and please, and I appreciate you. But sometimes it for some individuals it's just not ever enough. But I'm way good as far as with our administration leadership.

Interviewer: Outstanding so question 4A- is a job in the work that you're doing what you expected?

P7: Yes and no. So obviously, you know, program director, I've had that position in the past. So I know the roles of that. I was hoping the program was better established curriculum wise, student handbook wise, those type of things. I was hoping that this program was a lot better in a lot better shape. You know, financially was in lot better shape. I've never worked anywhere where you didn't have a budget. Your budget was, how much money you made last year. You know I'm used to working, you know. Obviously in a higher education. You have a budget for salaries for maintenance, for supplies. There is no budget. You just you're expected to earn enough money to cover expenses and obviously we want you to be able to go above that. Obviously you and I both know. That's hard for an EMS program to make money. So that's that's probably my biggest challenge. I think I have is to try to keep us in the black, and right now we're not able to do that just because it the program needs so many different things.

It need more instructors so obviously that costs money, and we're paying a competitive wage for instructors. You know, we need equipment, you know purchased. So that takes money. So we're hoping that we can be in the black slash at that 0 margin. Within the next 2 years.

Interviewer: So when you assume the role of the program director. And again, I'm focusing on paramedic because that's credentialed. And it's the he is so that's the reason that term thrown out there. But when you assume that role program director, do you have a mentor to help navigate the organizational challenges associated with state, national or even local issues?

P7: No!

Interviewer: Is that on your first initial job as a director? Is this the current role, or both, that you?

P7: That's all the jobs. Yeah. So you'll sometimes you learn by the school of hard knocks. That's probably the worst way to learn the job. I've been very blessed I've had some individuals in my life that I've known as in the same position that have a some life experience. So we we bounce ideas off each other, and obviously use them as a resource. Hey, here's what's going on. Can you help me, or do you have something? You know, the idea here is not to reinvent or recreate the wheel. The national accreditation agency has done a good job with supplying program directors a lot of information whether it's documentation or policies and guidelines to help support them, to be successful it's a matter of trying to understand the different processes it takes for national accreditation or state requirements.

So I don't consider myself a subject matter expert, but I could probably help you manage and navigate, you know, to get you start in a program. If I needed to, and help maintain that and the same thing for a student help, help a student maintain you know what's necessary for them to be initially certified and maintain certification throughout their careers.

Interviewer: So question 4B- what are the main satisfiers and dissatisfiers of your current role?

P7: So I guess my main satisfy is seeing the finished product seen those students like I talked about earlier. Seeing those students come in with limited knowledge. A lot of those students are coming from programs. But didn't give them a really good foundation. You know that EMT Foundation, so it's hard if you have a student that comes in with the not a strong EMT basic foundation, because now you're having to teach not only the EMT side work on their foundation, their ability for pathos, signs, and symptoms, treatments. You know, those type of things, you're having, I hate to use the word start from scratch, but you're you have different levels of students as they come into your programs.

If you know, that's the goal. My goal is always been. You want a student that came from your program because you know them, you know, strengths and weaknesses. You know what works best, as far as teaching style, learning style, those challenges when you have people from the outside, it's there's many different ways somebody learns. So that's a positive.

As far as a negative. I really don't have anything negative. I consider I use two different things, a situation and a problem. So a problem is something that needs probably immediate assistance, and it can turn very badly. It could be the point where someone could be seriously hurt or injured. Take those type of things. I use the word situation where it's a challenge to fix whatever that situation is, and it can be something really simple, as someone just cannot show up to class on time. Or it can be something where we have an exam, and somebody, somehow or some way got a hold of that exam, you know, we've gotten rid of that because we don't use any third-party exams. All those exams have been created by us so we don't worry about a third party exam being out, and we keep that security fairly tight on all of our exams. So those are things that we've kinda brought in since I've been here.

Interviewer: Awesome. So question 5. A. How satisfied are you with the pay you receive in relation to the type and amount of work that you do?

P7: So pay wise, we just did a restructuring of pay, and we're compensated very well for what we do. In my opinion, from previous employers, and you know. In, in the college community, college environment, you really just had that 12 months of that 9 month contract. But the way you actually were not having to eat top ramen, and you know Vienna sausages, as you counted on that overload, you know you were looking for that 7, 8, 10, 15 hours of overload to be able to get by. Because historically community colleges just don't pay much, and it's not because they don't have the ability. It's just that's just a community college, just the way of the world as a teacher.

So we don't have that thought process of overload. There is no overload. So with that they make up for that with obviously benefits are very good. It's a state agency, but the benefits are good and you're reimbursed, you know it meets the market standard.

Interviewer: So what do you think of the pay you receive in relation to the cost of living in the city of which you live?

P7: It's comparable. It is. I'm in a college town so things were a little bit higher as far as residences and things like that but it's comparable throughout the state. If you're thinking, you know, groceries, and you know, gas and all those type of things. It's it is what it is.

Interviewer: So question 6A- Are you provided with the tools, resources, including training that you hit on to develop in your career?

P7: We're working on those resources. So it's a yes and no. Yes, we have those resources that are available to us. But we're working through the processes to make the program better. If that makes sense.

Interviewer: Yes, sir. So just out of curiosity. Do you all use a platform for like clinical documentation, scenario documentation, and that kind of thing?

P7: Yes, a new storage system that has not been out for very long.

Interviewer: So question 6 B. Are the promotional practices in your organization, fair and transparent?

P7: I would say, yes, they are, you know, objectives, job descriptions, those type of things are out there in the front. So I would say yes.

Interviewer: Excellent. 7A- Is their flexibility and autonomy in your work, And how do you deal about it?

P7: So what do you mean by that autonomy?

Interviewer: So do you have the ability to teach how you see fit? You have the ability to alter your schedule to an extent based on family.

P7: Oh, yes, yes. Yes. Yeah. So yeah. So again, managing style nowadays is not micromanaging. It's their class. Obviously, there's object learning objectives that need to be met. There's hours that need to be met. If you have an idea, or maybe a better way to try to, you get that information across, then let's try it. You know. As long as it's not gonna be 375 slides over, you know the respiratory system. You know. Let's be creative. Let's do some different things. Maybe do some more group discussions, or maybe do some demonstrations. Those type of things, you know, just to try to get those experiences be able to relate it back to life. This is probably the biggest thing.

Interviewer: Question 7B- Are you able to do the work that's assigned to you? So I think you hit on that. You have the tools and resources, but they could be better changing them to better meet your needs.

P7: Yes.

Interviewer: Question 8A- Is your work appreciated by your supervisor?

P7: Yes.

Interviewer: How are you recognized for a job well done?

P7: I wouldn't say praise, but you know I think there's a mutual respect there, and that respect is, you know, been there done that, understand it like. I said not they've never told me no anything that I've asked for. And like I said, those Yeses, may not have necessarily just appeared immediately. But yeah, there's definitely support there.

Interviewer: Excellent question. 9A- Is there opportunity for career and professional development?

P7: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: the next question was do you have a learning plan such as a college degree and I think you're at the point that your career where I mean the return on investment just wouldn't be there.

P7: Yeah. I went back to school, got my bachelor's degree at 50. So, and I thought, Well, you know while I'm on this role, I'll just get my masters, and that we're only to be rolling that hard man. I'm I'm good, should I have probably done that? Yes, but am I gonna do it at this point in my life there's no I'm not.

Interviewer: Question 10A- are you satisfied with the responsibility and challenges offered by your work in your organization?

P7: Yes, lots of challenges.

Interviewer: Do you have the opportunity user skills in your work?

P7: Yes, every day.

Interviewer: And what'd you say? It's more, I mean, you're kind of out of the classroom so it's more just dealing with people and students, and that kind of thing.

P7: Right, just managing and and putting out those little you know. I call them situation, just managing situations as they arrive. What my biggest thought process be, for all now is to try to be more of a mentor, to not only instructional staff, you know administrative staff, but also to

those students, you know, when you get to be a certain age you're considered to be like in the old man or the grandpa so I try to. I don't play the grandpa role because that's resolved for my own grandkids, but I just I want that, you know. Hey, look! I understand what's going on in sometimes you can relate, but I find, as you get older students when they're in their twenties, they don't necessarily relate quite as well.

So that's one thing that we do have with us is we don't have individuals who are, you know, retired on their second retirement. And they're working for us. That was a big, a big situation within our agency is, people would retire from their 20 year career and then they would come to work for us, and we've changed that attitude in the EMS program where we have individuals who are still actively working in EMS or have substantial life experience, whether it's helicopter based, fire based, private ambulance service base and things like that. So yeah, we're pretty well rounded.

Interviewer: So does your work give you a sense of accomplishment?

P7: Yes.

Interviewer: And you said a couple of times, and they say it's seeing the student go from point A to Point B, where they don't know much of anything to that light bulb clicking, and then implying that to their career, and advancing in seeing that work pay off, correct?

P7: Right, and then the other thing, which is kind of scary, and you know you've been doing it a while, is when the students come in and you taught their mom or dad. So you know you've got. That's second generation, you know, with student, which to me, you know, it's they're the future. Obviously Mom and Dad were the future at that time. But now you've got that next generation coming in, and it's kind of fun. But it also kinda makes you look back and go you may have been doing this a little while, you know.

Interviewer: How likely are you to stay in the organization if it's not meeting your job expectations?

P7: So depends on what you can see to be expectations. If obviously everything, we're not gonna support the program anymore. If we're gonna be doing some things that aren't morally and ethically correct, then I will not stay. You know your word is your bond, your reputation, you know, precede you, and I believe I have a fairly decent reputation within the industry. People know me. He may not like me, and that's okay. But you're also gonna know what I think. And I'm gonna be truthful with you, and you know, just do the right thing. You may not like that. I do the right thing, or what I may say, but it is what it is.

Interviewer: So how important are your relationship with your work colleagues?

P7: So that's it. That's an interesting thing. And again, being a program director, there's, I've noticed that there's a different dynamic cause, you know, like, when I was young he wanted to be everybody's buddy. And that works until you have to be their boss. Unfortunately. So I think an EMS program director is probably one of the best jobs that you can have.

But at times it's also one of the loneliest jobs that you can have, because they're looking at you as the boss and you know their friend. But their certain boundaries, and I always have those certain boundaries also you know, I'm not gonna go out and go drinking. Not that I drink anymore, anyway. But I'm not gonna go out and go drinking and partying, and things like that, you know. You'll do the holiday gatherings, you know, when they type of things, but going out to eat, and, you know, go doing things after work, and that kind of stuff. I I've separate myself from that, because there's a work-life environment. You know in that I hate to say that the manager, director position versus you can be this for their friend, friend, and be doing different things with them, and you know all that kind of good stuff, because what if they do something that is inappropriate, you know that can come back and catch you, you know, through HR, Title 9, or whatever else should you know, they can come up with nowadays.

Interviewer: Absolutely you mentioned this a few times. I'll ask it directly. How would you describe your work-life balance right now?

P7: It's pretty rough. It's it's probably 60 to 70 hours a week devoted to work. So it's, you know. Start about 5:30 or 6 o'clock, you know. Try to get some things done at the house, get into the office somewhere between 8 and 9, put out whatever forest fires, you know, that are there. Whatever was on the agenda for the day that usually starts about 3:30 or 4 o'clock, and then, you know, everybody goes home. So it's quiet, and then you can get everything done hopefully before you know dark. It's summer now. So it'd be nice to you can stay at the office till 9 o'clock if you need to, and there'll still be daylight. The hours are long, and I don't know you agree with that analogy or no.

Interviewer: I agree. So. Question 12. A. How do you expect your supervisor to demonstrate that they generally valid value your contributions?

P7: I want them to demonstrate I don't know how to answer that. I'm not a I'm not a touchy, feely. You don't need to praise me and pat me on my head, and I just I just mutual respect. I guess you know. Listen, you know, and again, within their leadership, you know roles, you know. Have their support. I think the big thing is support. So whether it's a student issue, or it's a instructor issue or curriculum issue that you've got that support. And there's some resources that you can fall back on. But as far as somebody saying, Hey, man, we love you and need a good job and pat me on the head. I'm not that touchy, feely kinda guy. Do you recognize? You know what I'm doing? Yeah, you're paying me X amount of dollars every month, and I'm hoping that I'd meet your expectations. And the money that you're paying me is being well spent.

Interviewer: You have discussed performance appraisals. Is there a formal like annual one?

P7: Yeah. So we do so for new hires. They'll do a 6 month, and then they'll do an annual review at every 12 months thereafter, and it just kind of follows our physical year.

Interviewer: Got you. Question 13B- are formal process performance appraisal. And he said, Yes, do you have the opportunity to provide feedback to your supervisors?

P7: Yes.

Interviewer: And is it readily heard?

P7: Yes!

Interviewer: Perfect. So before we get to the very last question, I wanna ask you, what advice would you give to a brand new director stepping into this role to help navigate some of the challenges that you've experienced at the national, state, or even local level, to help avoid some of those pitfalls or some of the best practices that you would recommend?

P7: So I guess that probably the first thing would be, keep the faith every day is gonna be a some days are going to be more challenging than others. There are lots of resources out there, whether it's through national organizations, through our fellow educators and the state. There are a lot of us, and I say us that are more than willing to help someone if they have a question or a concern or a situation. Don't try to reinvent and recreate that wheel.

And then the other big thing here is, and again is, don't take it home, is leave whatever it is at work, and you have that time with your family, with your friends, you know. Make some time for yourself whether it's, you know, sitting outside, you know, throwing the ball of the dog or fishing. Have a hobby, do something that doesn't involve this job because it will burn you to a crisp in a hurry. Yeah, with it will cause conflicts and relationships, marriages and those type of things. So you can't take it home with you. You know you gotta separate that.

Interviewer: I think that's outstanding advice. So the last question, 13C- Are there any other local, state or national factors that may impact your decision to stay in or vacate your current role as the program director, that we have not discussed that you'd like to voice?

P7: Well, I know some bodies have kind of kicked it around that you're going to have to have at least a master's degree to to continue a program directorship. That would be a situation, that that would be a problem I'm not gonna go back to school to continue that. But I don't see anything that's gonna change what's gonna happen for me in the next, you know, 7 to 8 years other than you know. If it's a health situation or you'll get hit by a bus or something. You know things, something that you can't, you know. There's no way to fix that. Like, I said. You know, on the very beginning, this is the best job in the world that it truly is. Is it challenging? Yes. Does it have its moments where you wish that you know you were selling shoes at the Mall? Yeah, you probably have some of those moments, but it's the little wins that add up to that overall job satisfaction.

In my mind that at the end of the day, if you could lay your head down, you know that you did the best that you can do, and you have a clear conscience, and you know that tomorrow is gonna be hopefully a better day, then it's all worthwhile that I wouldn't change anything major, that I've done. Obviously, you know, throughout my career with the Ms. Education, I think I would have reached out for some more help you know, kinda early on, but in the very beginning there wasn't a whole lot of a support, and nobody really knew, because, depending on who was reading whatever rule it was, they had their own interpretation. Unfortunately, we still haven't with the



national accrediting bodies, if you look at an education standard and you talk to some with them, you may get two or three different interpretations of that same standard and that's something I would like to see changed. Not be reoccurring.

The other thing is, I'm not just the text state department of health, you know, since we've gotten gone to since we've gone to the national credentialling agency, you know they are obvious the licensing body for us to practice medicine. But their role has been substantially limited as far as guidance and help for EMS education, because I don't know if you've had a site visited annual visit with the accreditation body, the state just uses their national standard, you know, other than that you don't see them. Back in the good old days, if you had a pass rate in the 60s, you had whoever that project specialist is in that area, he or she was having a conversation with you, and they were saying, Hey, look! You need to get your business right because we're not gonna continue to have individuals' that are coming out subpar. And unfortunately, if you look at kind of pass rates throughout the state for the last few years, you have a lot of places that are not meeting that standard. So what are what are we doing for the future of EMS education, when we continue to allow those under performers to continue to underperform, and then whose responsibility is it to manage that?

### **Appendix L: Interview 8 Transcript**

Interviewer: So again. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me. Can I please have your consent to record you both visually and audio?

P8: Yes, sir.

Interviewer: Thank you. You understand that this is completely voluntary, and that you reserve the right to withdraw at any point during this interview, or choose to skip a question that you don't feel comfortable, answering?

P8: Yes, sir.

Interviewer: So what is your current job? And how long have you been in that role?

P8: Currently a program director. So, yes, I've been a program director since about 2014.

Interviewer: Nice, so have you been a program director anywhere else? Or was that the first role?

P8: No, this is the first role as a program director.

