



Central Okanagan
Division of Family Practice
A GPSC initiative

Annual Report

**June 2019 -
March 2020**

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Message from the Physician Lead – *Dr. Michael Koss*



The Division of Family Practice continues to divide its attention between local initiatives and larger IH/MoH-related projects. This past year has been dominated by Primary Care Network planning. A collaboration between IH, local First Nations, and the Division, our PCN plan was submitted to the MoH in 2019. We received approval in Jan 2020, and were on our way to getting started, when COVID hit and put everything on hold. Work on the PCN is starting up again now, so you will be hearing from the Division shortly about joining the PCN and getting access to Allied Health and a Nurse Coordinator for your practices.

Another IH-related project in the past year was the UPCC at Capri Mall. This started out as a collaborative effort with IH, but the MoH changed the plan, and it ultimately became an IH-owned and operated facility. However, when COVID hit, the Division was able to work with IH to change the UPCC to a COVID Testing and Assessment site, which benefitted the public and our members.

COVID planning became the main priority in early March 2020, and the Division liaised with KGH, IH, MoH on your behalf. We represented community FPs at the IH Incident Command table. The Division supported the rapid expansion of virtual care in the Central Okanagan, and helped organize PPE supplies and access for your offices. In addition, the Division provided regular updates to members, to assist you with: keeping you and your offices safe, managing your possible COVID patients, and seeing your patients virtually.

As for local grassroots initiatives - Your Division remains involved in the newly operational Child Advocacy Center. We continue to work on streamlining the creation of forms for your EMRs. Divisions is working with IH on re-design of psych/MH/SU programs to improve your patients' access to these important supports. The Division's LTC team continues to streamline the admission process to LTC facilities, and manages the LTC Initiative. The Recruitment and Retention program and the Division's Patient Attachment mechanism continue to be very successful.

I would like to thank our Central Okanagan Division Board, our Executive Director Tristan Smith, and our staff, for their hard work this past year, and their ongoing enthusiasm and willingness to tackle new projects.

Finally, thank you, to our Division members, for supporting your Division of Family Practice. As always, if you have any comments or suggestions, please contact us.

Sincerely,
Dr. Michael Koss
Physician Lead

Message from the Executive Director – *Tristan Smith*



The Central Okanagan Division of Family Practice, as a not-for-profit entity, has now served family physicians for 10 years! It's exciting to think of our journey, beginning with better access to specialty services, building our family physician recruitment programs, then leading up to larger collaborative system changes such as: GPforME, the Seniors Health and Wellness Centre, and Nurse in Practice.

Our Division provides local family physicians with the ability to take part in constructive system change. The Division offers a unique local voice for primary care with system partners such as: the Health Authority, Ministry of Health, Specialists, and governing bodies or health organizations. We also provide clinical support services such as Pathways and Up-to-Date.

Over the years our dedicated staff have worked hard to support our members. I would like to acknowledge our staff and consultants that continue to provide support for all of our initiatives including: Monica McLean, Amanda Stickland, Jennifer Bitz, Melissa Faraguna, Karen Kopp, Deidrean Williams, and Stephen Reichart. This is an effective and fun team who work hard and rise to the occasion when required, thank you!

As you are aware, during the last year our lives changed significantly with COVID-19. When the pandemic began to impact our community, the Division of Family Practice struck up a Board Task Force who directed staff to realign with emerging needs. Thankfully we were prepared to offer advice on Virtual Care platforms allowing a quick transition to seeing patients via telemedicine. Our Long-term Care Initiative worked closely with facilities and Interior Health to develop strategies to keep patients and doctors safe. Furthermore, the Division was able to share information through 19 members messages from February to June, with helpful updates regarding patient information, clinical information, PPE, office workflow suggestions, and access to labs/DI or testing sites. In addition, we encouraged our community to maintain the vital relationship between patients and their family doctors through public messages in local media.

In the background of COVID-19 is some exciting work with Primary Care Networks. Over the last decade we have heard from our members regarding needed clinical assistance for complex patients such as: frail elderly, chronic disease, or mental health/substance use. This reoccurring request enabled us to co-develop a plan that over three years will see over 40 nurses and allied health care professionals directly aligned to primary care services in the Central Okanagan. Should this plan come to fruition, we anticipate the growth and added capacity in the primary care system to increase access and attachment of patients leading to a win-win!

Over the coming year we anticipate the need to be adaptable to the needs of our members and look forward to serving you the best we can.

Sincerely,
Tristan Smith
Executive Director

Divisions Activities and Highlights

Community Engagement

Interior Health
City of Kelowna
District of Lake Country
Regional District of Central Okanagan
University of British Columbia-Okanagan
Ministry of Children and Family Development
School District No. 23
Canadian Mental Health Association
Other Provincial Divisions of Family Practice
Practice Support Program (PSP)
Westbank First Nation
Okanagan Nation Alliance
First Nations Health Authority

Continuing Medical Education

September 4, 2019	Meet the Specialists
November 7, 2019	LTCi Round Table
December 12, 2019	GI and ENT
February 14, 2020	LTCi Care of the Elderly Conference
February 25, 2020	Meet the Specialists – Virtual Care, Respiriology & Pathways

Division Newsletter

The Division newsletter continues to provide meaningful information to support clinical decision-making and share information about news and events.

