

STRAIGHT TALK »

Not one of the boys: female paramedic files discrimination complaint against B.C. Emergency Health Services

by Carlito Pablo on March 24th, 2021 at 2:41 PM

0



B.C. Emergency Health Services oversees the B.C. Ambulance Service and the B.C. Patient Transfer Services.

Nancy-Ann Margaret Patrick is a trailblazer.

As the B.C. paramedic related to a tribunal, she was the only woman on her shift 15 years ago.

Patrick has been a paramedic for over 22 years, one of few females in the male-dominated field.

Despite her length of service, she believes that she is not treated equally as men.

RELATED STORIES

International Women's Day: B.C. women, including small business owners, bear the economic brunt of COVID-19

International Women's Day: Georgia Straight Talks

International Women's Day 2021

Gas tab gets paramedic fired

Paramedics thrive on compassion, thrills

According to her, she is not part of the “boys club”.

“She felt singled out as a woman,” Grace Chen, a member of the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal, wrote in a recent decision.

Relating what Patrick has told the tribunal, Chen noted that her male colleagues were “not questioned about their decision-making”.

“She says the culture at the workplace is that assertive females are viewed differently than assertive men,” Chen went on.

As well, “Assertive men are viewed as being in charge, but an assertive woman is referred to in derogatory terms.”

Although Patrick said that there are now more women working as paramedics, the “perception remains that women are not behaving appropriately when they are assertive”.

Patrick had filed a complaint of discrimination against her employer, the B.C. Emergency Health Services.

BCEHS oversees the B.C. Ambulance Service, and the B.C. Patient Transfer Services.

Chen’s decision is connected with Patrick’s application to amend her original complaint in order to add new allegations.

Chen allowed the paramedic’s application.

The new allegations include her claim that a unit chief named Mr. Cooper offered two temporary positions to her male partner and another male paramedic.

“She alleges she was not one of the boys and no one spoke to her about taking one of those positions,” Chen related.

Moreover, Patrick claimed that she was “equally qualified and had more seniority than the other male paramedic”.

“She spoke to Mr. Simon (District Manager) who told her she could have the position,” Chen wrote.

It was only then that Cooper offered her one of the positions.

“She believed his conduct towards her was because she was not part of his ‘boys club’,” Chen wrote.

Also, Patrick’s original allegations include a claim that Simon “singled her out for her use of profanity, which was commonplace at the workplace”.

The allegations have yet to be tested in a hearing.

Patrick is represented by Sebastien Andreson of the Labour Rights Law office, and the BCEHS, Kristal Low of Guild Yule.

Follow Carlito Pablo on Twitter [@carlitopablo](#)

[Click here to report a typo.](#)

JOIN THE DISCUSSION

READ LIKE A LOCAL

STRAIGHT NEWSLETTER

Get daily news , prebuys and contest updates

Your email

Yes, I consent to receive communications from the Georgia Straight

POPULAR