Interviewer: What made you decide to take on that director role?

P8: Well got into EMS education while I was still working in the field, and was just doing it as a part time basis as an instructor, and enjoyed it and saw that I had a passion for education and that's what made me wanted to step into that director role whenever that seat opened up. I applied for it and got it.

Interviewer: Awesome. Do you happen to know what happened to your predecessor when they vacated that role?

P8: I just know that they left abruptly, and I really don't know that the individual is also employed full time somewhere else, and I don't know if we there's a conflict to scheduling or what happened. But just abruptly left in the middle of night type of thing.

Interviewer: Dang, and that makes it hard stepping into that role.

P8: Definitely, definitely.

Interviewer: Do you know, do you know, if they went back into like the industry, or a different industry or teaching, still?

P8: I mean, I've heard of the grapevine that they went somewhere else to teach when they're in that right.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So how long have you worked in EMS?

P8: I've been in EMS since 2007.

Interviewer: Which other roles have you performed within the industry?

P8: Oh, so just worked as a field paramedic and then as a EMS educator and now as a program director.

Interviewer: Excellent, so what would best describe your sponsorship type of your organization? Is it post secondary, including community for your universities? Hospital based consumption, fire, based ambulance based or other.

P8: It'll be post secondary. So community, college.

Interviewer: Gotcha. How many paramedics students does your program graduate on annual basis?

P8: On annual basis. We started doing two cohorts a year, starting probably about a year ago. So before we started that we were doing 24 is what we would graduate per year. And now that we've stepped into this new one with two cohorts, we're probably looking closer to 40 per year.

Interviewer: Do you still perform the teaching role within your organization?

P8: Very much so, so I'd have a full teaching load. I'm always in the classroom.

Interviewer: So is that 15 hours, or?

P8: It'll be us we're and me right now. I'm probably above that, probably in the mid 20 type range.

Interviewer: So what percentage would you say you can tribute to instructional versus administrative duties?

P8: I mean, it's definitely a juggling act. I would say most of it would be number one priority is always a student for me, and so it is. That's gonna take that priority. And then their education. And so most of the time I'm gonna be always in the classroom and the lab teaching, and then downtime will be more administrative roles for the for the program and the college.

Interviewer: Gotcha. How how much of that time that downtime, percentage wise of your overall workload, is available for that administrative role?

P8: Not very much. It's usually yeah. It'll be sometime in it if I can get away. But whenever we do paramedic, it's an 8-hour day. It starts from 8:30 in the morning, goes till 5:30 in the afternoon, and I'm with them the entire time. So all you have is about an hour break for lunch, and then you're back at it. So it's tough to do things. It's really difficult. I always like to do the

national accreditation body's webinars, but you just can't find a way to get them to have that opportunity to do a webinar for them.

Interviewer: Right. So outside of your teaching and administrative duties, what other task make up the bulk of your responsibilities? You perform within your organization.

P8: I mean it would be any of those any additional meetings, I mean just a regular faculty meetings, meetings with the medical director, you usually that way I have time for it. He usually does it on campus. He comes up here and teaches each semester a lecture, and so talk to him during that time. So that way you're kind of overlapping times because he's busy, and we wanna make the most of that time. But mostly it's gonna be teaching. And in the administrative roles. And then that's pretty much it that I work part time on an ambulance as well.

Interviewer: Outstanding. So I do the same. The finance, the little bit that it adds to. It's nice, but I do it more for to say sharpen to keep keep up with the science. And again, that prestige of the organization I'm working for is that similar for you? Is it financial, or a little bit of both?

P8: Very much so. Not just strictly, as I told them. I don't even care if I get paid. It was more of just being the stay up on skills being immersed in that type of environment. Because I feel that makes you a better educator and vice versa. I think an educator makes you a better provider, and there's a lot of that overlapping, and I'm always big on. How can you be a master of your craft? And I think it's blended in both, making sure you have a presence in both the field and the classroom.

Interviewer: Outstanding. Are you responsible for the simulation use in your program?

P8: We are. We also have a sim department here as well. They work mostly with a nursing program, but they're always there to help us out as well. But it comes to a lot of setup and take down EMS. We do our own setup and take down. We don't walk into a pre setup lab, and then just go home and they package it up for us. We got to set up our labs and break most of it down.

Interviewer: So for you personally, how much time do you allocate to scenarios and skills?

P8: So we'll send out the schedule, so I'll build the schedule for where I'm the lead instructor for it. And so everyone knows their role. And what they need to do whenever they come in. So we have bays already set up, ready in place. So each one has a stretcher, a mannequin, and then they'll have their primary bag pediatric bag, and the drug box, and so, therefore you're pretty much self sufficient to run scenarios right from the get go. It's more getting people ready. Hey, you're gonna run a cant intubate cant oxygenate, or we're going to do a delayed sequence intubation scenario. And that way they can run it.

I kind of like giving them the liberty to create their own scenarios instead of have a setup scenario. One thing that I find with it is, people get complacent, and they just kind of read off a piece of paper instead of actually having to think. And then go off. Of what medications and treatments are being performed. I think that helps them stay on top of their game by having to

adapt, instead of just reading strictly off a paper. So giving that stuff out, they can prep for it and come and prepare to run that scenario or that teach that particular skill that's not a scenario.

Interviewer: Right. They have that vested interest of putting the to themselves. So prior to the answer this question. But how many hours a week are needed to perform your job duties. Would you say less than 30, between 40 and 50, or greater than 50 hours?

P8: I would say, probably greater than 50 when you factor in I mean the lecture time is what everyone sees but what they don't see is all the prep work that goes into building and the continuous reading that goes on to update your lectures each year. I try to do it, and so I'm always doing something to update it. Like me, I'm about to teach toxicology. So I'm reading a different toxicology book. So that way I can enhance that, or if you find your hey, this lecture didn't go so well. We need to find a way to beef it up a little bit. Let's focus on that.

So and it comes to building usually for every hour, I'm probably prep in 8 hours for every 1 hour lecture, and I'm really slow when it comes to a building I'm just not on to say let's just throw it out on the PowerPoint, and I think there's a science behind it. It's not just death by PowerPoint, and just fill the screen with a bunch of words. I'm very big on all my students. I have the give presentations for topics as an exam review, because I want them to be better communicators. Because therefore, I think that's helps them out in the industry they can communicate a message more likely to promote or get hired and so I have them do the same thing. I build my slides for a picture on every slide and again no more than 25 words.

I want you to be able to articulate a message. Just not turn your back to our crowd and read off, slide! And then, so I hold myself to that standard as well, being able to present something, but go off off the slide, have a slide up there for 10 minutes, but I'm talking mostly, and it puts in a lot of work with having to take notes and then review your lecture before you give it the next day, so you come prepared. So I say, a lot of it goes to that.

Interviewer: Excellent. Oh, the administrative duties that's assigned to you, which take up the most amount of time?

P8: I think there's always the last minute ASAP college type things that you have to do that you didn't know anything about, and it's like, Hey, we need this information right now. And suddenly, what wasn't an emergency 5 minutes ago, now it's such an emergency that they need it by 5 o'clock. And so there's always those types of things. A lot of things have to go with state and accreditation and student learning outcomes program outcomes through. I feel like it's it's pretty redundant from already having to do stuff for accreditation and then we're having to do it through another avenue as well. So there's a lot of that stuff. And I mean, just when you have probably have 70 to 80 students in the program right now between EMT and Paramedic and so you always have issues arise. That you're going to have to be dealing with, and that can take a lot of your time when those issues do wrong.

Interviewer: So you mentioned that? It's I don't know if frustration would be the right word, but just repeated work of doing it for the college and then doing it for the accreditation body, and

then doing it again for the State. Do you feel like that repetition, or is there a better way to streamline it?

P8: Yeah. It's kinda how do you fix something? And I don't know. I did I think a lot of the I understand why the processes are in place and why they need to do it. At the same time I feel they can look great on a piece of paper. But that doesn't mean you have a very efficient and productive program. And I feel that that's where we've gotten in academia as long as everything looks good on paper, then we are doing very good. We're hitting on all cylinders. I think that's far from the case.

I think what matters is just being in the classroom, and what instruction is going on in the classroom. How are we doing and staying organized and structured in the laboratory settings, so we're being efficient there. I think those are the things you need to focus on. And the other stuff take care of themselves. Your outcomes will be good if you accomplish that. So I try to focus on those things that you do every single day because they're gonna stack up over time just kind of like retirement is if you take care of business each day, focus on it, you'll have good outcomes at the end of the day, and instead, just focusing on outcomes as a number.

Interviewer: I completely agree. So how many full-time educators or faculty members, including yourself, since you store in that educational role, are employed in your organization?

P8: Yes, so we have a full-time clinical coordinator. And then full time program director. And then we have three full time instructors, and then we also have our own administrative assistance. So definitely have a lot of help and resources here at the college.

Interviewer: Do you feel like that number is adequate?

P8: I do. I mean it's you only have so many hours during the day, and so when you're running two paramedic cohorts and two EMT cohorts, you have some overlapping, and therefore you gotta rely on part-time people to come in to help out with lab which always can't be there, and so it can be stressful whenever you need to accomplish more in the laboratory setting, that you might be down a person because you have a schedule conflict with them being in the classroom for another paramedic or EMT class. So you really have to lean in on your part-time staff during that time.

Interviewer: Gotcha, and you said, you do have administrative assistance that's specifically yours. You're not sharing with any other Allied health fields?

P8: We share with the Fire Science program.

Interviewer: Would you describe yourself as very satisfied? Somewhat says, satisfied or not satisfied with your current role?

P8: I'd say I'm satisfied where I'm currently at. I'm the kind of person that I have high expectations, and so I'm probably never gonna be extremely satisfied. I feel there's always places to improve. Or that just how I conduct business might not be how another instructor conducts

business whenever they're the lead class. I'd like to give ownership to all my instructors underneath me and have them have responsibility. And so therefore I mean I'm satisfied. Would I do things differently and some things? Yeah. But did we get to, you know, point A to point B with making different decisions that I make and not say yes, even though I wouldn't be doing it differently.

So I would say I'm satisfied with everything that I have resources that I do have. I think it's easy to have the negativity take over to you. So you got it, if you only look it through that lens, you're probably gonna be unsatisfied. But look at the quality of life and the balance that our role gives, and that I think it's good. You can always find something bad. But what I mean, if you work for time for the college, get spring break what other 40 year old, get the spring break 40 year old, gets a whole month off for December, and then kind of may break and gets weekends

Then it's like if you're complaining that much, go get back on the truck, and start to feel the stresses to go along with that, and I think you'll be singing a different tune, and I think you'll be saying, hey, I wish I was back in that old seat, because we've had some people go that route and they're like oh, I wish I was back a teaching in the classroom, so. I think it goes down to your perspective. My perspective is I'm satisfied because I see a lot of the blessings that my role has. But not always there, because I'm always trying to improve and get better.

Interviewer: Excellent. So have you searched for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job with the last year.

P8: I have not.

Interviewer: Excellent. How likely do you see yourself in the program director role in the next 3 years?

P8: I mean, my plan is to be here as long as they'll let me. I felt I have found what my passion is. I like to serve people, and I feel like the future of EMS, and really the future of most occupations, all ties back into the classroom, and if we take care of business, the future will be a whole lot better. So what can I control? I can only control what happens in my classroom and on this program. So if I could take care of stuff I'm doing my part of trying to make the EMS occupation a better place, and man, you're getting 80 students a year, and then you have them all go out their how many patient encounters do they have you know throughout their career and you make a huge impact of being here than just being directly on the truck I feel. I think it's good to do both.

But there, you might only see one patient at a time, and just those encounters here we train the future leaders of the occupation the future healthcare Provider. So you're gonna make a huge impact. And that's what I like to do. I like to make the world a better place and serve others, and this job does that.

Interviewer: Outstanding. So that kind of wraps up the more informal question. So question 1A- Does your supervisor understand what's important to you as an employee?

P8: Yeah, very much. So.

Interviewer: How do they show that understanding?

P8: I think, just through dialogue, you talk with someone and it's not a rigid conversation where, if you like, barriers are up, they're very loose whenever they talk with you, and they're approachable. And so therefore they're going to be always having an open ear, and want to help out in any way they can that you're definitely gonna have their help. And so best, dean, that I've had since I've been here for sure.

Interviewer: Excellent. How do potential advancement opportunities influence your loyalty to your current organization?

P8: I'm kinda I guess advancements for me would be something as long as being a dean or being a vice chancellor or the chancellor of the college, and that's not where I wanna be. I'm happy where I'm at. I wanna be in the classroom. I wanna have interaction with students. That is who I am, and that's what gives me purpose and meaning. So I don't see me advancing up any more past EMS program director cause, and I wouldn't be in the EMS program anymore. I've been looking all over health sciences or some other administrative role. And that's just not where a where my passion lies.

Interviewer: Excellent. So question 2A- How important to you are new activities that expand your skill set in meeting your job expectations, and that could be continued education going to conferences additional degrees, whatever.

P8: Yeah, I think it's huge. I've always wanted to stay abreast on not only medical knowledge, but how do you become a better educator when we go to these conferences, I always like to see in evaluate you know how they are as a public speaker. As I found out that's who we truly are is public speakers, and we have to be entertaining and looking at Ted Talks, how do people stay focused and listen to them? We do 4-hour lectures, and so I have my faculty say, well, I'm gonna lose interest. After a while, seem like they don't want to listen anymore. Well, you know, that's our responsibility. How can you become a better public speaker? And so I'm always looking for a way to become a better public speaker. So then you can educate better, and therefore people are more successful in the program.

So I think researching medical knowledge reading things that are outside your realm, of your occupation, where you find, hey? I have something similar here that you can take back to your occupation to make it better. It's always good. So read outside of your profession as well, and I think it's good to go to your conferences. As long as you have a budget for it. That's the thing. A lot of these conferences are getting pretty expensive these days when you factor in flights and \$600 registration fees, and when you have a staff as large as mine not everyone's gonna be able to get to go. It's just not in the budget and then so kind of trying to take advantage of anything that's online. And there's a lot of free information out there, a lot of books that you can read that I think you need a lot of that information instead of just going to a conference. So a lot of avenues to do it, and I think you have to do it in order to always improve.



Interviewer: So you mentioned the fees and the budget. How supportive is your organization as far as those types of that budget that they allocate?

P8: We have more than enough budget. I know people complain about budgets all the time, and you can be good at anything that you want. Like me today. We didn't use the mannequin for these EMT. That was the patient. And I'm gonna interact with me. I want them to get a palpitate my pulse, get a manual blood pressure, auscultate my lung sounds. I'll kind of wheeze a little bit to the simulate an asthmatic patient, and that way they have to interact with me instead of just having to deal with technology that I find out doesn't always work all the time, or it's not real human tissue.

And so when it comes to a budget, I think we're good. I know we are. A lot of places are based off of zero-based budgeting system. Where, hey? You got to spend it all, spend it all because you're going to lose it. And that's just I feel like unfortunate, cause you get a lot of wasted dollars for me. I wish I could save mine. Always have enough money at the end of the year to spend on anything that we want, and just because I have that lecture doesn't mean I always do it. I'm always trying to fight that battle to show why I'm more conservative in my budget so they could we take that, let's say we have additional \$10,000. I could do that for 4 years, and then we could buy something really nice, or couple of things that are really nice. So we definitely have enough budget that to run a program.

I think they use what you got, and there's so many other avenues you can't just rely on technology, because you can have all the bells and whistles in the world. But if you're not structured or not taking advantage of it, and it doesn't mean much, it all comes down to that instructor.

Interviewer: So question 3A- Does your supervisor give you feedback on your work?

P8: Yeah. So I mean, we always have our yearly evaluations that we go through here. In addition to that, if anything comes up my supervisor will definitely reach out to me. If anything needs to be talked about. Very open communication between me and the Dean.

Interviewer: Very nice, So you're able to give your feedback to your supervisor as well.

P8: Yes, sir.

Interviewer: It's readily accepted?

P8: O, yes, sir.

Interviewer: Perfect. So question 4A- is a job and the work that you're doing what you expected.

P8: It is, it's a challenge. So I think I always say, and what's worth doing if it's not a challenge at the end of the day anything that is has any responsibility is gonna be a challenge. And it's gonna be difficult at times. And that's what gives it meaning. And so, yeah, I do like it. I enjoy it. A new students coming through all the time, new personality, definitely seeing students that struggle to

learn. I don't know if you are seeing that with Covid coming out. But I feel like that's also what we have to do. We have to instill a lot of values before they go out into the field, and even then, even the once you have out there, that they might lack those values. But nothing can beat resilience and hard work, and that's what I try to really push into them is you're gonna have to work to understand anything we can't just observe, touch heads and absorb all the information.

