
PHYSICIAN LEAD'S ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019

There has been a lot going on in Primary Care Transformation in Prince George and across the Province this year.

Primary Care Networks:

The Ministry of Health is prioritizing the development of Primary Care Networks across the Province. Prince George is one of the “Wave 1A” communities, meaning that Prince George is one of the first to develop a Primary Care Network. A Primary Care Network is how a group of Primary Care Homes (our offices) interact with one another, specialists, community services and acute care services. I like to think of it as a medical neighbourhood. Dr. Susie Butow, the PCN lead, has done a tremendous amount of excellent work. Partnering with Northern Health, First Nations Health Authority and local First Nations communities to create the Prince George PCN proposal which was accepted by the Ministry of Health. Exciting opportunities to bolster existing, overworked primary care teams will continue to develop our primary care homes and allow us to realize the benefits of team-based care for patients and providers. An added outreach function within our primary care system is being envisioned to reach those patients who are not being served by our offices and are so in need of good primary care to avoid episodic, acute care presentations. Care and attention are being given to how we support the healthcare providers who are undergoing such a massive change in the way they do business. As GPs, we understand the many advantages that come from “Relationship Based Care” i.e. providing care to patients we know and who trust us. Creating trusting relationships within and between teams is critical to the successful implementation of Team Based Care that is comprehensive, coordinated and allows for improved office efficiency, provider and patient satisfaction - something not yet fully realized in Prince George. Within the PCN proposal, attention is being given to this culture change.

Urgent and Primary Care Clinic:

Another priority of the Ministry of Health is to improve after-hours access to healthcare by opening urgent care centres across the province, including in Prince George. As you know, for over 25 years physicians in Prince George have been providing after hours care which is tightly linked to the primary care home through the Nechako Medical Clinic. When Prince George was asked to open an urgent care center, the Nechako Medical Clinic Board, the Division of Family Practice and Northern Health worked together on a plan that would augment the current model of after-hours care rather than creating something new. The Urgent and Primary Care Centre in Prince George will open early June 2019 in the Parkwood Centre and will provide an opportunity for a larger space, and co-located inter-professional care including mental health workers, social work and nursing, allowing for delivery of IV therapy, acute crisis intervention and wound care. In addition, access to laboratory services at UHNBC will be improved with expanded hours of service.

Northern Shared Care Psychiatry Collaboration:

The Northern Shared Care Psychiatry Collaboration ended in September 2018 with a service model for delivery of Mental Health and Substance Use services created for Northern BC. The project was under budget and therefore, local work continues in each HSDA attending to implementation of the model. In Prince George, the local work is focused on revamping the current alphabet soup of Specialized Mental Health Services into an integrated system which will be easier to access for patients, families and primary care providers. The model depicts improved communication and learning between specialty and primary care services so that patients can move seamlessly between the two as needed, depending on the current state of their illness. There is much work ahead to realize this new, accessible system but we are headed in the right direction!

I hope you have noticed the small but significant advances that have been made regarding access to Child and Youth mental healthcare. We have a long way to go towards an easily accessible, integrated system for children, youth and their families. However, with the assistance of BC Children's Hospital (via Compass) and some early signs of improved local capacity, we are hopeful that we are on the right track. Child and Youth Mental Health tables for Prince George and the region have been started. In Prince George, MCFD, Northern Health, School District 57, Intersect, Native Friendship Center, Foundry, GPs, Pediatricians, and Psychiatrists are talking and have an interest in working together to improve mental health and substance use care for children and youth in PG.

Sustainable Inpatient Primary Care:

Finally, the work that has been done around sustainable Inpatient Primary Care has started to come to life on the new Primary Care Medical Unit at UHNBC. Dr. Theresa Shea, the Medical Lead for the ward, has been instrumental in its co-design with Northern Health. The PCMU opened on May 22, 2019 and the new Doctor of the Week Program has started. The new ward is beautiful and if you haven't seen it yet, you should really check it out! There are spacious patient rooms, a bright team room, accessible and plentiful computer monitors, an electronic whiteboard, a head nurse (Kyla Redlon) who will know all of your patients, and even a coat room where we can put our coats and bags. We heard all of your input regarding the hassles of rounding at UHNBC and we are hopeful that this new ward addresses many of these things. This will be a ward where our patients are mobilized early - encouraged to wear their own clothes, eat in a dining room, walk in the halls, patients and families will be involved in their plan of care, discharge planning will be done throughout their stay by a multidisciplinary team and you will be supported and known. There are new and innovative things happening here which will require patience and optimism on our part to facilitate lasting change. For example, we will be the pioneers in electronic documentation at UHNBC; computers at each bedside, nurses charting in the EMR and we will be able to dictate right into Powerchart. Look out for opportunities for Dragon training, extra training on Powerchart and "dynamic documentation". We look forward to hearing feedback from all of you regarding things that are working and things that need improvement. Watch out for the "suggestion box" on the ward and reach out to Theresa who will be on the ward regularly. The Attachment Rota is key to the success of this plan. This rota is responsible for attaching unattached patients -i.e. we take over their care from Doctor of the Week to provide continuity of care during their hospital stay and then bring them into our practice. The idea being that we limit the number of unattached patients coming into UHNBC and unburden the Doctor of the Week program, keeping it for the care of out of town patients and those new to our community without a doctor. Please consider joining - many hands make light work. You will be well supported in this process by Karen Flores who will be supporting both the Doctor of the Week program and the Attachment Rota. Please notify her with any concerns or difficult situations and she

will ensure you get the help you need. Thank you to all who have given valuable input into the ward and for all of your enthusiasm for this work!

There are so many ways that you can be involved in the work at the Prince George Division of Family Practice. I would encourage you to become involved. The broader the representation from our members, the more the system of health care in Prince George will resonate with you and bring satisfaction to you in your work. There are opportunities to work at all levels: local one-time initiatives, larger projects in collaboration with Northern Health/UPIC/community groups, or provincially. All of your time is remunerated at Doctor of BC sessional rates and we are well supported by the Administrative staff at the Division.

On behalf of all GPs I would like to thank our dedicated practice support coaches Tammy, Karen, Laura and Bonnie for the quality improvement that they offer to our practices, and the amazing staff at the Division (Megan, Gail, Sharon, Karen, Heather, Meg and Tricia) for their dedication to supporting and improving Primary Care in Prince George.

Finally, to Olive and Garry for their leadership, tireless dedication, and commitment to this work.

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