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## **A LOOK FROM THE EMPLOYER'S PERSPECTIVE: WORK READINESS OF PARAMEDIC GRADUATES IN AUSTRALIA**

### **Abstract:**

The education of paramedics is undergoing significant change in Australia, moving from a post-employment model of in-house training to a pre-employment model where education is a bachelor degree in a University. However, little is known about what capabilities employers seek in paramedic graduates. Most Universities in Australia claim they are developing graduate capabilities which include discipline knowledge and capabilities and generic skills, the so called 'soft skills' that employees value. Generic skills include communication skills, teamwork skills, critical thinking and others. Indeed professional associations representing Australian paramedics value such capabilities. We were interested to know whether paramedic training programs in Australia delivering work-ready graduates, and what skills and knowledge employers desire from a graduate in order to better inform educators. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior operational and educational personnel from Australian employers of paramedics. Data was analysed using thematic analysis. This presentation will explore the results of this Australian study. The results, although specific to the paramedic industry, may well be applicable to other healthcare disciplines.

### **Keywords:**

paramedics, work readiness, graduate capabilities

**JEL Classification:** I00