



## ADVOCACY REPORT – 2016

One of the goals of the BC Pediatric Society (BCPS) is to advocate for improved health for infants, children, and youth, and their families. This year we have had a busy advocacy agenda, covering the following topics:

Transitioning Patients into Adult Care: The BCPS has a Specialist Services Committee grant (led by Drs. Aven Poynter and Todd Sorokan) which is focused on building supports for community pediatricians who are transitioning patients into adult care as they “age out” of pediatric care. These supports include

- a medical transfer summary form (built upon the work done by the On Trac program at Children’s)
- a list of community resources
- information about locating a family physician for patients who do not have one
- guidelines for transitioning patients with a mental health disorder
- work on fee for service items to support this work

Currently we are travelling the Province gaining feedback on these supports – next step will be to pilot them.

SipSmart Update: Several years ago, the BCPS developed a curriculum based program for Grades 4-6, aimed at decreasing the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages. This year we have been working with the Ministry of Health to update this program. The new version is headed for schools around the province now.

Child and Youth Mental Health: A constant concern for pediatricians is access and quality of child and youth mental health services. The BCPS has a number of initiatives in this area, many of them in partnership with the Child and Youth Mental Health and Substance Use Collaborative. Drs. Wilma Arruda and Aven Poynter continue to work on these issues, and we have a number of community pediatricians on the Local Action Teams (which are community based multi disciplinary groups focused on child and youth mental health). Additionally, we

actively lobby the MCFD in this regard, particularly around the issue of wait list data (which is “forthcoming”) and early intervention strategies.

We are also current working with the Collaborative and our colleagues at the BC Psychiatric Association re making a team based practice financially and logistically more attractive to pediatricians (and psychiatrists). And we are discussing the “specialist hubs” that the Ministry of Health notes in their planning around the primary medical home – and what that could mean for this new kind of practice.

Linking Pediatricians to Schools: There are a few examples of school based health centres in BC, one of the most notable being the Barsby Clinic in Nanaimo, founded by Dr. Wilma Arruda and her colleagues. The BCPS is interested in seeing more of these clinics, as is the Collaborative. Additionally, the MCFD is monitoring these clinics as they include child and youth mental health services. The BCPS is actively lobbying in this regard.

Additionally, we have an interest in linking pediatricians to schools generally – not necessarily in a clinic setting, but running the gamut from being an advisor to a particular school to attending school team meetings about particular patients. Dr. Aven Poynter has a pilot with the Langley School District, out of which we will see a “how to” build a relationship with a school district – this work is based on earlier work done by a few pediatricians including Dr. Mary Ann Beimers and Dr. Alisa Lipson.

Public Coverage of the HPV Vaccine for All Boys (Not Just Boys “at risk”): This year we have worked diligently on this topic, on our own by sending letters to the Minister of Health and Dr. Perry Kendall, by meeting with Ministry of Health officials, by asking pediatricians to do the same, and by partnering with the Canadian Cancer Society (BC Division) on a public awareness campaign accompanied by a campaign directed at the Ministry of Health. The feedback we have is that this will happen, but the question is when, particularly given the dollars focused on the public health emergency re the opioid substance use crisis. We are planning to make the point that a crisis doesn’t negate the importance of prevention.

Immunization Schedule and Non Publically Funded Vaccine Factsheets: This year we have updated the immunization schedule and factsheets (thanks to the work of Drs. Jane Finlay and Bill Abelson). All these documents are posted on the BCPS website ([www.bcpeds.ca](http://www.bcpeds.ca)).

Disability Tax Credits: We continue to hear concerns from pediatricians about companies that encourage families to apply for the disability tax credit when it is clear the patient does not qualify. And the process for

applying for the tax credit when the patient does qualify is also onerous. The CPS has developed a guideline, which is on the CPS website, to assist us in completing the application form. The BCPS has developed a letter that pediatricians can use to give to families when we do not see any reason that the patient would qualify and therefore feel that we cannot complete the application form.

Secure Care: This month will see the first meeting of the Secure Care Working Group, led by Dr. Tom Warshawski. The goal of this group is to look at the evidence around secure care for those patients with severe substance use issues, and if warranted by the evidence, move forward to urge the Province to set up a secure care facility (with supporting legislation around this goal).

Sleep: The BCPS has supported the work of Dr. Allie Davey (community pediatrician in Kamloops) and Dr. Osman Ipsirologu (from Sunny Hill) in regard to sleep issues experienced by patients. Currently, Dr. Davey is running a sleep clinic one afternoon a week in Kamloops. Dr. Ipsirologu has joined a joint Sleep Disorders Clinic at BCCH/Mental Health and hopes his long wait list will be shortened. The group is also creating a webinar series on this topic.

Family Centred, Integrated Support of Children and Youth with Complex Neurodevelopmental Disorders: The Project Goal is to establish and provincially disseminate a model for family-centered, integrated support of children and youth with complex neurodevelopmental disorders (e. g., Autism, FASD, Down Syndrome, Intellectual Disabilities) and related behavioural/mental health needs. Individuals who have complex needs and their families, require integrated support from educational services, Psychologists, community agencies (e.g., The Centre for Child Development), Ministry of Child & Family Development (MCFD), general practitioners, community and developmental Paediatricians, as well as Paediatric Psychiatrists/Neuropsychiatrists.