And I feel like that's what we see is a lot of the students account in the bottle fed a lot of information just constantly been given the answers. And so that's a huge challenge is to change that way of thinking. I do a lot more, I guess, Socratic type teaching where it's more questions, what and how? Questions were, they have to describe it, and I could tell them they don't really know how to respond. They can't really think about a question, or why they would select a multiple choice one. They're just going to select that one cause. It sounds right, but they can't tell the why behind it, and that scares me, because that means we're not producing competent healthcare providers. They need to be critical thinkers.

What they lack is that critical thinking, and I feel like we can complain about it all day long. But it's not gonna change anything. And we can say, you know what the hell with it. This is the new students. We still got to get them through. And if it's just memorization well, let's do it. But that's not solving the problem. We need to make sure we have critical thinkers that puts more work on us than that. So be it. But that's how I'm used to state right now. The biggest challenges is it's gonna be new students coming in and new learning styles.

Interviewer: For sure. So when you assume that program director role, did you have a mentor that help navigate organization challenges or challenges associated with state or national requirements?

P8: None at all. I had. We had the dean at the time, but it was more. Everything about the college, really, about when it comes to the state. We had someone on the role that was interim for a little bit. Here. So it did have a little bit, but digging into it there was a lot that I had to learn on the fly, and from the moment I took over the program director within, I think 5 months we had a side visit. So, therefore you're just trying to understand things, and then you get kind of thrown out there and have to pay for other people's sins. And that's fine. But yeah, definitely happen to learn on the fly.

Interviewer: Yeah, so, is there any best practices already or Potential pitfalls that you'd see somebody else, That's let's say, stepping in that director role tomorrow. Any advice you'd give if you don't have that mentor? Some of the things that you did that helped you be successful.

P8: And I'm actually mentoring someone right now. A director of one of the programs, having him know how to just go through our learning management software. So we use e-campus. So he knows how to use that to know how to put in time for a faculty whenever they submit it. All the little things that I really didn't know. There. I could have someone that I can be a guide for him, and then it's just have you, and how do you become a supervisor? It's easy. Whenever you're everyone's underneath. And you're an instructor.

But now, when you feel responsible for people in their production and how do you communicate with them? How do? How are you a leader? And then that's something that could be a little bit difficult. And I think everyone has their own style, and so try to give guidance in that way as well, and if not always, the correct answer for it. You can do it different ways, or every situation probably has multiple ways you can navigate that. Circumstance and come out with a similar conclusion. But I think it's good to have a guide and to bounce ideas off of, and that's I think, that mentorship role is good at this. Someone who's had experience, and they might have walked that path before and say, Hey, this is what I went through this. You might do some of these similar things.

Interviewer: Sorry question. 4. B. What are some of the main satisfiers in this dissatisfies of your job?

P8: Main satisfiers are going to be getting the opportunity to interact with students and getting opportunity to educate them and see them grow throughout the program and begin competent and watch them as they graduate, or is successful, or whenever they go on to get hired and you see how well they are performing and knowing that you might never get a thank you for it, and that's fine with me. But you see how they've grown and matured, and that's due from hopefully the impact that you made on those individuals that that's going to be the big, biggest satisfaction that I have had.

The difficult one can also be the same side the people that don't share the same vision. Or don't have maybe the same values. So for me, always having a positive attitude being resilient and hard work, I'm on the will always go back to those three core values. If I can do those things, and if people don't view that, then it can be difficult, because if you don't want to work as hard, then other people are gonna have to pick up the slack at the same time, and it can be difficult in in a college environment when it deals with communicating with people underneath you, and how you navigate those waters, and where that leads to. I've done that numerous times, and it's not as easy as only your own business, and if people don't have an aligned vision it's pretty easy to move forward and say, Hey, We don't share the same values. So if it's that would be the the biggest struggle.

Interviewer: Excellent. So. Question. 5A- How satisfied are you with the pay you receive in relation to the type and amount of work that you do?

P8: I would say it's satisfactory. I think everyone's gonna say they want more. I could definitely. I never broke it down to what it would pay per hour wise. But when you factor in a full load with the pay is, and then we get also paid the structural load units everything above 15. And so we're always operating, you know, in the mid 20 type range two cohorts going on that definitely helps bump up to pay pretty significantly tainted that I don't even know what the normal rate would be like without the Ios in there built in and for all that overload. But I could say I'm satisfied right now with it.

I think you could always improve when I look at EMS, in general, compared to all other healthcare fields. It's definitely a lack in what they pay per hour. I see it around here, and the problem is, what amount of work for a rule EMS service, and they just don't have the taxpayer

dollars there. So I look at it and say, Well, what can we do? What can you do to increase the pay can only do it so much and I think there's a trade off there in that trade-off is gonna be a work-life balance. You'll always have busy bad days, but you won't get hammered as much. So therefore, you're not as fatigued on your days off, when you have people working in a busy area, and they're running calls 20 out of a 24 hour shift. I mean, that's good to burn you out. And so, yeah, might get pay a little more. There's a currency paid, and maybe your mental health because of that. So there's always trade-offs.

Interviewer: So. Questions. 5B- What do you think of the pay you receive in relation to the cost of living in the city of which you live?

P8: I'd say before Covid, probably so. But after covid cost of living here in this area has skyrocketed with people moving out of the surrounding areas. Someone, let's say me was going out and buying a home for the first time, it would be very difficult to be able to and I think a lot of Texans are probably having to deal with this, buying a home for the very first time. That doesn't have any of that money stored up and invested in home. I think it would be difficult.

Interviewer: Excellent question. 6A- Are you provided with the tools, resources, including training, to help you develop in your career?

P8: Yes, very much so.

Interviewer: Can you expand on some of those tools or resources?

P8: Yeah. And I look at our simulations lab, you have the everything that you need here to get the to conduct every lab. You look at the facilities here, they are state of the art. When you look at visual audio capabilities inside the classroom are very well also. So you really have everything that you need to do your job and do it right.

Interviewer: Very nice just out of curiosity. Do you all use a platform for clinical documentation or skills or scenarios?

P8: Yes, we use a commercial platform for it.

Interviewer: Do you feel like it's user friendly to both the students, yourself, and part-time staff, or.

P8: I would say no, probably to the students. I tell everyone not only get to learn to be a good paramedic. You're also gonna have to learn a new language. And that's this platform. And so I put it the responsibility on them to input everything. And also the clinical setting, and they're able to do it over time. Now. Once they change from the skills tracker to the competency tracker that we've been using for this new cohort. I don't know if sums up like it's hard for me to even load anything from a lab shift to see what they did. It just spins for 6 hours, and so same thing as our clinical coordinator. It's hard for her to evaluate clinical shifts right now, because it's not loading, but the skill tracker ones, fine and it gave it more of a global view.

That's one thing that I would say, this is frustrating, is changing that student minimum competency matrix all the time. I think anybody could pencil whip this thing if they really wanted to. And I hear programs that do it. Or students that came over from where else they are. Oh, I never heard of this that they just build everything out for us. It's like man. How did you not know how to input any of that on your clinicals? And but I feel like it could be a really good instrument of used correctly. But, like I said, you can have everything look good on that SMC that doesn't mean a student is competent in anything if you're not running an efficient lab.

Interviewer: I agree. Question 6 B are the promotional practices in your organization fair, transparent?

P8: Promotional. I would say I've never been a part of anyone being promoted up in here. They would have to apply for the position. You're just not given a position. They're going to post it and go to the same process of being evaluated like every other candidate. So I really can't say how transparent it is. I've just been on hiring committees where people have been employed before, and like a part time to a full-time position, and that seems to be pretty transparent. I guess that could be a promotion, but nothing like up into administration. I haven't been, but that's from everything that I've seen before underneath me, so pretty transparent.

Interviewer: Fair enough. Question 7A-. Is our flexibility in autonomy, in your work, and how do you feel about it?

P8: I'd say, Yeah, very much so. And that I think we can design that. I'm big on people having ownership for the class and designing it and then evaluating it. And to see do we hit all the points and giving feedback to them. But yeah, everyone has ownership to be able to develop a curriculum that you based off a state and national guidelines. But how do you do it? That's going to be up to you on how you want to educate it. And to those students, how do you do a design your slides? Not big on saying, Hey, you gotta use these book slides the the most boring slides I've ever seen. And so, yeah, definitely be creative. Show your personality, and, you know, make an impact to these students and find a way to connect with them.

Interviewer: Excellent. Question. 7B- Are you able to do the work that's assigned to you? So do you have the tools and skills that you need to succeed in your job?

P8: I would say yes, definitely. Have all the tools that I need, all the technological capabilities. Have the staff around me, and that I know that it's a luxury. What we have the amount of staff and having a full time administrative assistance. So definitely have all the tools we need to be successful.

Interviewer: So I'm gonna take a step back just for a second we hit on the scenario lab question earlier. And you said, you have stayed the art equipment. Would it be beneficial to have financially if you have the capability to have that individual that's just straight scenario based that they take care of that and put those together. And would that benefit your organization to just have one person that's designated to that type of job?

P8: It did definitely would. I mean, it would make things easier to say, Hey, these are scenarios that we're gonna have tomorrow. Make sure everything's prepped for this cause. Everyone has outside obligations and taken school kids to school in the morning, and so to get there to prep. You know, it would definitely be nice to have somebody, but at the same time I feel like we have enough people that we could do it if we were the private industry. I think we have more than to be successful. I don't think they they would see. Oh, I'm just gonna pay a full time person just to set you up for lab in the morning. Good and then tear it down. I just don't think that would make for a full time job in itself.

Interviewer: So how do you? How would you describe your work? Block balance?

P8: Me. It is it's great right now. I do my job here, and then I'll go home and be able to be a dad. You know. Be a husband. Get the stuff done around the house, and then come back and really big on the when I work on the ambulance I'm going to dedicate one weekend a month. So you think about that 25% of so you think about that 25% of my weekend. So it's something to me to be current. But it's not something that's gonna kind of throw off that balance where I don't get to see my kids. And my wife as much. So that's what's great about education. I feel like you can get a good work black balance with it.

Interviewer: Excellent. So question 8A- Is your work appreciated by your supervisor?

P8: I think so. Whenever I talk to her, since he seems to appreciate me and the job that we've done here for the EMS program. So I would say yes.

Interviewer: How have you been recognized for a job? Well done!

P8: Just verbally, or during the evals each year. They'll let them know. I know affirmations are great, and they're deserved, and so she does a good job of saying when someone said a good job she'll let them know.

Interviewer: Outstanding 9A- Do you have the opportunity for professional career development? I think you kind of hit on that. It's more intrinsically driven as kind of the person that you are.

P8: It is yes, and I mean we have our own funds for it, for the entire faculty. We have a budget line item for it, and even if we exceed those monies, you can always go to professional development committee, and they have additional money as well to pay for them. To go to a conference. You wanna do it. You can find the resources for it.

Interviewer: But so question. 9 B. Do you have a learning plan, such as a additional college degree? And if yes, does your supervisor support you?

P8: Like an additional, like a master's degree. No, I just have my master's degree.

Interviewer: Are you looking at, advancing that are?

P8: I don't know. I look at it, and I don't know if that would change anything. I wouldn't mind going back to school now what it would be in would probably be something maybe totally different. Some I would get a masters in something, probably something else that could be applicable to education, or maybe something. Whenever you're done with this career that you could use.

Interviewer: So how supportive would that do you have anybody that's going back to school underneath of you?

P8: We did our clinical coordinator, probably about 4 years ago, got her. She got her masters, I believe in any EMS program somewhere out [region of United States], and so she was able to obtain that. And she was able to do it. And then that definitely increased her pay for having that master.

Interviewer: Was that, supported by the college.

P8: It was, I mean, I don't know financially. I think they might have something for textbooks or something very minuscule. But I don't think it's very much to cover the cost of an entire master's program.

Interviewer: But I mean as far as like as long as you have the time, doing it during your downtime?

P8: Oh, for sure. Yeah, I believe that. That's how she was doing it back then. And it seemed to not be an issue.

Interviewer: Awesome question. 10A- Are you satisfied with the responsibilities and challenges offered by your work in your organization?

P8: Very much. So, yeah, we always have a challenge all the time. And so like. I said, I enjoy having a challenge, and it provides more meaning and purpose. And so I enjoy it.

Interviewer: Excellent question. 10B- Do you have the opportunity to use your skills in your work? And that could be. That could be your skills as paramedics skills as a leader skills as the administrative just skills on the computer. Whatever.

P8: Yeah, I would say very much. So any skills that comply to medical knowledge, I mean, you're definitely gonna be doing that. Any skills that apply to public speaking is in the classroom. Any skills that apply to being a leader and leadership and having to overlook, you know, be a supervisor. For how many of 6 different people? So all that five different people? So it's gonna challenge you a different way. And so like, yeah, you have to have a variety of skill sets.

Interviewer: Where many hits. Question 11A- Does your work give you a sense of accomplishment? And I feel like you've answered that when it's definitely your passion, it's very, very evident. How likely are you to stay with an organization if it's not meeting your job expectations?

P8: For me. Yeah, if we how we say if we didn't share the same values or anything, and then it would be, I'm not gonna work at a place that I can't accomplish what I want to accomplish or if I don't share the values of the organization. Then I'm not gonna waste my time, you know. We all got one life, and life is short, and we think about our careers, or even shorter. And then, so I'm gonna go work where I feel that fit in with that organization.

Interviewer: 11B- How important are your relationships with your work colleagues?

P8: I think it's gonna be really important to have open communication. Not always going to agree on everything, but that's all what it's all about. I don't want to be a tyrannical leader that says, Hey, this is the way and how we're going to conduct business. I want to give everyone ownership and have them make decisions, and therefore we'll evaluate it at the end of the class, and see how everything did it work out well, great you know I might have done it differently. But that doesn't mean that my ways wrong. Your way was wrong, so I think it's great to have that communication. Have those faculty meetings and one-on-one meetings. But I think the biggest thing is, you've just got to be able to feel comfortable talking about difficult topics and also praising good things as well whenever they come up in a public manner.

Interviewer: Excellent 12A- How do you expect your supervisor to demonstrate that they generally value your contribution?

P8: For me, it would just be you could just tell me. Sometimes I think she does a good job whenever things when it's deserved. Yeah, definitely, let me know. I'm big on affirmations, not just because you're saying it, but because they're actually meaningful. And it is recognized and hard work, and it was earned just not handing them out just like candy. There's no meaning behind it, and so she does a good job whenever we do something that's worthy of it to give that affirmation.

Interviewer: Yes, sir. So what support do you expect your supervisor to provide an order for you to achieve the next level in your career.

P8: No, I mean, I get everything that I need. The only thing would be great is if this college sponsored, maybe a master's degree program that would always be nice, and I know we have a lot of our students that come through here that are sponsored by departments that get their paramedic education, paid for free, I mean, that's amazing to see I've never had that luxury ever offered to me, and and that would be awesome if there was some type of tuition reimbursement at the college for a master's program but currently there's not and I'm fine with that, and I understand that.

Interviewer: Excellent! So before we get to the last question, and I, we kinda hit on this a little bit earlier. You have any advice that you would give a brand new director that's coming into that role to help again navigate some of those issues that you experienced.

P8: Yeah. My biggest thing is. Know, it's not gonna be easy. You're gonna have times of suffering and happiness and I think that's kind of life in general. How do you handle the difficult times



because they are going to come. And if they're not here right now, they will be your doorstep. Someday, and so know that that's gonna happen, and all you can do is control what you can control. And that's you. And what decisions that you make and always make a decision that's in the best interests of the program or the best interests of the student. And if you can do those things that are backed up with your own values, then there's nothing that anyone can fault you for later on, if it goes back to that.

And so that's what I would let them know. That'd be grounded in that area and then let them know it's a marathon, and just enjoy every second of it, and haven't have a different perspective. If you come in through a lens that hey? This is a work, and this is just horrible every single day, and you look at all the negatives in it, and that's all you're gonna see. But if you change that lens and look at the opportunity that you're presented about, look at the impacts that you can make. Look at that work life balance that you could have. You know we there's a lot of good things that you have to in the seat. And so I would look more at those. And that's what's going to get you throughout your career is that that perspective.

Interviewer: Very, very solid advice for sure. 13C- And the final question, are there any other local state or national factors that may impact your decision to stay in or vacate your current role as a program director, that we have not discussed yet, that you'd like to voice?

