

Catrina McDonald

My name is Catrina McDonald. I have been a Paramedic for 3 years. I started my career on North Vancouver Island, in Port McNeil. After being stationed there for approximately one year, I began training in the Vancouver Dispatch Operations Centre as an EMD. However, after a period of time I missed the hands-on work as a Paramedic so I transferred to Boston Bar (Station 204) where I am still currently posted. Although I am stationed rurally, I work more than full-time hours within the communities of Surrey, Langley, and Delta as additional shifts. For four months, during the peak of recognition to the Opioid Crisis within BC, I had the opportunity to work on an Ambulance designated to work uniquely to the needs of the Whalley area of Surrey also known as "the strip." Here I was assigned to respond to a designated area which is the heart of the Opioid Crisis within Surrey area. This "Oscar" Ambulance unit worked closely with Police, Bylaw, and the Fire Dept to respond to emergencies on "the strip" which included between 2-12 overdoses in a given 12 hour period. This "Oscar" unit gave me the opportunity to build and maintain relationships with many of the residents of the Whalley area and was a great inter-agency partnership and cooperative project with the health authority.

I have been volunteering and assisting with Public education projects within the service for about 2 years now. Our service has changed drastically over the past 5 years, and I have seen a significant change during my 3 years of service. I love being able to aid in the education of what a paramedic does and how our service works. I have assisted in many events, such as the PNE, fundraising for BC Children's hospital foundation, school visits, parades, teaching and helping out with cadet first aid competitions. Being able to teach young children, youth and adults has been an amazing experience. It is such an honour to be here today and speak to all of you. It is our dream to be able to instil a better understanding of our service to you and answer any questions you may have.