During the June 2019 to March 2020 year, we had Newsletter editions for: June 2019 to December 2019, January 2020 to March 2020.

Webpages for Division Members

Webpages are offered to members as an opportunity to share information and resources such as office hours, staff information, phone numbers, FAQ's from patients, links to clinical information and common patient handout materials.

Online Forum for Division Members

Mighty Networks was offered to Members and their staff, and NiP as an online forum to connect and share through experiences and ideas.

Recruitment and Retention

Date initiated: June 2014

Physician Leads: Dr. Milt Stevenson

R & R Administrators: Monica McLean, Tristan Smith

Update:

1. From June 2019 to December 2019, we were fortunate enough to recruit 7 full-time & 1 part-time Physician and 3 Locum Physicians, during this same time 11 Physicians retired. From January 2020 to March 2020, we happily welcomed 5 more full-time physicians and during this time, 1 physician retired. We anticipate 8 more Family Physicians will retire in 2020.
2. Central Okanagan Division Physician Lead and Recruitment Administrator are continuing to liaise with retiring physicians and clinics to assist with moving patient panels.
3. We are always reviewing and improving our “Red Carpet” recruitment program including our recruitment advertisements on HealthMatch and our Central Okanagan Division website. We also continue to work with long-standing clinics to review recruitment needs and reviewing clinic spaces to create more work spaces for physicians.
4. We are continually working on new strategies to advertise for locums in addition to creating a new Locum Matching Program. Clinics can advertise their locum opportunities on the BC Family Doctors website where we collect the information via survey for the ads. We created a newsletter and had locums subscribe to it, hoping for matches.
5. Locally, we are fortunate to have physician leaders Dr. Jade Dittaro & Dr. Gregory Handrigan, Co-Site Directors of the UBC Faculty of Medicine - Family Practice Residency Program - Rural Okanagan Site, who are forging urban opportunities R2 residents.

Attachment “Find A Family Doctor”

Date initiated: August 2018

Physician Lead: Dr. Milt Stevenson

Attachment Administrator: Monica McLean, Amanda Stickland and Deidrean Williams

Update:

1. The Division “Find A Family Doctor” program began on August 16th, 2018 following our A GPforME initiative. Our aim is to attach patients to physicians as capacity increases in offices.
2. From June, 2019 to March 2020, we have attached 3,042 people.

Pathways

Date initiated: November 2015

Physician Lead: Dr. Milt Stevenson

Pathways Administrator: Deidrean Williams

Update:

1. With over 3 million-page views last year, Pathways continues to be recognized as an excellent clinical tool for up to date information regarding the province's 3700+ specialists and clinics, referral forms / requisitions as well as vetted physician resources and patient information handouts.
2. **100%** of the Province is using Pathways with the final 2 Divisions, South Okanagan Similkameen and East Kootenays, coming on board in December 2019 and March 2020 respectively!
3. Over 400 Central Okanagan users access an average of 1800 page views every week.
4. The Community Services section of Pathways has been refined to support primary care providers in the growing trend of social prescribing. Public access to Community Services launched in the fall of 2019 for Central Okanagan users.
5. Pathways is now used by Specialists and hospital-based physicians to find and help attach patients to primary care providers.
6. New access keys have been developed to support Primary Care Networks with 12 active accounts at present."
7. With the advent of Covid19, pathways has supported and facilitated a plethora of virtual care and Covid19 related resources and information for both doctors and the general public.

GPSC Long-term Care

Date Initiated: September 2015 (transitioned from the RC Steering Committee which was initiated in November 2012)

Physician Leads: Dr. Rob Williams, Dr. Bernie Lewke, Dr. Willie Mackle, Dr. Tara Sebulsky

Staff Support: Jennifer Bitz, Tristan Smith

Update:

1. Updated the 'Road Show' document for 2019/20 and completed the second round of sessions at each of the 16 local care homes. These are interactive dialogue sessions regarding the 5 Best Practice Expectations and the 3 System Level Outcomes at each care home with staff and one high volume LTC physician.
2. Organized and hosted 3 CME events:
 - a. Nov. 7, 2019: Round table event
 - New IH Palliative Care Order (J Carscadden, V Kennedy, K Wade)
 - Palliative Approach (R Williams, K Hartman, R Chartrand)
 - Persistent agitation in a nursing home patient (A Wisniewska)
 - Prescribing sedatives and anti-psychotics in the elderly (S Ghadirian)
 - b. Feb. 14, 2020: Care of the Elderly Conference (half day)
 - Abnormal Gait in LTC (J Kow)
 - Supporting Opioid Agonist Therapy in LTC (B Hufsmith & N Uppal)
 - Management of Dyspnea in Advanced Disease: LTC edition (C Baldwin)
 - MAiD in 2020 (D Smith & W Mackle)
 - c. June 4, 2020: COVID-19 and Older Adults: What LTC and Community Clinicians Need to Know (S Sinha)
3. By January 2020, the Streamlining LTC Admission Process Project was fully implemented. This is an ongoing work in progress with incremental continued improvements supported by process evaluation. To do this, we continue to work closely with our LTC physicians, IH admin, KGH, the Access Office, Community Home Health, care home staff and LTC pharmacists. We will be hosting a third process flow mapping workshop in Autumn 2020. The project was launched at a workshop in December 2017 with a second workshop on June 19th 2019.
4. Improving information exchange between KGH and MRPs/LTC homes
 - a. Working with the Emergency Department at KGH to improve information exchange between them, care homes and MRPs when a resident is sent to the ED and back to the care home. This work created a new ED to LTCH form which has since been updated. The key now is to inspire usage.
 - b. Working with KGH to improve communication flow to MRPs and LTC homes when an admitted patient is transferred back to the care home. Much of the success of this project relies on information system improvements that ensure a patient's MRP information is accurate in Meditech at the time of hospital admission.
5. Quarterly administration of fee claims for bed incentives and for accepting new patients into LTC.
6. Administration of annual signed commitments by LTC physicians to continue to work toward the 5 Best Practice Expectations.