P8: Yes, I guess the only thing would be as if they mandated. You had to have a masters degree to be a program director. I mean, that would definitely cancel me out. And and so that would be the only thing that I could think of.



### Appendix M: Interview 9 Transcript

Interviewer: So for the record. Can you please give your consent to being recorded both visually and audio leads?

P9: I, can. Yes.

Interviewer: Perfect. Do you understand that this is completely voluntary, and that you reserve the right to withdraw at any point, or refused to answer any question that you're not comfortable, answering perfect.

P9: I understand that.

Interviewer: So was your current job. And how long have you been in this role?

P9: My current position is program director of a private education company that offers EMS educational services at my current company. I've been here, as you can see in the background. Actually for 15 and a half, almost 16 years is July. I was program director at a prior company before that a few years ago, and I used to be a program director chair of a college program back at in the mid-1990s. So.

Interviewer: Just out of curiosity. What was it the stent of those previous two director roles?

P9: Let's see, one was about 2 years for the one prior and the one before that was about a year.

Interviewer: Very nice. So what made you decide to become a paramedic program director? And I'm going focus on paramedic because it isn't accredited just for the consistency of it.

P9: Right, that's fine. Well, I've been an EMS education since 1993. In some compacity or another. And actually I had forgotten that was actually the program director for 2 years for a hospital program back in the early 90s as well. And I took over that role because there was no one else to do it at the time, and I firmly believe in EMS education, and that paramedics are not always educated well, so many of the programs as I was going across and running into them, even as an operations director for EMS for a couple of services, people coming out of school that just we're not up to snuff with what they were getting and so I decided to become a program director for promoted higher education, higher quality of that delivered content to try to get a better product of the current candidate coming in.

Interviewer: Excellent. So with the current organization that you're with was there somebody in that role prior to you?

P9: No, actually I along with one other person, actually, two other persons originally founded with our company.

Interviewer: Oh, very nice!

P9: And so we founded this company and started with EMT. And EMS instructor, went straight on. It amt and paramedic. As soon as the State of Texas would allow it, and then we became nationally accredited. Shortly after it was required for national or for the State of Texas to.

Interviewer: Perfect. So how long have you worked in EMS?

P9: I started in EMS in 1986. What is that? 37 years? Yeah, I'm a. I'm a dinosaur.

Interviewer: What other roles have you performed within the industry?

P9: I have set up to ambulance services from the ground up. And then operations director. I flew for a flight air medical 911 flight program for 2 years and worked 911 my entire career, with the exception of probably 6 months or so on a transfer service.

Interviewer: What best describes a sponsorship type of your organization. Is it post-secondary, including community college reports, universities, hospital consortium, fire based, ambulance based, or other?

P9: Consortium.

00:04:20.000 --> 00:04:28.000

How many paramedics students, does your organization graduate on annual basis?

P9: I'm gonna have to estimate that since I wasn't prepared because we don't have regular classes where we start at 1 point and ended and other hours is an open entry open exit program. But I'm gonna say we probably average. I'm gonna say 5 a month, so probably average 60 to 80 a year that graduate.

Interviewer: So do you still perform a teaching role within your organization?

P9: Not anymore. No, I'm totally administrative.

Interviewer: So outside of that? Well, that question, it's what percentage would you say, is this instruction versus administration. So we'll go to.

P9: Well, hang on a second. Let's revisit that for a second.

Interviewer: Okay.

P9: If you send our program teaches in a non traditional environment, and we do a lot of static and video presentations where it's not active live teaching, we do those on separate deals. I don't know if you would count all the editing and views actual instruction, because I'm the one who writes a lot of the content, so I don't know if the students read so I don't know if you count that as teaching.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So just to get a little bit better of a feel for your teaching methods, is it synchronous? And asynchronous. We're some of the times and structures live in front of the students. And sometimes it's just put on the students shoulders to be familiar with.

P9: Yes, the majority. It's on the students, shoulders and the minority are a weekly available instructor lead rooms that are on zoom as well as medical director lead rooms that are on Zoom. So that's the minority side, but they do offer those several times a month, and the students get to choose when they go.

Interviewer: So is there a set number that of those lives? What's that number per month?

P9: It's not per month per paramedic, they have to attend a minimum of six of the instructor lead chats and a minimum of three of the medical director sessions.

Interviewer: So are you responsible for the simulation use in your program, and I know it's your program is set up a little bit different than most. Or is that is that distance, like skills, like simulations, as far as different scenarios.

P9: Right. Yes, yes, I'm responsible for providing and structuring a little bit to the the skills lab instructors to utilize and teach.

Interviewer: So how much of the time or how much time each week would you say that those scenarios and labs take out to set up and get ready to roll with the other instructors?

P9: I'm doing roughly I think, trying to think of just paramedic level, not EMT level, but I would think we're probably doing a minimum of 3 labs a week that are 10 hours a day. So, you know, as far as setup is concerned, you know it's hard for me to gauge that, because each instructor is different in how they set up. Usually they leave the everything set, so that the next instructor can come in with their paperwork, their materials, and start the next lab. It's not a matter of as far as going in, and laying out equipment. We have rooms all laid out ahead of time, with everything that is needed, and they just shift from room to room to room. And so I'm not sure if that's what you're asking.

Interviewer: Out of curiosity. How many of those rooms do you utilize are available? I'm sorry to put you under the gun again.

P9: No, it's okay. I gotta think about it. Six, and they have several stations set up in each room, so that they can just ship from one to the next.

Interviewer: That's nice. So how many hours? In again, I understand that we're focusing on the paramedics side of it. But I understand that it's very hard to delineate some of these cause it flows into your advanced EMT courses as well, so you can look at it from a global perspective. So how many hours a week are needed to perform your job? Would you say? Less than 30, 40 to 50, or more than 50 hours a week?

P9: More than 50.

Interviewer: So of the administrative duties that are assigned to you, which do you find that takes up the most amount of time?

P9: Again. That's a difficult question. That's a difficult question, because it depends on the day of the week.

Interviewer: And it's seasonal. I find it seasonal where?

P9: It is because when you're when you're dealing with or coming up on your time for annual reports or self studies, whether it be the state or accreditation, then those hours amp up tremendously from what they normally are so and like, you know it depends on the day of the week. Like today, it's just been dealing with students the entire day I mean, it's one I'm not unusual to answer to 200 emails in one day. But I would say, the moment of my job is split between dealing with interaction by email, message or telephone with students. And documenting and following through with all of the it EMS that are required to maintain, mostly accreditation. You know whether it's whether it's documenting, you know the interactions with the you know, the medical director in the QA/QI, and pulling all of the committees together in the exam review committees in the you know all of the different things that are required for us as program director responsibilities. I would say, that's equal to just what is needed for accreditation in the week, with the amount of time that I spend actually trying to interact with students.

Interviewer: And I could imagine what your self study looks like with not having that but not having that set Cohort.

P9: It's a nightmare, but we do it for a reason. So you know, we reach a subset of the student population that cannot fit into the norms is a lot of the student population that we get. They can't go sit in like your program there and go to school and be show up 3 days a week, for however many hours, and then try to do their work and stuff. They have to have more possibility than that. And most of our students have to have extensions, and life happens and we don't throw them out on their ears. That type of thing so dealing with all of that. And then documents, and trying to make it fit into the little boxes that are set by accreditation.

Interviewer: Along those lines, a lot of the stuff that we're that we're required to document. I mean with your role, and how you're set up, it's very unique and very much needed, especially at this day and age, is the situation we find ourselves in a State national level. But how do you think we could simplify, or how could the accreditation, body? I'm not gonna say their name. But how do you think they could simplify that? Or is there a way to simplify that where we still are able to effectively evaluate our program and the students in the outcomes. But maybe not. I mean, just simplify it.

P9: Well, I think to be honest and surprisingly for me to say this. They have come a long way in the last, I'd say year, year and a half or so, in trying to simplify things versus before. I know that before the last couple of years, getting support or getting questions answered, especially if they were trying to, you know, say that you weren't meeting a standard. It was an impossible to get a

straight answer before, and at least now they can give you ideas for ways that you can meet that standard stats made it somewhat easier. But that shifting standard is what's difficult, you know.

I think what can make it easier is the consistency of oh, I well, I realize we as profession, need to improve even in EMS education, it seems like it's a continually moving target. Every time you do and you finally feel, oh, my goodness! I finally got there, and I have everything that you need, the way that you can understand it with our little odd program here. And then they move the standard. So I think that's a big part of making it maybe more consistent, and in structuring the standards in such a way that they are not constantly evolving or changing. So that again, you're constantly trying to measure full time faculty members.

Interviewer: And no, and I agree with you over the last year year and a half, it has improved greatly. I know when I first assume the role and ask for okay, I understand standard but what's the interpretation and it seemed like you get it two or three different interpretations, depending on who you talk to. So I agree that that's come a long ways as well.

So and this is going to be a difficult question probably won't make you have to count again. But how many educators are full time faculty members, including yourself, are employed with your organization?

P9: There's just two that are full time educators. And we have part time. One let's say, well, yeah, part time. And then you have contracts. So I'll count those. So eight in total.

Interviewer: Do you feel like that? Number is adequate?

P9: For now. Yes. Yeah.

Interviewer: Excellent! Do you have an administrative assistant that helps reduce any of the workload?

P9: I do. One and a half. I say one and a half, because one is full time and the other it just works a few hours a week. She's like the assistant to the assistant.

Interviewer: Gotcha, do you feel like that's adequate? Are they able to keep up with?

P9: Yes, yeah. I think they are keeping up pretty good.

Interviewer: Excellent, so would you describe yourself as very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with your current.

P9: I'm satisfied with my role. I'm just tired. I would be more satisfied if I felt like I had the energy. But I'm at the point where you know I'm just, you know, because of the like, I said, the moving target requirements, the constant change in trying to meet guidelines and fact that those guide ones keep shifting in morphing. I'm exhausted.

Interviewer: I could imagine. So I'd be search for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job within the last year.

P9: No, not since I home part of the company, I think.

Interviewer: How likely are you to be in your current role with in a 3 year timeframe? So 3 years from now, how likely are you to be in that role?

P9: Depends on if somebody wants to buy my company.

Interviewer: Do you have any other goal or aspirations. After this.

P9: Retirement. Yeah. 37 years. Retirement, please God.

Interviewer: Right, sure it's very much deserved. So that kind of wraps up the informal questions, if you will. So question 1A- And these questions might be a little bit unique since you do your part owner of the organization, so does your supervisor understand what's important to you as an employee or your own supervisor.

P9: No, we have a vice president of the companies, who is also the dean, and he is pretty satisfied, according to my evaluations.

Interviewer: How often do those events occur?

P9: Once a year.

Interviewer: Do you have any other informal type of evaluations, or is it?

P9: No, because I'm pretty much self sufficient working, and he's very familiar with me, and everything that I do.

Interviewer: He was a firm supporter, in fact, he owns a little bit of the company as well, and he helped us found the company 15 years ago. So no, he's pretty much. I talk to him when I need you.

Interviewer: Excellent. And you said, with the retirement right around the corner, so how do potential advancement options influence your loyalty with your current organization?

P9: There's nowhere to go but above me I don't wanna be dean. He makes a lot less money than I do.

Interviewer: Question 2A- how important are new activities that expand your skills and meeting your job expectations. And that can be additional education. It can be conferences presenting it conferences or anything along those lines.



P9: It's important, but after 37 years I find it hard to find anything that really tweaks my interest anymore. I used to present the Texas EMS Conference. I've been to the educators stuff. I go like every other year, and they're interesting when I go. And I went to the accreditation workshop, whatever that one is that was in last year, and it was interesting, and I learned a lot. But being as exhausted as I am, you know, and after 37 years, and however many that is in EMS education, it's hard to find anything that really interests me. I'm just kinda I mean, I am not saying that I can't learn. It's just hard to get that motivation at this point, due to sheer exhaustion.

Interviewer: For sure, so question 2B- how likely are you to stay with an organization, if you enjoy the role and benefits, but you're not provided with the opportunity for advancement.

P9: Well, since I own it, I'll stay here.

Interviewer: Question. 3A- Does your supervisor give you feedback on your performance? You said yes once a year and a formal evaluation. Are you given the opportunity to provide feedback to him?

P9: Oh, yeah.

Interviewer: Is it readily accepted?

P9: Oh, yeah, we can duke it out if we want to, or we can just talk about it.

Interviewer: Excellent. So question 4A- is the job and the work that you're doing what you expected.

P9: Yes and no. I mean it is in the sense that that what we are doing is what I intended, as far as meeting the needs and trying to keep a quality educational product. And we turn now really good students, but are really good graduates. But no, in the sense that accreditation when that came down the pike, and ended up with all of those that volume of workload was not expected, not from the beginning.

We had to start from scratch, and when an accreditation was new they adjust it here that we had to have that to have a paramedic program and of course there was very few guideline or the guidelines were their but very little help with those guidelines, and I mean it was so bad at first it was okay. So on pediatric contact. This has been an issue all the way since back 2010, when we started trying to, and we send in our self study, and we put two for each one of the pediatric contacts. It's what we were requiring in rotations, and at that time we were told it wasn't good enough, and we said, Okay, so what is the number that you're looking for? What we can't tell you has to be approved by your advisory committee. So two is not good enough, but you can't tell us what number you're looking for. And it finally ended up being, two. But it's, you know, that's kind of an example.

Interviewer: So that number being two. Was that because you presented to your advisory board and your medical director, and that's what they settled on.

P9: Correct

Interviewer: You been a director at multiple organizations, at each one of those organizations. Did you have any type of mentorship or a mentor? The help?

P9: At one of them at one of them, which was a college base, and I'll I'm I know we're not supposed to say names, but you know I throw I'm sure I can start throw the name out there just for this, and if you've been a over 10 years. He was my friend, he was my mentor. He built me into what I am.

Interviewer: That's awesome. So what are the main satisfiers and dissatisfiers of your job?

P9: Main satisfier, I would say, is, when we have our graduates that go out there and say that they're very pleased, that they get a good education, that they compare themselves to other graduates from other programs and feel that they are in many cases feel that they are much better prepared when they tell me that it just it makes me feel good, because that's what I was after.

My major dissatisfier. Besides dealing with the volume of work that's related mostly to accreditation and maintaining that every day, active, as they say, I would say it would be a lot of student population. Now, most of them are younger. I have a lot of difficulty personally dealing with the entitlement of the me, me, me generation and it's very frustrating. Especially when, if they don't get what they want, they threaten to ruin you on social media. You know. And so it's, I think that's my major dissatisfaction is that people side of a lot of the current societal issues that we're dealing.

Interviewer: Excellent. Question 5A- So how satisfied are you with the pay? Receiving relation to the type and amount of work that you do?

P9: Not, but there's nothing I can do, because it's my company. I only afford to pay me what what we can afford to pay, and so there's not, I mean, I could probably go to college and make in fact, I know what good cause I know what some of you guys are making and I could probably make anywhere from 20 to 50,000 more year than what I'm making. But you know it's a small company, an education company that's private doesn't have the resources that colleges does.

Interviewer: Absolutely so kind of off of that. What you think of the pay you receive in relation to the cost of living in the primary city in which you live.

P9: That it's fine, because the primary city I live is in a Third World country. So it works.

Interviewer: So question 6A-. Are you provide the tools, resources, including training to help develop in your career. And you kind of hit on that where you're pretty much developed in your career.

P9: Yeah, but I can reach out and get all of those tools that I want. It's just they, whichever ones interest me. Add, there's no problem in our company with me reaching out that, you know, and saying or taking those resources. And as long as there's money in the kitty, it pays for it. So.

Interviewer: Excellent, and just out of curiosity. Do you all use a or what do y'all use to track like the skills and the hospital and truck rotations and all that? And again I'll use names. I'll take it out.

P9: Documenting Platform #2

Interviewer: Gotcha. How but how do you feel about platinum on your side of it versus the students side of it?

P9: No. We started with this other provider, and we became increasingly frustrated. This one is fantastic as a company, and they are very user client, oriented. They listen, they try to help you, and I would say 95% of everything I ask them to do, even if it's something that really is more for me because we're different than anybody else, They usually at some point it may take a few months, but they'll make it happen.

The downside. I guess if it's not, the company's fault is again with the like appendix g, and then changing to the current students for our student, whatever they call it, it's been very difficult for them as a software, organizer to try to make that piece completely user friendly because the documentation side of that, when you're trying to make all of those reports, it's very difficult for students to understand. It's very difficult for instructors to understand. So you end up a lot of times. The instructors doing the data entry just to make sure it's right, because the students can't follow it. So, and that's not their fault. That's again. That's the fault of the complicated requirements for reporting that we're having to meet as an industry.

