

Nominee Information:

1565

Name: Mr. Glenn Braithwaite

Title: Duty Supervisor

Organization: BC Emergency Health Services

Project / Group
Name (If Applicable):

Address:

Email:

Nominator Information:

Name: Mr. Joe Acker

Title: Director of Clinical and Medical Programs

Organization: BC Emergency Health Services

Address:

Email:

Health Care Hero Awards:

1) Provide a brief biography and/or background for this individual.

Glenn started his career as a paramedic for BC Ambulance Service (BCAS), in Vancouver, in 1978. Glenn was a paramedic during Expo '86, including host service to international guests.

In 1987, Glenn became the Unit Chief for Station 248 where he was the BCAS liaison to Vancouver City Police, Emergency Response Team, Patrol and Marine Units, Vancouver Fire Department and the Ports Canada Police. Later that same year, Glenn was assigned to the RCMP Integrated Security Unit to provide emergency medical services to international Heads of State Delegates.

In 1992, Glenn moved to Penticton, where he volunteered with Search and Rescue and helped coordinate the BC Winter and Summer Games, and Seniors Games. He also developed and supervised Emergency, Incident, and Event Action Plans for inter-agency and community events, and disaster planning.

Glenn supported the largest fire activation protocol in the history of BC (up to 1994), when he served as the Branch Coordinator to BC Ministry of Forests Unified Command Team, Forest Protection Branch. Glenn was the BCAS representative in the response, resource management, inter-agency coordination, and recovery functions across BCAS and health services in the area.

Due to a tragic circumstance in 1994, Glenn, with utmost professionalism, helped develop Line of Duty Death Memorials (in 1995, 2006, and 2010) for paramedics who lost their lives in the line of duty.

In 1999, Glenn became an instructor for the Justice Institute of BC (JIBC) where he taught the BC Emergency Response Medical Services' (BCERMS) Incident Command and Emergency Operation Centre Courses.

In October 2003, Glenn was seconded to the BC Ministry of Solicitor General to coordinate regional responses within BC Fire Services (BCFS), including interface and wildfires. He liaised with federal, provincial, regional and municipal governments, crown corporations, and agencies through the declared State of Emergency.

In 2006 Glenn became a Duty Supervisor in Kelowna, a position he continues to this day. In this role, Glenn supports daily operations by ensuring the safety and supervision of crews, coordinating major incident responses, and serving as an inter-agency liaison.

During the Vancouver Olympics, Glenn was a Venue Commander at Whistler Olympic Park during testing, training, and international events including the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

Glenn's accolades to date:

- 1981 – Chief Constables Commendation – Vancouver Police Department
- 1989 – Award – National Advanced Life Support Competitions
- 1991 – Commendation – Sunshine Foundation of Canada – Vancouver Chapter
- 1999 – Regional Managers Award – Province of BC – Provincial Emergency Program
- 2003 – Mayors Commendation – City of Penticton
- 2004 – Award – BC Seniors Games Society
- 2006 – Commendation – BCAS Emergency Management Office (EMO)
- 2008 – Commendation – BC Southeast District – Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- 2009 – Ministers Commendation – BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
- 2009 – Award – JIBC – Heroes and Rescue
- 2010 – Executive Director Leadership Award – BCAS
- 2010 – Chief Operating Officer (COO) Leadership Award – BCAS
- 2011 – Executive Director Leadership Award – BCAS
- 2015 – Employee Award of Excellence: Clinical Care – BCEHS
- 2016 – Employee Award of Excellence: Quality and Patient Safety – BCEHS
- 2017 – Employee Award of Excellence: Career Achievement – BCEHS
- 2017 – Provincial Award of Excellence: Tony Sutherland Memorial Plaque of Pride – BCEHS

2) Why does this individual deserve a Health Care Hero Award? Describe either a specific incident, or a pattern of contributions.

Glenn demonstrates an exemplary commitment to patients, staff, colleagues and the broader community. Glenn is able to recognize patients' needs and coordinate resources to ensure the best outcomes for patients. He has the clinical experience, operational leadership, vision, and logistical expertise to effectively communicate the plan with everyone involved, in order to respond efficiently.