Primary Care Networks

Date initiated: February 2019

Physician Leads: Dr. Michael Koss, Dr. Christine Hoppe, Dr. Milt Stevenson, Dr. Janet Evans

Staff: Tristan Smith, Monica McLean, Amanda Stickland and Deidrean Williams

Update:

1. The Ministry of Health endorsed and approved the Central Okanagan PCN plan in January 2020.
2. The Central Okanagan PCN plan includes an investment of 37 Nurses and 19 Allied Health team members over a 3-year period.
3. Nurses and Allied Health hubs will be directly aligned to family physician offices.
4. The PCN plan itself will be co-governed by the Division, Interior Health, and Aboriginal partners represented by Westbank First Nation.
5. Physician engagement will begin in July and deployment of nurses and allied health care staff will commence as soon as possible.
6. Sharing patient care responsibilities with a team provides additional capacity for primary care providers to enhance primary care services and bring new patients into practices.

Collaborative Services Committee

Date initiated: April 2011

Physician Leads for 2019/2020: Dr. Michael Koss, Dr. Milt Stevenson

Staff: Tristan Smith

Major Issues Identified:

- System of Primary Care Network Opportunities
- System integration: Seniors, Mental Health, Substance Use, Acute Care, Long-term Care
- Emergency Preparedness

Collaborative Services Committee Aims:

- Improved care for identified populations
- Decrease unnecessary system usage such as Emergency or Acute Care
- Improve experience of care for both providers and patients
- Increase access to care for identified populations

Progress:

- The Division participated in a regional committee with senior Interior Health medical directors during the initial phases of COVID-19.
- The CSC continues to work towards shared initiatives involving family medicine.

Next Steps:

- Begin Implementation of Central Okanagan PCN plan.
- Support ongoing COVID-19 related issues
- Continue to work on initiatives with Interior Health, the Ministry of Health, and other partners that help us improve care for patients in our community.

Summary of Committees

Collaborative Services Committee

The Central Okanagan Collaborative Service Committee (CSC) brings together representatives from the Central Okanagan Division of Family Practice, the General Practice Services Committee and Interior Health.

These partners share issues of concern for patient care outcomes, co-determine priorities and co-design solutions to the complex and interconnected issues facing the healthcare system and the delivery of primary care. All partners work together to improve patient care and system efficiencies within their sphere of influence.

Co-chairs: Dr. Michael Koss (COD), Deborah Preston (IH)

Division Members and Staff: Dr. Christine Hoppe and Tristan Smith

GPSC: Dr. Lee Mackay, Jillian Wong

Interior Health: Deborah Preston, Sharon Cook, Dr. Curtis Bell, Danielle Cameron, and Greg Cutforth.

Inter-Divisional Strategic Council

The Inter-Divisional Strategic Council (ISC) is a formal group representing senior executive administrators for Interior Health, all Interior Health Division Leads, the General Practice Services Committee and the Ministry of Health.

Its strength lies in the collaboration of the Divisions within IH and our ability to connect with the highest levels of IH administration as well as GPSC and the Ministry of Health. Together we endorse and sponsor initiatives including improving access to Child and Youth Mental Health services, adult MHSU, Integrated Health Network transition.

This year we focused on the Primary Care Network along with co-leads from the Ministry of Health, General Practices Services Committee, and Interior Health.

Division Representation on ISC: Dr. Michael Koss, Dr. Christine Hoppe and Tristan Smith

Inter-Divisional Recruitment Committee

Date initiated:

Physician Lead: Dr. Milt Stevenson
IPRR Administrator: Monica McLean

This new committee is advocating for physicians at partner tables: ISC, PCN steering committees, LOU IH, and First Nations tables.

These committees allow for sharing of work around community engagement, physician wellness, and governance models.

Other topics include Human Resource contracting, Patient attachment work, regional servers to support business infrastructures, risk management, and resilience.

Getting regional Divisions together has produced a valuable exchange of ideas, built functional relationships between Divisions, and has brought forward projects that produce quick results across the region.

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