Interviewer: So question 6B- Are the promotional practices in your organization fair and transparent?

P9: We don't have a lot of promotion. We've got, you know, skills instructors. We've got one skills lab coordinator we've got one skills lab instructor who's lead instructor over everyone and if we don't have a need for anything else, so we don't really have a lot of emotional opportunities because there's no hierarchy structure above that like you would have at a college.

Interviewer: So. Question 7A- Is their flexibility and autonomy in your work, and how do you feel about it?

P9: Yes, yes, I'm considering what I do. Yes, that's all flexible, and I pretty much work autonomous on my own, without anything else, unless I go ask for somebody, hey? will you look at this and tell me what you think?

Interviewer: Excellent. So question 7 B. Are you able to do the work that's assigned to you? So do you have the tools and skills needed to do your job?

P9: Yes. Well, think about it this way you work in a college. I that's one advantage to being in my setting is because if I'm in control of all of this, I don't have to go ask someone else for all these things, I just do it.

Interviewer: So. Question 8A- Is your work appreciated by your supervisor? And you said, you feel like it is, how are you recognized for a job? Well done!

P9: Oh, just the board tells me, you know. It's that's they're good. The Advisory Council Medical Directors. They all are very vocal, and tell me things. But again, it's a small company. So it's not like we have a awards, or are those ceremonies? It's just too small for them.

Interviewer: Question 9A- Do you have the opportunity for professional career development?

P9: Yes, and anything I wanna do.

Interviewer: Do you have a learning plan, such as additional college degrees?

P9: I mean, as far as what I wanna get past here. No, if they tell me tomorrow that we have to do the message to keep our program director status, I am done. I'm tired.

Interviewer: Yes, ma'am, so are you satisfied with their responsibilities and challenges are offered by your work in your organization?

P9: Yes.

Interviewer: And you said, could you expand on some of those potential challenges that you face on a fairly regular basis?

P9: Yes, because I feel like we have overcome a lot one way. Started this program and again accreditation came down the pike. We were told that what we were doing would not work. We were nit picked apart the self study. They kicked it back with so many yellow tabs and stuff that, you know supposed violations, and we were comparing it to. We had several to work off of that with 3 other colleges and some of the answers that and things we were doing was exactly like some of the colleges were doing, and we still get dinged for it. It was that type of thing. So we managed to get through that and get the original, and then we came back for re accreditation. And again that mentality, that attitude toward hybrid distance. Education was still very negative from the committee, and we fought with tooth and nail again. And then what? What's satisfies me now? Over it is thanks to a pandemic. It's changed the whole paradigm where everyone is now trying to do what we've been doing since we started and now, all of a sudden, it's okay. So it's like, okay, I feel vindicated, validated.

Question 10B- Do you have the opportunity to use your skills in your work?

P9: Not anymore. I have degenerative spine disease and some other health issues. So it's made it where I can no longer really get on a truck and do the things I used to do.

Interviewer: Question 11. A. Does your work give you a sense of accomplishment?

P9: Yeah, I would say so.

Interviewer: What would be the largest driver behind that sense of accomplishment, or some things that?

P9: That we're still here almost 16 years later, after they told us it would never work.

Interviewer: And then you said you alluded to earlier, that seeing your students come out prepared as well, if not better, than the people, I'm sure that was telling you could never do it.

Question 11B-So how important are your relationships with your work colleagues?

P9: Oh, it's extremely important. You have to be able to get along and communicate in an interactive fashion. And sometimes distance can make a problem, because you're communicating a lot electronically. And you can't hear voice inflections. Sometimes people take things differently than what was meant. So, you know it complicates the conversation, but for the most part I think we all push to try to do what we believe. You all believe in the same thing. What we're trying to do, which is get better students downstream, or better graduates.

Interviewer: Question 12A- How do you expect your supervisor to demonstrate that they generally value your contributions?

P9: He tells me regularly when we get together. That's all I need.

Interviewer: Excellent. So question 12. B. What support do you expect your supervisor to provide you in order to achieve the next level in your career? And that'd be in retirement? I think this is going to be a hard question answered to.

P9: Yeah, unless they can find somebody that wants to buy us. I'm not sure what else he's got to offer right now. And it sounds like I'm just desperate to get out. That's not what I'm saying at all, but you know, at some point here soon, I do need to start going out. I'm almost 60 years old, and it's 37 years, and I don't wanna see this school for away, just because I retired. I wanted to take it and continue it on to the next phases, and someone else would come in and build my role. Who's younger and more, I guess less, maybe could come in and steer this thing to a whole other level that I'm just too jaded to do right.

Interviewer: So last group of questions. I feel like you've answered very well. It has to do with performance appraisals and feedback. You've answered both of those. So before we get to the very last question, and with your extensive work, history and just the dynamic career that you've had greatly value.

Your advice on this. So what advice would you give to that brand new paramedic program director that's stepping into this role for the first time? So. Do you have any challenges that you found or any pitfalls or best practices that you? You would provide to them.

P9: Yes, first is, if their company or school can support it financially, which the college environment has better like, I said, funding so, but is to try to find or utilize personnel, to divide up some of those duties that fall on the program director, some of those responsibilities. Try to setup from the get go where you have people that come into their position, teaching for you, and they have this as part of their job responsibilities from beginning and that way. There's no push back, because people don't want that extra load. It comes as part of the job at the beginning, and then you can monitor and pull, and it would make your job as a program director easier because you're not responsible for all of it. I mean, you're responsible for all of it. But you're not doing all the work.

And I think that would be the biggest thing I could tell them is, try to start from the beginning with when you set up your staff. You've got your responsibilities. That the accrediting body said. You've got these things you have. Well, you're coming in, and you're this lead inspector, and you are also going to be doing this. I'm gonna give you the tools to do it. I'm gonna monitor you. And these reports will feed into my report. But this is part of your job. Okay. And do that with 3 or 4 or 5 people, and divide it up so that you have yours. There's. And then you can just pull that data in and much, much easier.

Interviewer: And I think that's great advice by show on various aspects of your job. That continuity. If I stepped out of this role, that'd be much more suited to step in it. Run with it versus you haven't ever looked at any of any of the accreditation bodies, requirements, or standards and trying to jumping with both feet and then drowning. So I think that's.

P9: And doing it from the beginning means that they don't have the option or the choice. But when you already have people that are teaching, and then you try to share this and bring them in and give them these students, then they're pushed and disgruntlement because they don't want you giving them more work today. So that would be. My advice is, when you step in. You said new program director. When you step in doing that's where I failed at beginning. Of course I haven't, so it may not have helped me much unless I'd set those up. And then the new people came in that were training. It was still there, so, but it's the first like, I said when we started but accreditation was not an issue, so we didn't think that. And then we had no clue. What would be involved in it? So, looking back and looking at what people can do, I think that's the best thing a new program director can help themselves.

Interviewer: Outstanding, outstanding advice. So the last question, are there any other local state or national factors that may impact your decision to stay in or vacate your current role as a program director that we have not discussed yet that you'd like to voice?

P9: I do have some concerns over the new DOE. Thing that came out that the accreditation body is actually stepping up against about the third party rotation. What I'm looking for well, for the hospitals, the mandates that they're planning on putting out some serious concerns there, because that could totally destroy the ability for most schools unless they're heavily established in their areas like some of the colleges, are with their medical facilities. That pretty much is gonna hurt everyone else from being able to get into those. So if I haven't a place to say my students that could have a alright cool because I've gotta have a place to send them do the rotations. So that's something that is looking, unless they can stay away from it.

As far as other things, I would say just again, not, you know, to keep things or make things as clear as possible and invite innovation into the State mandates and regulations. The, you know that there's more than one way to skin a cat, and so if they start narrowing the scope, so it's looking good right now, because there's been changes in people I think, that are driving these changes that we've been talking about that we've been seeing for the past 4 years. But if they start narrowing that back down and try and put everybody back into a box that can have a definite negative impact.

### **Appendix N: Interview 10 Transcript**

Interviewer: So before we get started, do you consent to be being recorded both visually and audio?

P10: I do.

Interviewer: You understand that this is completely voluntary, and that you reserve the right to withdraw at any point during this interview, or refuse to answer any questions that you're not comfortable answering.

P10: Yes, I understand.

Interviewer: Perfect. So what is your current job and how long have you been in this role?

P10: EMS program director of a community college. I've been the program director here for 5 years.

Interviewer: Nice. Do you know what happened to the individual that was in that role prior to you?

P10: He took a position within the college in a different department. He chose to pursue emergency management, and he took a different position within the college.

Interviewer: I got you was that a lateral move or promotion?

P10: I believe it was a promotion.

Interviewer: Why did you decide to become a paramedic program director?

P10: Because I was in the field for about 13 years. At that point, I was looking for something different, a little bit more challenging. I've always been a numbers behind the scenes kind of person prior to getting into EMS. I was a branch manager for several banks here in the area, so my background has always been with an administration, and I thought it was a good move to make. I was working as an adjunct instructor for several years before that, and I enjoy teaching, and I enjoy doing that aspect of the job.

Interviewer: So you said you've been in EMS for 13 years.

P10: 17 actually.

Interviewer: Oh, I'm sorry! 17. What other roles have you performed within the industry?

P10: I was a lieutenant for a municipality organization as a paramedic. And I've also worked with in the hospital within administration as a paramedic.



Interviewer: So what best describes the sponsorship top of your organization? Would it be post secondary included community, college, and for your universities possible consortium? Fire based ambulance based, or other.

P10: Post secondary.

Interviewer: Nice. How many students as your organization, as far as paramedics students do, y'all graduate on an annual basis?

P10: Anywhere between 15 and 18.

Interviewer: Do you still perform the teaching role within your organization?

P10: I am required to carry my own instructor load. Yes.

Interviewer: Gotcha, and how much is that load? If you don't mind me asking?

P10: It is between 18 and 20 hours per semester.

Interviewer: So what percentage would you say and contribute each week to that instructional side versus the administrative duties that are assigned to you?

P10: I would say, be like a 20 80 split.

Interviewer: With 20, being instructional?

P10: Yes, 20 being instructional.

Interviewer: So outside of the teaching and administrative duties, what other tasks make up the bulk of your responsibilities you perform?

P10: We're required to have college service. So I sit on committees and we do other functions of the college as part of my college service.

Interviewer: And just out of curiosity. How many of those committees are you required to sit on?

P10: There's not a number requirement, but, as you know, our pay increase yearly is always is always contingent upon our volunteerism, and what we do within the college.

Interviewer: I got you, are you responsible for simulation used within your classroom?

P10: Yes.

Interviewer: How much time would you say you commit each week to that simulation?

P10: So I have a clinical coordinator that assist me with that, and I oversee it. So I would say maybe 5 hours a week, and then she takes the bulk of that.

Interviewer: Nice! So how many hours a week are needed to perform your job. Would you say less than 30 hours, 40 to 50 hours, or more than 50 hours?

P10: Oh, more than 50 hours! Most definitely.

Interviewer: If you had a put a number on it, just an estimate, how many hours do you say you contribute each week to your workload?

P10: I would estimate about 55 hours a week.

Interviewer: So of the administrative duties that are associated with what do you find that takes up the most amount of time.

P10: I would say I would say payroll and oversight of my adjunct instructors, you know we hire adjunct instructors to assist us, and then there's a lot of times we're having to do the book of the work for them. So, yeah, supervising. Adjuncts and payroll payroll on at our college is done manually on paper. So I spent a lot of time going through people's pay sheets and making sure it's correct. And signing in a approving and then submitting.

Interviewer: Yeah. In the next questions, going to be more full time. But before we get to that one, how many adjuncts do you all have? If you don't mind me asking.

P10: Currently we have 30. That's a lot of payroll shoots. Yeah.

Interviewer: How many full time Educators or faculty members, including yourself, are employed with your organization.

P10: You ready for this 2. Myself and my clinical coordinator.

Interviewer: Do you feel like that number is adequate.

P10: It is not it, it is far from adequate.

Interviewer: So in an ideal world, if money wasn't an issue, how many would you say? How many would you like to see?

P10: I would probably be able to sustain four to five full time faculty, because in between our paramedic forces and our EMT courses, and we have three cohorts going on at the same time of 15 to 20 students at a time. So that's about 60 students in the spring, and probably 75 in the fall, not including summer, which we have another two cohorts. We could sustain at least three additional full-time faculty and have them make load.

Interviewer: So is that an issue with the college just for not having the spots. Or is it? You have the spots, and you just can't find people to teach them, because I've seen both.

P10: It's the college not wanting to approve spots every year. We request additional full time FTEs, and we're denied. We're won out by other departments.

Interviewer: So is it one of those things where they want you to grow the program but they're not going to give you the help until it gets there.

P10: Absolutely, absolutely.

Interviewer: But and then almost put in the cart before the horse, where I mean if you want growth, you have the staff.

P10: Absolutely.

Interviewer: So do you all have an administrative system that helps reduce any of that workload?

P10: Yes, we do have an Aa.

Interviewer: So is that I mean, I know personally and how the interviews are conducted, most of those are shared with other Allied health branches. Is that the same for you?

P10: That is correct. She has three other programs.

Interviewer: Just out of curiosity. What other programs is she responsible for helping?

P10: She's also responsible for pharmacy tech, mental health, and medical assisting.

Interviewer: So I'm sure her plate stays pretty full, too.

P10: Yeah, yeah, so yeah, again, we tried to, you know, be respectful of what we turn off to her or not. I mean, it'd be nice to give her a lot of the administrative type duties. But there's a lot that I absorb.

Interviewer: So do you feel like? I mean, if you had your own, you think that should stay plenty busy just with that stuff you absorb.

P10: Oh, yeah, absolutely. Cause I'd be able to cross train her to the technicalities of our program to be able to advise students more. When right now the advisement and retention is basically in my lap.

Interviewer: So how much time would that free up if you had that individual that was just strictly designate your program?

P10: I would say, probably about 10 hours a week. Yeah, because I have to register my own students. I have to advise my own students change their degree pathway, or their majors. Anybody that wants information about the students. She can send out a template that I put together of. Hey? These are the, you know, frequently asked questions about our program and how to register. But then, when they call her back with like more technical questions about Hey, I was a paramedic, or I was this or I was that. Then it kind of falls on me.

Interviewer: Gotcha. Would you say what would you describe yourself as they're very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with your current role?

P10: I'm somewhat satisfied.

Interviewer: What would be the main reasons for that current level of satisfaction?

P10: I truly enjoy what I do. I enjoy working with my faculty. It's a great team, and I enjoy working with the students and helping them become successful.

Interviewer: So have you searched for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job within the last year?

P10: I have, I have!

Interviewer: Do you feel comfortable? Tell me what job you're interviewing for?

P10: I was interviewing for a EMS. It's called. It's weird, but it's called an EMS program director position but it's within the hospital doing an EMS liaison type role within the hospital to work with the community EMS organizations.

Interviewer: So how likely will you be in your role within a 3-year timeframe?

P10: You know I hope to remain in my role within 3 years, because I do enjoy working and I've come to the realization that you know the grass isn't always greener in other places. So, and going to conferences, you know, with other program directors, I believe it's all the same plight and the same fight that we have with our leadership in trying to make it better and make it easier for us. So, I'm gonna try to stick it out and then just hope for the best and continue trying to ask for what's needed for us to be first to grow and be successful.

Interviewer: Question 1A- Does your supervisor understand what's important to you as an employee?

P10: No!

Interviewer: Could you expand on that?

P10: So, I believe, my particular supervisor, I believe, feels they give us the support that we need by saying, I support you, and I trust you. But at the same time, when we need the support, it's kind of thrown back into our laps.

Interviewer: And you kinda hit on it earlier. So is that lack of support both not by providing you with faculty, is, is it?

P10: Lack of support, not providing with faculty. And then, when we do turn to leadership for support, it's kind of thrown back at us like Okay, I'll help you. But I need you to sit down and drop a five page plan of what that's gonna look like. And you know, it's like I'm doing your job. I'm asking you for your help, that you're putting it back off on me, and I'll do it. But then you turn that stuff in, and you do spend the time in the energy to say, Hey, this is my vision, and then you hear nothing about it.

Interviewer: How do potential advancement opportunities influence your loyalty with your current organization?

P10: So I think advancement opportunities are important. They do play into loyalty. Obviously as far as I'm concerned, or my opinion. Obviously, you know, if you're working for an organization and you see yourself potentially, you know, getting any kind of or progressing throughout the ladder, then they're has to be some level of loyalty. With that being said, I do consider myself a loyal employee, and I think it's important. If you see yourself going higher in the organization, what good is that pay increase, or that level of responsibility? If you're not really loyal to the organization and don't believe in the organization itself.

