

Health Service & Manager Failed to Accommodate Paramedic with MS



A part-time paramedic with multiple sclerosis had decreased sensation in his fingertips, making him unable to ‘palpate a pulse.’ The health service wouldn’t let him work as a paramedic, saying being able to feel a pulse was a bona fide occupational requirement. The Human Rights Tribunal found the health service and a senior manager liable for disability discrimination by failing to accommodate the paramedic. There was no evidence of actual harm arising from not having both paramedics being able to palpate a pulse. So the service could’ve accommodated him without undue hardship by making him a ‘Driver Only’ or ‘Special Driver Only.’ The Tribunal also criticized the manager for ‘actively thwarting’ accommodation efforts and deliberately trying to prevent the paramedic from returning to work, noting that the manager didn’t do the things expected of management when considering accommodations [[Cassidy v. Emergency Health Services Commission](#), [2013] BCHRT 116 (CanLII), May 6, 2013].