ABSTRACT

**DISsertATION PROJECT:** An Exploration of Turnover and Turnover Intention Among Program Directors of Nationally Accredited Paramedic Education Programs  
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Purpose: Paramedic program directors are leaders within their profession. Recent data suggests that turnover among program directors of paramedic education programs is staggeringly high, averaging 22% per year. Changes in this leadership position can have deleterious effects on program students, the sponsoring institution, and the citizenry at large. An exploration of this phenomenon was a necessary first step in understanding the issues at play and to begin a conversation that can improve retention of program directors as we look to the future of the profession.

Methods: This study was conducted by administering a cross-sectional, web-based survey which consisted of 26 items. The survey was distributed to all 700 paramedic program directors across the United States. The survey was designed to profile demographic attributes, both personal and of their programs, explore the presence or absence of turnover intention, and to investigate the research questions which included tests for association among various demographic attributes and an independent variable of turnover intention. Further, research
questions sought to determine factors leading to program director turnover and where program directors are employed following turnover from that important leadership role.

Results: The results of the study indicate that there is a statistically significant association between number of hour worked per week to preform job duties and turnover intention. Chi square tests for association of every other independent demographic variable was unable to show an association. The results further showed that the primary factors leading to turnover intention are: excessive workload, lack of institutional support, and difficulties with accreditation. It was also determined that the destination of program directors following their tenure in the position are varied beyond categorical analysis. Finally, nine recommendations aimed at decreasing program director turnover are made.