Interviewer: Excellent. So Question. 2A- How important to you are new activities that expand your skills and meeting your job expectations? And this can be on the job training, conferences, additional degrees, that kind of thing.

P10: I think it's very important. It's always important as educators to know the newest and the latest and the greatest technology. If someone is out there doing it, with less work. I think it's great. I think collaborating with other schools is great, too. I try to do that as often as I can. Long gone are the times of, you know we're gonna have our little secret, you know, team here, and what we do. We don't want anybody else knowing about it. I think you know it truly takes a village so conferences are important to be able to go, meet people and discuss. You know what they're doing that may be working. I think that CEs are important to be able to understand new technology and new protocols that are out there. New research studies all that is important within education. Specifically in our profession.

Interviewer: Do you have the support to go to conferences?

P10: Yes, yes, yes, fortunately, yes, we do for that now. I'm not saying that, you know everything gets approved, but there are a lot of grants and budget monies that we can request, and most times I do get approval for at least one to two conferences a year. So yes!

Interviewer: You hit on that. You're going back to school. How supportive and again, this is kind of a question. I'm jumping ahead a little bit. But how support is supportive is your organization with you going back to school?

P10: I don't think that really plays in the part, because it's kind of what I'm doing on my own I don't really ask for any time off, or anything from the college to be able to do that, or complete that. But as far as supporting me and being happy that I'm doing that. Yeah, I feel like, it's there. There's a genuine, you know. "That's great. You're going back to school" kind of atmosphere, but, as far as you know, I take all the time you need that may be where it becomes a little bit tricky.

Interviewer: So how likely are you to stay with the organization if you enjoy the role in benefits, but you're not provided with the opportunity for advancement?

P10: I probably at that point would have to make a decision to look elsewhere. Then, if I reach you, know my educational goal, and I feel like I'm at a point where I should be progressing, or I should. You know and I'm not getting it. Then yeah, at that point I probably would be looking elsewhere for more advancement.

Interviewer: So question 3A- Does your supervisor give you feedback on your work?

P10: No! There's no! No, yes and no. My immediate supervisor department chair is very hands off. Just kinda you know, kick the kids back into the play area and then do your thing. Of course, if something, you know needs to be changed or done, you know we meet with them, but they're very hands off, so don't really hear or see from them much, unless it's an issue that needs to be resolved, or something that needs to be taken care of.

Interviewer: Do y'all do like a formal evaluation annually, or anything like that.

P10: It's more of a "Hey, this is what I wrote. Let me have any questions." Sign here which I don't complain as long as I get a good valuation, you know, so.

Interviewer: So you provide the opportunity to provide feedback to your supervisor.

P10: No, we are not. And as a member of our college faculty Senate, it's something that we have fought long and hard, for like a 360 evaluation that we feel as necessary for some, for some leadership.

Interviewer: Is that just a cultural thing that it just never has happened? Or is it?

P10: I think so. I think it's more in industry rather than in the college. Or post-secondary setting, and you know, as we know it's like, don't fix it if it's not broke, and you know we don't wanna look into any changes. It's fine the way it is, but when you look at the, when you look at the statistics, and we have actually asked for these statistics, when you have 30 to 40% of your leadership, making the most of the pay raises for the year, and everyone else, not and then we

hear that, you know leadership is instructed that only a certain amount of your faculty can receive this kind of evaluation, this just to keep the numbers right. We're not playing a fair game.

Interviewer: So question 4A-is the job and the work that you're doing, what you expected?

P10: Yes, it is. Yeah, I can't deny that I wasn't expecting to work 50 to 60 hours a week. Specifically in EMS, you know. But you know what I get to go home, and I get to sleep in my own bed at night, and that's that's the perk, right?

Interviewer: When you assume the role of the director, did you have a mentor to help navigate organization challenges or challenges with the state and national requirements?

P10: Yes, I did. Yes, I had a clinical coordinator that was already in place here on the team that has been in education for a very long time.

Interviewer: So of those, either your organization, state, or national issues, what did you find the hardest to navigate as far as what was the biggest learning curve there?

P10: I think the accreditation rules. She was more versed in the State rules, and whatnot as a as a course coordinator, but through as far as accreditation forms, changes, those kind of you know, rules and guidelines that we have to follow she wasn't as versed so we both had to learn those together.

Interviewer: Question 4B- What are the main satisfiers and dissatisfiers of your job?

P10: The main satisfying thing is seeing students that are successful. Having, you know, having for show that we're in the right direction as far as success rates.

And then the dissatisfiers are the limits that are placed on us, you know, by our leaders, as far as the support.

Interviewer: So. Question 5A- How satisfied are you with the pay you receive and relation to the type amount of work that you do?

P10: I would say that I am moderately satisfied. I think I think it could be better, absolutely. I think it could be better but it could be worse on the same token. So. Yes, but in comparison to what industry is making right now and again, I'm not professing that educators should make the same as someone who's on a truck for 48 hours. But it should be a little bit closer. There shouldn't be that big of a gap like there is now.

Interviewer: Does that feed into your adjuncts. I mean, we run into where somebody in on the street can let me pick up one overtime shift and make. But then make here in three or four shifts.

P10: So no, actually, we pay our adjunct very well. We pay our adjuncts \$48 an hour. In fact, some of them make more than I do in the grand scheme of things, as far as hours put in, so our adjuncts make a very very good money. So as far as trying to get help from adjacent because of

pay, that's never been that's not been really an issue. They just received a pay raise. It was \$46, and now it is \$48, and that's across the board for any adjunct with them in college. So that's not an issue. But I feel like, as far as the full-time faculty we could use higher pay.

Interviewer: Question. 5B- What do you think of the pay you receive in relation to the cost of living in the city in which you live?

P10: I think again it could be better. It could be better. Everything's gone up and we've not seen that same increase within pay. I think our colleges I think they've done a fairly well job in trying. Just haven't made the mark yet, as far as I'm concerned. Specifically for the technical programs. And I think this happens a lot of times in many community colleges. A lot of the time and effort, and money is pushed into larger programs like your nursing programs, and then the other technical programs kind of off the wayside.

So, for example, right now, full-time faculty on the nursing side, they're getting a \$1,500 a month stipend because they're considered a what's it called a like a hard to retain employee. However, I could say the same for our profession. Not a lot of people wanna come over from industry to education because it pays less. There's less flexibility in the hours. So, am I, saying we're worth \$1,500 a month, maybe not. But I think it's an area that should be looked into.

Interviewer: So question 6A- are you provided with the tools, resources, including training, to develop in your career?

P10: No!

Interviewer: What's missing? What would you like to see?

P10: Again more of an emphasis of understanding our program. It's one thing to be my leader and say No, you can or cannot do something, but if you truly don't understand our profession, and why things are necessary, I feel like as program directors, we should be given the respect as our content area experts to say I'm telling you this is what we need, because XYZ I'm even, you know, providing you with, you know, proof of that. And it's still kind of just not. It falls on deaf ears.

Interviewer: In again out of curiosity. Do you all use any type of platform for your skills?

P10: Yes, we currently Documenting Platform #1 for our clinical skills, tracking and our clinical tracking and skills, tracking. We also use them for testing. And then we also have Documenting Platform #2 as an additional means of testing.

Interviewer: I got you. You feel like either one of those platforms or user friendly. Or are you satisfied with the product overall or D, you feel like it adds to your overall workload.

P10: I think both of them are user friendly. The problem with the first is that as they grew too fast, too quickly and they have a lot of glitches, a lot of issues. And we just have not been satisfied with the customer service, which is why we're choosing to move.



Interviewer: 6B- Are the promotional practices within your organization fair and transparent?

P10: Are you speaking about my department, or within the organization college itself?

Interviewer: You could do either, or, or both.

P10: I do believe that I'm very transparent. As far as you know, what we do here within my department, as far as my team. That's one thing that I take pride in, that I'm transparent in that aspect as far as above me, not so much. I wish there was more transparency above me.

Interviewer: Question 7A- Is that flexibility in autonomy in your work? And how do you feel about it?

P10: Yes, there is flexibility, and yes, there is autonomy, and I do appreciate that aspect of it.

Interviewer: Are you able to do the work that's assigned to you? So do you have the tools, skills, and resources to succeed at your job?

P10: I do have a tools and resources. Time is always an issue, though trying to get everything done.

Interviewer: 3 weeks of work into one.

P10: Into one that's right, or finding out the day before that there's a all of a sudden deadline that must be met by the next day, and so sorry we just found out about it, so now we're telling you, and it's like great. Thank you. I appreciate it.

Interviewer: So how would you describe your work-life balance?

P10: It's hard I would say my work-life balance is hard, but I've gotten a lot better with trying to separate myself or pull myself away when I need to. It's easy for me to just kind of dive in, and the time go by and not realize how much time I've spent in the office. So I've had to make a conscious effort to get myself some relief for some reprieve from the office. But it's easy not to, because you've got so much to do. You just have to get to the point where you say you know what it's going to be. The remote, no matter if I put an extra 2 or 3 hours today, it's not gonna matter, because tomorrow they're gonna replace it with something else. And the more you do the more they're gonna expect.

Interviewer: Absolutely so. Question 8A- Is your work appreciated by your supervisor?

P10: Yes, I do. I do feel like my work is appreciated. Yes.

Interviewer: So how have you been recognized for a job? Well done!

P10: Hey, an email, hey, we appreciate. We see your hard work. We know the hours you put in. We appreciate you.

Interviewer: Excellent. So question. 9A- Do you have the opportunity for professional career development. And you kinda hit on this one a little bit. You said there are monies available for those conferences, and you do get to make a couple of them. You know. Also hit on as far as your personal school, that there's supportive in it. They don't give you a whole lot of time to kind of do it on the clock, if you will. Is that pretty fair?

P10: That's yeah. That's fair to say.

Interviewer: So question, 9B- And you hit on this. Do you have a learning plan such as an additional college degree? And you said that you are obtained your masters, and hopefully, be done in the very near future. And that you're looking at continuing on after that, as well.

P10: Yes.

Interviewer: So question 10A- Are you satisfied with the responsibilities and challenges offered by your work in your organization?

P10: Am I satisfied? Yes, there's plenty of challenges in my work situation. It could be a little bit easier. Yes, maybe it could be a little bit easier.

Interviewer: So you're satisfied with the responsibilities. But the challenges can be overwhelming at times, you would say.

P10: Correct. That is correct. Yeah.

Interviewer: 10B- Do you have the opportunity to use all your skills in your work?

P10: Yes, I do believe, yeah, I'm given that opportunity, between here, either in simulation or out in the field, sometimes we have to go out to clinical sites. Then, yes, we, we are able to use our skills.

Interviewer: Excellent question. 11A- Does your work give you a sense of accomplishment?

P10: Yes, it does personally. Yes.

Interviewer: That biggest sense of accomplishment you hit on students success. Is there anything else kinda adds to that? Or?

P10: Student success and faculty, promotion. I'm really big, in saying it's a team effort, and you know, no matter what our successes are, it takes a village and it's our team that makes that happen. So, seeing that my employees are my faculty under me, are happy and satisfied with the job, makes me happy.

Interviewer: So how likely are you to stay with an organization if it's not meeting your job expectations?

P10: That's hard for me, because I'm a loyal person, and I have stayed at places that I just wasn't satisfied with. But I just didn't wanna make the jump until I just felt like I just absolutely had to. So I would say, I'm 80% sure that I'll be somewhere that I'm not happy hoping that I can make some kind of change. But I also know my worth. So if it gets to a point where I feel like I needed elsewhere, and I'm not afraid to do that.

Interviewer: Question 11B- And you hit on this as well. How important are your relationships with your work colleagues.

P10: Very important. And again, it's what makes her breaks most departments. It makes the job easier, too. If you have people that are looking out for you, and you're looking out for them and makes the job easier.

Interviewer: Excellent. So. Question 12A- How do you expect your supervisors to demonstrate that they genuinely value your contributions?

P10: Truly here us out when we have something to say, and respect is giving us a seat at I call it a seat at the table, meaning when there's decisions to be made about my department. Truly, you know, encouraging me to give my feedback, and my suggestions are my opinions as opposed to. Now we've made this decision, and this is just the way it's gonna be.

Interviewer: So, how often are you granted that so at the table, if you will?

P10: It's gotten better when we first change leaderships we got a new dean. It was a little difficult. It was just one side, I think I've got my point across to where there's things that and there's a certain decisions that just can't be done, because there's not other. They're not looking at all of the angles that we look at as program directors, and they don't know that, you know, a small decision could affect so many different things within the program. So I feel like that's gotten better. That relationships gotten better with my leadership. But we still have a little ways to go as well.

Interviewer: Excellent! What's support? Do you expect your supervisor to provide you in order to achieve the next level in your career?

P10: Support as far as I would hope that they would trust and be able to give me the recognition and the support to be able to let me go out of my current position, to be able to grow and do something more, it's hard when you have when you have somebody that it works, and you know the programs running, you know, with no issues. I could see how hard it would be to say, Oh, now I'm gonna do something else. Gotta find someone else. So sometimes you have leaders that they don't want to see you grow. They just want to see where you're at because your doing a good job. It takes a strong leader to say, you know what I want the best for you, and if that's what you feel will make you happy then I support you.

Interviewer: So this is the last group of questions, and you hit on a couple of these already. Does your supervisor conduct performance, appraisals and do they give you feedback on your work? You said there is a formal evaluation but it's kind of more just crossing the T off and using it.

P10: Correct. Yes.

Interviewer: You don't really get to do a whole lot of feedback for your supervisor.

P10: Correct. Correct, we get none. Yeah, there's no reverse rolls on that.

Interviewer: So before we get to the very last question, what advice would you give to another brand new program director who's coming into that role for the first time to help navigate some of the challenges at the national state, or even local level so any best practices or any potential pitfalls that you would give him a heads up about.

P10: I would say, do not be afraid to reach out for help from other program directors. I think a lot of times we are afraid to say now I don't know, and we'd rather, you know, read for 10 hours and look into to see if we can solve it ourselves as opposed to just reaching out or picking up the phone and trying to say, Hey, is there someone else out there that can. They can help me with this and make it a lot easier I wish I would have had more context in the beginning of my tenure as a program director, as opposed to just you know what I gotta sit with this manual and I gotta read it from front to back 3 times to figure out you know how best to do this. There's a lot of people out there that are doing it, and it's working and it's working well. And you can pick up on those tips, so it's never a bad thing to admit. Hey? I don't know Can you help me out?

Interviewer: That's outstanding advice. So there's been several that kinda mentioned, and it may be harder to do at the national level, and may be a little harder to do because of how, again fragmented. Everything is due to each on their own different animal, if you will, but at the state level, I mean, and I agree with you. I wish I had half the contacts that I have now. I feel like it would make the job much easier. Initially, when the hardest time those formative years.

How would you feel about if there was a type of mentorship program at the State level where we have some most people that's been doing it 15 or 20 years, and maybe they don't have the answer. But they could say, Hey, this individual's very good at that, reach out to them.

P10: Absolutely. I think that would be a great thing, and I know it's been mentioned here within our State in doing that. And then it never really kind of got off the ground. I even offered to say, Hey, I'm willing to help with that program if necessary. I think it's great idea, but organizations that tried putting it together. It kinda never took off, but I'm sure it's the same in most states. You get the same one to 2 people running all the different organizations, and they've got their hand in the pot, and they've got too much stuff going on that they never really can fix the problems that are out there all at one time.

Interviewer: So this is going to be brought up. They wanna look at this at the next state meeting. So if we are able to get some together like that, you don't mind if I reach out to you to. See if you want.

P10: Yeah, not at all. I would love to. I would love to.

Interviewer: Beautiful. So last question, are there any other local, state, or national factors that may impact your decision to stay in or vacate your current role as a paramedic program director that we have not discussed that you'd like to voice.

P10: No, none that I can think of.

### Appendix O: Interview 11 Transcript

Interviewer: So again, just for the records I have your consent to record you both visually and audibly perfect.

P11: Yes

Interviewer: You understand that this is completely voluntary and that you reserve the right to withdraw at any point during the interview or refuse to answer any question that you're not comfortable answering?

Interviewer: So what's your current job and how long have you been in this role?

P11: Current job is EMS program director for a community college's EMS program. I am also the lead instructor for the paramedic program here and I have been in this job for 9 years, almost full time at the college as program director, and I've been in education in for many more years.

Interviewer: Have you been in the program director anywhere else?

