

We're All in This Together – Advocating for Mental Health Patients



Overview

The Delta Division of Family Practice's **"A GP for Me"** initiative includes integrating work streams to address patient attachment, GP capacity and primary care needs. We improved information and processes to enable GPs to identify and rapidly refer to targeted MHSU and allied health care resources and to receive timely feedback.



Collaboration

- Delta Division of Family Practice
- Member GPs
- Medical Office Assistants
- Allied Health Care Professionals
- Community Service Organizations
- Fraser Health
- The Corporation of Delta



Strengthening the Arm of the GP: A GP's Story

- Learned more about the referral process
- Built relationships with other health care providers in South Delta
- Referral was much smoother and quicker than before
- Patient's life has dramatically changed for the better
- Able to navigate the system more efficiently to provide continuity of care

Key Guiding Principles

- Patient centeredness
- Leveraging/integrating with existing processes, tools and roles
- Design for sustainability
- Simplicity, practicality



Issues and Solutions

The following themes were identified in response to the question, *"What are the issues or obstacles related to our goal of improving feedback to the GP?"*

- a. Communications, relationships / networking
- b. Education
- c. Additional psychiatrist clinical mentorship / MHSU support

Using case studies and a patient journey walkthrough, the Division, in collaboration with allied health care partners and FHA, identified improved communications processes for referrals and feedback to the GP. The Division created "Guidelines for Communications between GPs and Community Partners" to clarify information sharing between GPs and community partners for MHSU adult patients (non-urgent care). Given that the care of MHSU patients typically involves sharing of information, a privacy consultant was engaged to ensure communications processes addressed privacy concerns. This document exists within the context of current legislation, including two privacy laws: *the BC Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)*, and *the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)*.

Relationships between GPs and community partners will continue to be strengthened through in-clinic community partner "road shows", networking at GP/provider MHSU education sessions and ongoing collaboration with providers to create more clarity around processes (and/or support improvements).

FHA MHSU has expanded services to GPs to support MHSU patients: a Rapid Access Clinic, in-clinic psychiatrist clinic mentorship and accessibility to a psychiatrist for quick calls.

Impact/Benefits

- Improved patient care and outcomes
- Timely access
- Seamless, smoother process
- Ease of wrap around care/integration
- Access to wider range of expertise
- Relationship-building among providers
- Increase capacity for providers
- Knowledge of services and roles
- Improved communications between GPs and FHA MHSU and community partners
- "[It's] the way of the future. Efficient way to manage busy practitioners and better patient outcomes."
- Network providers have made changes to their practice including more efficient office processes in terms of where to direct patients for MHSU resources and sharing information with colleagues



Sustaining the Change

- Provider education includes networking opportunities, and will continue through FHA's Practice Support Program (PSP).
- Guidelines for communications have been prepared and will be shared with all South Delta GPs and MHSU providers.
- Community partners will maintain service information on the FETCH searchable on-line website which is easily accessible to GPs and the public.
- Established connections will sustain mutually beneficial relationships.
- A patient/public education session focusing on MHSU is planned for 2016.

Patients: Advocate, navigate and understand

GPs: Support in caring for complex mental health patients

Allied Health Care Partners:

Building relationships with GPs and being heard