In the summer of 2016, a girl became impaled on a 4 inch wide, 10 foot tall tree, while ATVing with friends on Apex Mountain. Hardeep Dhaliwal (BCEHS Charge Dispatcher in Kamloops) contacted Glenn and, in Hardeep's recount of the incident, "if it had not been for Glenn's early planning and strong clinical understanding of the patient's needs and coordination, she would not have survived." Glenn understood the need for an urgent air response and recognized the patient needed rescue and transport to the closest Trauma Centre within a single operational period. There were significant hurdles that needed to be overcome in order to execute this rescue effectively. Glenn had a clear vision of the needs of this patient and through his leadership the young patient survived. The first hurdle was a lack of immediately available BCEHS air resources – through Glenn's network BCEHS contracted Eclipse helicopter – one the provincial contract ad hoc air suppliers. The patient was impaled and attached to a tree – Forestry and Fire were not available – Glenn contacted Search and Rescue to bring handsaws. The helicopter needed to serve dual purpose as it needed to be able to do medical evacuation as well perform Search and Rescue (SAR) – Glenn's collaboration with the pilot and SAR to complete dual duty was essential to the patient's extrication. Glenn was able to communicate the gravity of the situation, and Kelowna General Hospital (KGH) prepared for the incoming patient. Faced with another hurdle – Blood Services identified that there was not enough blood at KGH – Glenn was able to make arrangements through in collaboration with Blood Services BC and Dispatch to get a sufficient amount transported from Penticton Regional Hospital to KGH. Each one of these critical instances required Glenn's understanding of the criticality of the patient's injuries, his vision, his leadership; most importantly, the ability for Glenn to employ his extensive professional network in order to save the young girl's life. Following the event, Glenn provided the opportunity for emotional healing for the patient, her family and rescuers when he coordinated a meeting between Search and Rescue, BCEHS paramedics and dispatch staff, and KGH hospital staff and surgeons.

3) How does the nominee go "above and beyond" the scope of their job? What sets them apart from other dedicated health care workers?

It is Glenn's kindness and compassion for all the people involved that sets him apart from other dedicated health care workers. Despite all the years Glenn has worked within emergency medical services (EMS), he has remained

optimistic that, together, we can do the right thing every day. Rene Bernklau (BCEHS Manager of Clinical Operations) described Glenn's resilience and dedication, to his staff and patients: "Passion and strength in performing daily can be one of the more difficult things to maintain in long careers, [by] succumbing to age [and] losing energy. In Glenn's case, he displays the willingness to maintain a high level of performance, showing up early or adjusting to where his strength and oversight is required. This is not common, and [it] needs to be recognized." What makes Glenn a health care hero is that he sees a glimmer of hope in people when they can't see it themselves.

In June 2018, Glenn attended to a routine call for a young patient who had made some poor life choices, which left him homeless and vulnerable. Glenn's individualized care and compassion for this young man became the impetus this patient needed to change his life. The young man was required to stay overnight in hospital and was scheduled to be discharged the following morning. Glenn saw past the stigma and saw a young patient who was smart and who had limitless potential. Glenn gave this patient hope. Despite Glenn working late and not getting home until after midnight, Glenn was up early to ensure that, upon discharge, the young man would have someone with him who would advocate for him. Glenn was the voice in this patient's healthcare journey, and he ensured that he was not on the street and taking steps toward a better life.

Glenn shines because of the countless times, and the numerous people (staff, colleagues and patients) that he has advocated for and supported, often through their darkest days. There is no 'record' of this selflessness and compassion. We don't know how often Glenn has gone over and above for his patients – however, when you speak with nurses and physicians in the Emergency Department, many have their own stories of Glenn's altruistic character.

Glenn is truly there for his colleagues. Lindsay Kellosalmi (Lead Coordinator for BCEHS' Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Program) has worked with Glenn when some of his paramedics have worked their most difficult days: "He always ensures his employees are taken care of in a confidential and timely fashion. Glenn has even gone out of his way on his time off to ensure that his colleagues have the support that they need." There has been at least one situation in which Glenn, with the CISM team's support, has intervened when one of our paramedics was at risk of suicide. Glenn's ability to build trust, combined with his skilled communication, enables him to support people in their darkest moments and change the course of action for the better.

4) How has this person's efforts had a positive impact on their patients, clients, colleagues, employer and/or community? How has the nominee inspired others?