P11: I have not been the program director at any other programs. I was the assistant chair at a different community college for many years. So I helped with the accreditation process there and when I was at my current college before as a full time instructor, I helped with the initial accreditation of the program back in the 1990's.

Interviewer: Why did you decide to become a paramedic program director?

P11: It was part of an evolutionary process, would have never thought I got here. I started out senior in high school, didn't know where I was going, and progressed, and the local EMS agency wanted volunteers for the locally Employs Agency, because they were short. So I volunteered there, and you know I really got the EMS bug at that point went off to college for a couple of years and said, Not so sure about this, and went in. Had the opportunity to do paramedic program. And became a paramedic. This was in the around 1985 or so, and I was on the streets for many years, and there comes a time when you get on the streets and say, Okay, where am I going next? I was basically an fto while I was on the street without the formal recognition of that, because it really wasn't anything that was recognized at the time.

The agency that I was working for had an EMS director, and everybody else so I had to make a decision on. Okay, if I'm going to stay in this, what can I do? EMS director is not going to be an opening anytime soon. I really am not sure about staying on the streets much longer. I'd like to get into a supervisory role or something, and when I went to college the first time my major was actually education. And so I said, Okay, well, let me marry education and EMS, and so I was able to do that, and went back to college, got associates, bachelors, and a Masters degree, and opportunity came in 1998 to become a full-time faculty member here at this current organization. And that was my evolution there into the EMS part of it into the education part of it. From that point I worked here. I was working part time here prior to that in education. I've been doing EMS

education, starting out with CPR classes even before I was certified. So I've been EMS education for years. In the process, I'd receive my bachelor's degree in '98 or '99, right in there.

And it came a point at the institution where we were going to have some issues with administration, because that they current program director at the time, and the President, just were on not the same page. So I said, Okay, I don't want to be in the middle of the conflict. Had an opportunity to go to the second organization and worked there for over 14 years as a faculty member. And then this job actually came looking for me. The program was in disarray. It was a mess. I had a great reputation, because this is where I was actually paramedic for over 12 years. So a lot of people knew me, even though I hadn't been a street medic in 14 years. A lot of people knew me, and my name came up and they said, Okay, we've got to do either fix the program, or we've got to shut it down.

And they said I was the option to fix it if I didn't accept the job they were going to shut it down, and I said, That's not a good thing. So I took the opportunity to come here, and that was in it's 9 years ago now, started part time in February and full time in May. So May, I'll be here 9 years. And it was interesting process building the program from a ground up which a lot of program directors actually have to do that they're the I'd like in my program to flames burning around me. And everything's on the ground almost. And now you have to figure out, okay, where do we go from here and where we're at today is a far cry from where we were when I started.

Interviewer: Very nice, very nice. What happened to the individual that was in your role before you came on 9 years ago?

P11: The predecessor, the program was on probation, and they were within a couple of weeks of closing it down, and the individual was asked to leave because of other issues in the program, and they left, and there was an interim individual that that took over the program that was the fire program director and that's when I was contacted. Whenever they parted ways with previous it was the entire program. Both the full-time faculty member and one program director. And that's exactly where we were when I left in 99. So they did not grow the program in over 14 years. Like said they were asked to leave for a number of reasons, part of which had to do with their actions both in the classroom and outside of the classroom.

Interviewer: So what's best describes the sponsorship type of your organization as a post secondary institution, including community college for your universities.

P:11 That's it.

Interviewer: How many paramedic students do you all graduate on an annual basis?

P11: It varies from year to year. We have 2 cohorts a year right now, we're in the process of actually adding a third. Are typical cohort is between 15 and 30 students. So we can graduate anywhere between 30 and I think are high, with 48 or something a year. And like, I said, we're about to add a satellite location, and that those numbers will go up.

Interviewer: Very nice, very nice, and you say you still perform the teaching role.

P11: Yes, I am the lead instructor for the paramedic program at the main campus. Where we do a satellite we will have a we'll have to hire a additional faculty member.

Interviewer: Gotcha. What percentage would you say contribute to instructional versus administrative duty on the typical work week?

P11: It depends fall or spring or summer semesters. Fall semesters, I'm in classroom 2 days a week, 8 hours. So that's what it is. And then the other 3 days I have to deal with various administrative issues as well as overseeing other EMS classes, because I personally go into each class and talk to all the students several times a semester and observe what's the activities in class at all levels. The spring semester, I'm less available because I'm in the classroom for 24 hours a week, 3 days a week. So it's Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursdays. So Mondays and Fridays are the only days I really have to do anything administer. So it's I am I, in, you know, even though they say I have released time to do the program director job. When you look at it. Compared to other academic programs and also vocational programs. I'm not getting that released time.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So outside the teaching and administrative duties, are there anything else that takes up the bulk of your time?

P11: I also check clinical sites, as I spot check those. I will do that electronically or in person, just depending on the day. There will be days. We'll we do not have paid receptors, so it's myself, and the clinical coordinator. Maybe some of the other full time people just spot checking clinical sites to make sure that students are there, and doing what they need to. And just keeping that interaction so there'll be a days when we do a 100% clinical site. So I can put over 100 miles on my car that day checking the various clinical sites, and there'll be days where we do a 100% site check.

We also have our normal college duties here. So I'm known throughout the college, I think, as someone that is really passionate about the college and what we do. So I've been on a lot of committees. So that takes a lot of time. I find myself on a lot of long-term committees when some instructors may have one committee assignment a year. I may have 5 to 10. So it's just, and I, you know I love to be in the mix, and that away whenever something comes up I can always say, Well, you know what I do participate. And I do have a legitimate complaint at this time, you know.

Interviewer: Absolutely. Are you responsible for the simulation use in your program?

P11: I am responsible to some degree. I do have a lab coordinator who is a full-time instructor. He's my full time advanced EMT instructor, which is the first semester of our paramedic program. And so he oversees he's got a full load with that, and then he has a paid professional assignment to oversee our labs, and then I have the scenario that the, we have a lot of adjuncts, and they run the scenarios. So I will say, Okay, these are the scenarios for the day. Here's our themes. Here's your scenario information, and we go from there.



We are very, very fortunate with our simulation space in 2018 we moved into our new building here, and when we moved in between us and the other nurse, the ADN and LVN programs they spend over a 1.3 million dollars on simulation equipment. So we have the seman, 3 G. We have the 3 G medical and trauma. We have the we have the neonat. We have baby, we have juniors, we have the Als. So man als, they have a lot of nursing mannequins. So we are very well placed as far as simulation at this campus, and we just did a half 1 million dollar increase in our simulation space out our Richmond campus location.

We have an ambulance simulator in both areas, we have a extrication. Cage that we have at both locations. Now we have similar type mannequins at our other locations. We don't have the 1 million dollar investment, but I have. We probably have close to quarter 1 million dollars invested in manikins for simulation. So I think we are very well situated for that, and we were very well so situated when Covid hit to allow us to continue.

Interviewer: Outstanding. How many adjuncts do you all have?

P11: Okay. So I, currently, the I've got three full-time faculty members and asking for fourth, and with me that would be five total. We have four total. Now, adjuncts, I've got about 13 or 14. adjuncts, and I've got another, probably about 15 or so lab assistants, which they help with various skills labs. So we have kind of different levels. There.

Interviewer: So next question is, how many full-time faculty members do you have? So you said you have three full time. You're looking for a fourth.

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Yes, and then myself, so that right now we have four full time with myself. I've got myself program director. I've got the lab coordinator that I mentioned before, who's also teaching the advanced EMT class at our location here I have got a clinical coordinator whose primary job is to oversee the clinical aspects. And then I've got at our satellite location, I've gotten a full-time instructor that's responsible for overseeing the aspects of that program. You know the day-to-day operations at the satellite, but not necessarily the program as a whole. And he is responsible for the EMT class over there and then we have an adjunct that teaches the advanced EMT class. Which, like I said again, that's a first semester of the paramedic. So.

Interviewer: Do you feel like that number is adequate, if you get the additional individual.

P11: Well with the additional individual we're gonna actually add a another cohort of paramedics. So right now I am probably program wide, I'm probably one to two instructors below, where I should be full time. And that's with no addition. I, with the addition we may need to look at, also adding, we need to also look at adding a clinical, maybe an additional clinical person at that point, and we are probably looking at adding an administrative assistant because right now I do not have a administrative assistance. That's necessarily designated full time. So there's a lot of those type duties that I'm finding myself doing, that I shouldn't necessarily be.

Interviewer: So you say you have access to a administrative assistant, or is it shared between other programs?

P11: With the administrative assistant that I've got it's one third of the time, and I share it with two other Allied health programs. And you got to understand the situation as far as the way the college has our program set up. We are in the health occupations building, and there's an Allied Health Division. But we came from public safety. So I'm actually in vocational science, because Public Safety, police, fire, and EMS evolved into the vocational division. So we kind of went that route. So even though I've got a third of the Allied Health Secretary, I really don't get a third of the time.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So how many hours a week are needed to perform your job? Duties? Would you say? Less than 30, 40 to 50, or greater than 50 hours?

P11: Probably greater than 50. Whenever you get down to it, and whenever I first started the program it was a lot more than that, because you had to fix things. But now probably a on average 50 hours a week easily, just because I show up early, stay late and still have to deal with issues on the weekends as well.

Interviewer: Would you describe yourself as very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not satisfied with your current role?

P11: I am satisfied with my current role. I think I could be doing more if they would give me the tools to do it. But I'm very pleased with the program overall, because where we're gone to.

Interviewer: And when you say tools are just the additional help, or?

P11: The additional manpower, because we are sitting very well as far as materials and stuff like that. We've got all the things around us that we need to have a successful program. I just need a few more pieces of the puzzle to, you know, to make it better than what it is. I feel that we have a very good program, and I would stack it up against anybody's, but we can always do better, and that's probably a little bit of the OCD in me. You know that I don't want to settle whenever I get to settling for things, I think you probably need to replace me at that point.

Interviewer: Absolutely outstanding. Have you searched for, applied to, or interviewed for a new job within the last year?

P11: No.

Interviewer: How likely are you to be in your current role 3 years from now?

P11: As I'm not planning any changes in the immediate future, so I'm very likely, you know, if everything works out fine, unless I win the lottery, and if I win the lottery, then that another deal.

Interviewer: Gotcha so that kinda wraps up the informal question. So question 1A- Does your supervisor understand what's important to you as an employee?

P11: I believe so, but sometimes with the accreditation stuff. I don't think that they totally understand the enormity of what we have to do. So sometimes I don't feel like some of the other administration understands all the roles that we have to play.

Interviewer: How do your potential advancement opportunities influence your loyalty to your current organization?

P11: I'm very loyal to the organization, like I said. I am very much a participant, and every activity that I can do for the organization, and especially for the program. I wasn't looking for a job when when this one came looking for me, so that would be the only reason that I wouldn't be here is if something came looking for me versus me looking for a job.

Interviewer: Gotcha so question 2A- How important to your new activities that expand your skills and meeting your job expectations. And that could be further your own education or CEs, or go into conferences. And that kind of thing.

P11: I think that staying up with what's happening in the industry is very important for us. We have an ever evolving profession. If you stick where you were even 5 years ago. You're behind. If you stick with where we are today, you're behind. You need to be looking over the horizon at what's coming next to me, or next to us. You know I am looking at. Okay, what's out there? That we're seeing in other parts of the State, or an EMS as a whole, and I bring that into the curriculum here.

So, for instance, when I first came they were just barely doing 12 leads, you know, and the machines they had wasn't working in their process wasn't very good. And immediately we started doing more than 12 weeks with the monitors. We started doing right side. We started doing posterior in the 15 and 18 leads. End tidal CO2. We've been trying to push that out the entire time that I've been here trying to get more and more knowledge. We were rolling out ultrasound in to 2019. We were gonna open it up and introduce it to curriculum. And all of a sudden we had a new event in the world, and we had to change our thought process that didn't take it off of my priority list. But it did push it down a little bit. So now we have ultrasound as part of our curriculum, and now we're seeing the agent agencies in the area adopting it because our graduates are coming out with it. So I see very much where we're driving our local standard of care because of what we expect from our students.

Interviewer: So how likely are you to stay with the organization if you enjoy the role and benefits, but you're not provided with the opportunity for advancement?

P11: Well, I that was one of the reasons I got into education was the opportunity for advancement. But if I felt that it was a step up, not a not necessarily anything. I could have been a street paramedic for a while after that I just would not have been as satisfied. Like I said, when I became the associate chair at the other organization, that role came looking for me I didn't look for that role, and when I became the program director here, that role came looking for me, I didn't go looking for it. And I am very satisfied where I'm at. If the opportunity came for me to advance, I would definitely do that as well.

Interviewer: Perfect. So does your supervisor give you feedback on your work?

P11: Yeah, they do. And it's always glowing because of what we do. You know we're one of those poster children for the college to show. Okay, this why you should come here, see what we have here, you know we're always looking for things to do. So very much aware. What I do doesn't necessarily directly observe what I do, though. So you know, that makes sense.

Interviewer: So is it, I mean, is there like a formal evaluation like once a year?

P11: Yeah. The college has formal evaluation process. Our students do evaluations for the college in the fall semester. And then the following fall, they do evaluations from those of that from student evaluations plus I have the supervisor evaluation after that.

Interviewer: Gotcha, are you provide the opportunity to give feedback to your supervisor?

P11: Yes, I can give, but there's no formal means to do that. It's more informal.

Interviewer: Is it readily accepted?

P11: He pretty much observes from a distance, our program. So there's really not a whole lot of back and forth there, and the other thing is, the division chairs, who's a immediately responsible to, he and I go back, as paramedic. So he was police officer when I was as a paramedic. So we go back 30 years. We have a different relationship than you would have traditionally with a supervisor. So he will come to he will come to me with things when he has issues and I'll go to him with things when I have issues. So it's a different type of relationship than you would traditionally have in in this higher Ed setting.

Interviewer: So question 4A- Is the job and work that you are doing what you expected?

P11: I love being the EMS instructor for the program being the paramedic instructor for the program. I like being the visionary for the program, seeing where we're headed. The task that becomes a little burdensome is the administration part of it, and without a delegated administrative assistant. It makes it more difficult to do my job. If had some assistance there. I would do, I feel I would be more satisfied overall.

Interviewer: Gotcha. So when you assume the role of the program director, did you have any type of mentor that helped navigate your local issues or any state or national issues when they came up?

P11: The program director at my previous institution was is, and still is, a very good friend of mine. Her and I went through a lot of changes. when I was there, and we still call each other about things. So, and whenever there we have questions we're back and forth. She's called me just as much as I'm calling her to now, and she's been a program director for more years than I have been.

I have been an EMS for such a long time that I've developed a lot of relationships over the years, and I have tapped a lot of program directors when I have questions because I just know them from being around Texas EMS Conference. You know I've attended all but 5 years of that conference, and it's been going on for well over 30. So I've been to a few conferences, seen a few people on top of other things that I've attended. I have been very fortunate that I have some very good connections with various people in different areas that can answer my questions when I have them, especially in dealing with program direction. And I'm also a site visitor. So I have. I have made additional connections there as well, and even to some of the area colleges and educational programs in our area, I have made it known that if you're about to do a site visit, or accreditation, or anything with, call me up, and all it is the cost of the lunch and I'll come out and do whatever I can to help you, because we're all in it together.

Interviewer: Question 4B- So what would you say the main satisfiers, and this dissatisfiers of your job would be?

P11: Satisfiers are seeing the students out there successful, doing what they need to do, taking care of the patients and me giving them the best experience possible. They may not be happy at the time, as far as what we're doing, but I tell them, trust the process. You'll get through it, and at the end you'll see. Now, students coming back to me, and they come back to me now as adjuncts, and whenever I have them in the class, and I tell them I give them an opportunity to interact with classes. I say you know y'all can tell them anything. That you'll want, and one of the things they leave back with is trust the process you may not understand it now, but it's going to get you to where you need to be.

I'm totally happy with what I do in class, and I wish I could have more time to develop materials. But you know, if I just had to instruction role, I'd have some awesome materials. But with the administrative duties as well as instructor. I don't have what I would like to have. There, and that's one of the frustrating things.

Another thing is, I have not had great experience with especially my clinical coordinators, and in dealing with the message that they may make is creating a headache for me, and unfortunately we have a lot of, I guess the type A personalities, and they don't take criticism and they don't take suggestions very well, in some cases. And that's one of the frustrating things. Is, they cannot see the vision that I see, and they get kind of caught in their own little tunnel. And then when they get to the end of the tunnel, they say, Oh, now I see what you were talking about, and that's what's frustrating is that they can't see the big picture, because they're you know the different individuals are in their own little tracks, and they can't see the whole. And that can be frustrating.

Interviewer: So question 5A- how satisfied are you with the pay you receive in relation to the type and amount of work that you do?

P11: I took a pay cut to come to be the program director here, because satisfaction and the challenge of doing this. I finally am about what I was making a previous job. Nine years in here, and that's a little frustrating. What's even more frustrating is, I have a paramedics that are graduating my program now, and they are making more in some cases than I do annually. And that is frustrating. I think the pay could be better, but I have 5 minute commute to home, so

there's a trade-off there. And before I took this position where I was traveling to, before it was an hour and a half each way, so I was 3 hours a day on the road for the job, and now I have spending less time, I guess, with the job, and having more satisfaction.

So the pay isn't everything. I would have liked to be a little bit better than what it is, but I know that there are some people who have it a lot worse than not do, especially as program directors, because they do not get the in many cases they do not get the pay that they deserve.

Interviewer: Absolutely so. What do you think of the paid receiving in relation to the cost of living in the city in which you live?

P11: It seems to be okay. And if you were talking to me 3 years ago, I'd say, we're doing pretty well now. I'm thinking now not so well. It's not as good because we where other people like in the EMS field because of demand, they have had increases to get to where they're at today, which is great. But here at the college we were getting regular raises, and then all of a sudden, 3 years straight we didn't get one, and that's frustrating because the economy's it's getting more and more expensive. But I'm not getting initial funds. And finally, this last year we have, we were able to get a bit of a raise.

But I've been caught throughout, even in my education career, where I was on a 12 month contract back in 2008, and they cut me to 10 and a half month, and still expected me to work for 12 months because of the economy. So it's a little bit of a abuse almost there. I think that if we would have continued to get the increases, understand why they didn't do it but they didn't do anything to makeup for it. And now we've got a lot of other educators that are getting increases in their pay. But it seems like a community colleges we're like the forgotten stepchildren.

Interviewer: So questions 6A- Are you provided with the tools, resources, including training, to help develop in your career? As far as your tools and simulation and all that sounds like you're very well prepared and funded. Is there anything that you feel like besides, personnel that you're missing that would make it better?

P11: I'm always looking for the next great thing. The next thing the latest thing we haven't our program at our other campus was an immersive, interactive room. We actually put our students into the scene. And it's around them. We have sites, smells, and sounds that's making that simulation experience even going to the next level. We have got now a buy off on the college for the other Allied health programs for us to actually bring that to our main campus. So I'm always looking for something to help improve the student experience.

In the grant that we got to help with the improvement of the program. We also had in there scholarships for students. So 100% of my EMS students for the last year got financial aid, whether they qualified or not, they got something. We have a scholarship for certain counties, certain students that they got that, and then those that did not qualify for that got money from this grant, and that I feel you know I've gotta be an advocate to help my students also because they are struggling to make ends meet as well, but I think we're well situated in our equipment, but you know I've also seen EMS agencies who said, Okay, we're doing the best we can. We won't

do anything different. And 10 years from now they're dinosaurs. So we always have to find that next you know where we're going to next. And the day. I can't do that. You need to replace me.

Interviewer: So out of curiosity, do you all use any type of platforms to document like scenarios skills, hospital/truck rotations?

P11: We're using documenting platform 2 to document a lab experiences, scenario experiences and field experiences. So we're using that platform. Additionally with our scenarios, we have paper forms also that are filled out by the instructors and kept as a permanent record.

Interviewer: So do you feel like that's that platforms user friendly for your instructors and your students, and as well as yourself?

P11: It's as user friendly as it can get compared to the other things that are on the market right now. For what it does, It is as user, friendly as it can be. We try to make it as user friendly as possible. We actually make videos to introduce our students to it to help them get a little bit more comfortable.

And it seems like with the ever-changing, ever moving national expectations that product changes, and sometimes those changes don't get out to us. And that has a tendency to create some frustration. And also the, you know, with we almost got with the national requirements, we almost got to the point where they were micromanaging what you should be doing in your paramedic program. And that's not the way to do a paramedic program. With the portfolio that you see with National Credentialing exam, I agree with the portfolio concept, but I don't necessarily agree with all the individual components, and how they mandate how you must put this in there, because I should be able to teach the program to what my needs are here locally, and there are some things in there that I have to do because I have to jump through that hoop. And that's taking time away from things that I feel are more important.

Interviewer: So from a micro managing level, and I agree with the what you said is, I mean each region's individualized, and yes, it's some global concepts we need to stress in any good paramedic program would do that. But just to loosen the reins a little bit, to make it a little bit more accustomed to your individual needs.

P11: Yeah. I will tell you. We did far more team leads and scenarios prior to this portfolio coming into existence. So I actually lost some of the hands on training, trying to jump through the hoops that they're asking us to jump through. Well, you have to have x amount of lab. Then you have to do the lab before you do the scenario, and that's not the way the curriculum evolves the way the curriculum evolves is you do this, this, this and this, and I may not have all the lab pieces, before I start doing scenarios. And that's okay, because those scenarios don't need those pieces of the lab. But you know, whenever, whenever you're trying to dictate to be how to micromanage my program that gets frustrating.

Interviewer: Absolutely. Absolutely. So questions 6B- are the promotional practices in your organization fair and transparent?

P11: They are there! They could be a little bit more forthcoming within the organization. Unfortunately, we have some individuals' that wind up on various hiring committees that seem to come in with the prejudice on different things, and that creates an unfair promotional opportunity. I guess.

Interviewer: And I mean is that into the administrative roles that you're seeing that. Or is it kind of across the board?

P11: In the day to day. Instructor role is not an issue in the department chairs, program directors. It's not so much an issue. But whenever you get above that, then it becomes more of an issue. We have a lot of administration that have been here for many years and definitely, we have stability in the organization. But in that middle management it seems to be flowing in and out, and no consistency, and they have some tendency in some of those positions not hiring from within, even though you have more than qualified applicants.

Interviewer: Question 7A- Is there a flexibility and autonomy in your work? And how do you feel about it?

P11: Yes, I can do whatever I need to do whenever I need to do it, and we can adjust. Again, EMS is spinning a square peg into round Hole with higher Ed. Because we don't fit the typical mottle of higher education. This is where I see a lot of the programs, the college wants to see okay, you do a 2 hour block here a 1 hour block here or hour block here. And at the end of the semester you come out with your product with these little chunks like that, and EMS chunks it while you start here and at the end of the semester you come out with your product. With these little chunks like that, and EMS chunks it what higher ed wants to do with what we're actually trying to accomplish in EMS and EMS is not adding building blocks, you know, 5 different building blocks every week for 16 weeks. It's adding one building block for 6 weeks, another building block for 6 weeks, then a building block for 4 weeks, then the next one. So you take them all the way through instead of you know, stacking them and then getting to the end.

Interviewer: Questions 7B- Absolutely? Are you able to do the work that's assigned to you? So do you have this tools, skills and resources to be successful in your job?

P11: We have awesome resources. We have probably some of the best that you can think of. The college has some issues with some of the technology we had a ransomware attack, and I lost 19 years worth of stuff. All my presentations, everything gone. I just happen to have a hard drive backup plugged into the computer that weekend. That the ransomware took everything, and it was like gone. So that was very frustrating. I lost there, and I had to start all over with all my presentations, and that was, you know, they're still not up to where they were previously, and that frustrated me. But the technology we have is very good for what we have. The support there I think it's very good, so.

Interviewer: Outstanding. So how would you describe your work-life balance?

P11: Not as good as I'd like it. I would like to have more life and little less work. Unfortunately, in EMS we are taught to get the job done, regardless of the resources that you have. So make it



happen, and we don't care how you make it happen, just do it. So whenever I was rebuilding the program here, I was putting 70 hours in a week. Trying to get everything back up and running. And even now this should be a 40 hours a week job, but it's not. I could say 40 hours, and that's it. But my personality will not let that happen, and as a result my home life suffers a bit for that. I'm not like a lot of other folks that have gone through divorce and stuff like that. But I have missed t-ball games and soccer games and band concerts, and everything because of the job, and then the education to get to go on to the bachelors and masters level. I had to sacrifice home stuff for that and that's stuff you can't get back, and I am trying to do better at balancing the off time versus the work time.

Interviewer: Question 8A: So is your work appreciated by your supervisor?

P11: I think so.

Interviewer: How do they show that appreciation?

P11: They leave me alone. Yeah, but you know, like, now, we're going through the budget cycle with the new request that I have trying to grow the program. And every request is coming back with what we need more information. And that can be a little frustrating, because not always clearly communicating, exactly what we need. So sometimes some of the processes can be a little bit frustrating as well.

Interviewer: Questions 8B- So how have you been recognized for a job well done?

P11: So I just received a NISOD for the second time. Basically community college instructors throughout the U.S. are recognized for their excellence in education. So in our division we have a recognized person every year, and I've received it. I've been here 9 years, and I've received it for a second time. So that's a good thing. Lots of verbal thata boys are of voice. How well we do the program and everything. But it's not a whole lot of else other than the award which I you know there are not many, two time winners in our college. So that's one thing, and you know I can think of a couple of other awards that I'd like to received from the college that I haven't yet.

Interviewer: Question 9A- So Do you have opportunity for professional career development? And this is like such as a college degree.

P11: Well, when I came to the college I already had my master's degree. They do give you steps, increases for additional education beyond a masters. I unfortunately have been so involved in the program that I haven't had the time to do that. They do not give support upfront, but they give you additional pay on the back end after you complete X amount of hours. They may or may not give you release time. It just depends for me even if they gave me release time, I couldn't.

One of the things that I make big champion of is making sure that we go to the conferences we need to go to. So we go to Texas EMS conference. Every year we go to EMS Educator Summit. There educator summit every year. I go to accreditation conference for accreditation purposes, so I could stay up on things. So, you know, we try to encourage that, plus all the other dictated things that college makes us do to fulfill their requirements.

Interviewer: Question 10A- Are you satisfied with the responsibilities and challenges offered by your work in your organization?

P11: Yeah, I'm satisfied with everything, and you know every challenge keeps me on my toes. So I can't not advance the program. And that's kind of a driving for me. I have to leave it better than I found it. If I leave here tomorrow, the program is untold how much better than it was when I found it, because they were going to shut it down. So it was in that bad of shape. So I think that they allow me to challenge, and I have found ways to take us to these next steps, and it's was frustrating sometimes.

But again I have had some advice a long time ago. That is you need to see what your next goal is that is achievable And see that. You need to see that goal out here. That's 5 years, 10 years out that you're headed towards. But that long term goal should not be what you're targeting. It should be your endpoint, and you should have stair steps that get you there. So these intermediary goals. So when I started, for instance, my education said I'm going to get a master's degree. At the time I did not have an associate degree, because EMS was clock hours whenever I started, so I had 2 years of college but no associate degree. So I came back, got an associate degree, checked off the list, stayed in college, got a bachelor's degree check to 2, 3 years to do that, checked it off the list. So okay, I'm gonna continue on to that master screen. 1, 2, 3. Okay, I'm there. So you know, if I would have looked at the Master's degree and start out without the associates, I didn't have those stare steps, so that helps get me down the line. I'm always looking, and I'm always looking for these big victories.

Interviewer: I agree with you on that. So question. 10 B- Do you have the opportunity to use your skills in your work?

P11: I am able to use my skills every day at work. I get to you everything that I've done in my past helped me do everything that I do today, and I will be doing tomorrow. And if there's something that is missing, I'm gonna figure out a way to build that spot in so that I can keep on growing and I'm closer to the end of my career than to the beginning. So, you know, I still have that desire to keep growing, and when I stop doing that you need to replace me.

Interviewer: So just out of curiosity. Do you see yourself retiring out of the position that you're in?

P11: I hope so. I figure I have 5 to 7 years left. Unless something else happens. I've been in EMS since I was a senior in high school so I've been in EMS over 41 years now. So that's all I've ever known and I don't know what I will be like without it. But I've also been in EMS 41 years, and I don't think I want to see 50.

I have been. We just finished a self study in a site visit, and I utilized one of my full-time faculty to help a bit with that self study and help a bit with this site visit. I've still got one more in me, and but on the next one I'm going to be stepping back and letting somebody, you know help me more get through the process. So they learned the process before I leave. Probably one of the worst things you can do is and I've seen more than one program do this, the program director

leaves, and nobody has a clue, and that's not right. That's not right for our students, you know, you always have students in the pipeline, and you're going to deny those students in the pipeline. The best possible experience, because your ego, or whatever got in the way, you always have to have that next step. And then that contributes to this problem with attrition. They come in. And all this is dumped on their lap, and they're so overwhelmed with trying to figure out instruction versus administration versus all these other things. In this no wonder it's a revolving door, especially with lower level experience.

Interviewer: But I completely agree. So question on 11A- Does your work give you a sense of accomplishment?

P11: Yes, it does, and I don't give myself enough credit for that. I stand back and look at where we're at today and where we started this program. And where I'm at today, and where I started back in high school, and I have come a long way. I would have never dreamt being where I'm at today, back then. And when I took over the program I never dreamt of being where it is today. And I think I'm so focused in on the day to day activities. That I don't take enough time to look back and see what we've done.

Interviewer: So question 11B- How important to you are the relationships with your work colleagues?

P11: They're critical. If we can't get along, the program suffers. I have had couple of former individuals that worked at the program that did not see that vision, and did not want to get along, and all they did is create upheaval in the program and didn't really contribute. They actually took the program down versus help building it up. And I do not like that. It is critical that we all get along, and it's also critical that you understand the processes that we're going through. And whenever you show up and show me one thing to get the job, and then when you get in the job and come completely, turn that around. I can't respect that, you know.

As long as this, and I consider this my program, I also consider it our program if you don't have mob vision about how the program should be. If you do not have our vision on how the program should be you shouldn't be in the program. My vision is part of it. I am not a dictator, so I do get feedback, but when it comes down to it, I have to make that final decision sometimes. And sometimes people don't like it. Some people don't understand it, and some of it is beyond my control. It may be administrative issues, it may be a accreditation issues that may be state issues that are dictating what I need to do. And you just want to buck it every second of the day, that doesn't work.

Interviewer: So before we get to the very last question I wanna ask you, what advice would you give a brand new program director stepping into that role for the first time to navigate some of the issues that you ran into at the local level, the State level, even the national level, to help them be successful. So I mean common pitfalls, or any best practices that you provide.

P11: Find a mentor, somebody that's there to help you find that person that just like on the street you know, I've got a former partner, so I can still call today, find somebody that you can talk to about things. Network! You cannot run your program in your silo, you cannot run it in your own

little community. You need to see the whole picture you don't need to see this little bit. You've got to get out there. But we need to also network with other individuals' in our college. So work with the other Allied health programs. You know, everybody's in their own little world. You know you need to broaden your horizons.

I am not your competition. You are not my competition. Yeah, I've got students passing by your college to come to mine, and I've got students in my service area that goes to your college. That's their decision. There is a reason that they choose the different institutions. We're all in it together, you know. We've got seven accredited paramedic programs in this area, and I'm one of the farthest out. But you gotta be able to get along and figure it out, because you know everybody swimming in their own direction. You're not getting anywhere very fast.

The other thing, attend educational opportunities. So brand new program director for a paramedic program. You need to do a accreditation workshop that should be the top thing on your list. You need to get with your state folks and get your advanced coordinator, you need to get with them. You need to attend those training so that you have a better understanding. But you also need to get in your own institution to understand what their demands are to. In Texas, higher education coordinating board because they have their own view of things that doesn't correspond with what the Texas Department State health services think education programs should be. That's what's amazing is you have two government entities that won't even talk to each other.

Interviewer: Outstanding advice. Last question, are there any other local, state or national factors that may have or may impact your decision to stay in or vacate your current role as a paramedic program director that we have not discussed that you'd like to voice?

P11: Not that I can think of like I said. I think on the the last question I kinda hit a lot of the different people we have to answer to. I think that's the national accreditation is a key to having successful programs. But I think it doesn't need to be as micromanaged. I think National Registry is a great thing. But again, watch what they're doing there. When it comes to the State there's all kinds of people. And then the local institutions. It's just we, you know, there's so many people we have to just keep in mind whenever we make decisions.

Appendix P: IRB Approval

Date: 2-14-2023

IRB #: IRB-2023-22  
Title: Attrition and Turnover Intentions of Paramedic Program Directors in the State of Texas  
Creation Date: 2-1-2023  
End Date:  
Status: Approved  
Principal Investigator: Jacob Braddock  
Review Board: ACU IRB  
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Exempt	Decision	<span>Exempt</span>
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