Glenn just doesn't give up – simply put: his tenacity and curiosity saves lives. One night in 2017, during the height of the opioid crisis, Glenn was working an extra shift in Vancouver as Duty Supervisor. A cluster of 9-1-1 calls were received. The first call was for a cardiac arrest, where the mother was doing CPR on a young person. Paramedics arrived and quickly realized it was an overdose situation; they asked if there was anyone else with the patient and found there was another person in the home who had also overdosed. A second call came in for an overdose and when the paramedics asked if there was anyone else, they were informed of a third location. Glenn was the closest response unit in the area and he responded. Upon entering, Glenn found three young men in a low level of consciousness in the front room, and four more in another room who were all in respiratory arrest. With the help of a police officer on scene, who was also a part-time paramedic, the two of them started working on the four patients until additional crews arrived. Glenn was able to quickly see the bigger picture, and inquired about how the three calls were all linked, Glenn ascertained the young men had bought cocaine and had done it together; however, one of their friends was unaccounted for. Through collaboration with the police, the 'missing' patient was found overdosed and in respiratory distress, just steps away from his parent's back door. Eleven lives were saved that day because of Glenn's clinical skills, exemplary leadership, and seamless coordination – he was able to see the bigger picture.

Steve Sweeney (Retired Deputy Chief with Vancouver Police and member of the Kelowna Outdoor Events Committee) worked with Glenn in Vancouver in the 1980s. Steve admires Glenn's "innovation and resolve regarding the 'Centre of Gravity' event held every summer. The three-day event features sporting activities during the day and music concerts at night. The nighttime concerts had problems with drug and alcohol abuse and required several BCAS resources to manage the event. Glenn was successful in establishing a response protocol with the event organizers that included free water and a 'Cool Down Zone.' This zone also served as a triage point for patrols that required medical care." This was an innovative approach that required great diplomacy as well as medical knowledge, as the event promoters were hesitant to admit there was a problem in the first place, given the negative connotation. The implementation of this practice resulted in greatly improved patient care delivery and timely medical response to event-goers in distress.

Glenn's leadership, vision, logistical understanding and clinical strength are crucial to making a significant, positive impact on patient care. Glen inspires his staff, peers and colleagues, both within BCEHS and other agencies, to do better and to be better – his commitment to patients and his community is evident in everything he does.

6) OPTIONAL - Additional brief testimonials or endorsements from others.

Dale Jorgenson (President, Penticton Search and Rescue (PENSAR)): "Glenn is known as a problem solver, communicator, team builder and true professional and always been open to commit his time and energy to make our team more effective, thus enhancing patient care." Glenn has assisted PENSAR in undertaking: Incident Command training; establishing First Responder Level 3 as the standard for our First Aid Training; developing enhanced communication; providing ongoing guidance and feedback to the team on tasks; ensuring SAR is always aware of BCEHS' protocols and specialty teams."

Derek Robinson (President Eclipse Helicopter): "While working in the Okanagan valley, I have had the pleasure of working alongside Glenn during some of the most horrific situations, and it has been the most rewarding. He is decisive but compassionate to all those around him, understanding the role he is playing as well to the timing needed to ensure the outcome was that of a positive nature for all concerned. His motivation and character never waiver from his principles to provide his complete attention to assist with solving any problems you may be enduring. On many occasions, he took the time and went out of his way to ensure any of my personal issues were not in any way burdening my life too badly."

Kurt Lozinski (Retired Staff Sergeant RCMP): "Glenn always provided me with a sense of comfort when dealing with potentially dangerous situations and I could always rely on him to make the appropriate call and do the right thing."

Denis Gaudry (Fire Chief Kaleden): "Glenn and I have fostered a now decades-long contact. Many years ago we were called to assist with an MVA, Glenn showed up on the scene, responded to check the driver – we were too late and trauma too much – Glenn recognized we were there and redirected his energy just to ensure everyone on our fire crew was ok. The Opioid Crisis has caused worry and concern for my fire team. Glenn attended a training night on his own accord and explained, from his wealth of knowledge, the technical side of the drugs, impact to the patient, things we need to watch for to keep my crew safe. Our crew found this comforting."

Glenn's lifelong career, and his myriad essential and pivotal roles, has provided mentorship and guidance to individuals of all ages and in all stages of their professions. Glenn has been heroic and instrumental in coordinating and performing life-saving actions. His humble, compassionate nature has had a profound impact on countless patients, staff and colleagues. Although this application lists only a handful of examples that demonstrate Glenn's heroic nature, there are undoubtedly many more specific encounters in which Glenn has altered the course of someone's life. Glenn's influence, on his staff and in his extensive circle, will be his legacy at the end of his career. Until then, we have the opportunity to celebrate this exceptional human being with the Health Care Hero Award.