

Advocacy

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One of the goals of the BC Pediatric Society (BCPS) is to advocate for improved health for infants, children, and youth, and their families.

ADVOCACY REPORT - 2019

This year we have had a busy advocacy agenda, covering the following topics:

Transitioning Patients into Adult Care

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

Besides the development of a new [Medical Transfer Summary Form](#) (based on work done by the OnTrac program), we collected and posted Division of Family Practice assists in finding family physicians for transitioning patients (as well as adult specialists). We provided a list of community resources by region, and a set of mental health guidelines.

These mental health guidelines led us to our next SSC funded project. Besides working to increase the uptake of the Medical Transfer Summary Form, we are focusing on transitioning complex patients with mental health disorders as they age out of pediatric care. This project will involve creating up to 10 “straw dog” patients (based on typical patient profiles provided by community pediatricians). Then we will “transition” these patients and see what resources are out there to support them; we know already that this is going to be an issue, so we’ll be looking for solutions that stick. We’ll be working with our

Advisory Committee which includes representatives from the Ministry of Health, MCFD and the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions) to understand what's already been done in this regard, and what can be done.

SipSmart Update

The SipSmart program has now officially been moved over to the Childhood Obesity Foundation on a perpetual license agreement. They have put up a SipSmart website (sipsmart.ca) and have plans to update and expand the program.

Child and Youth Mental Health

A constant concern for pediatricians is access and quality of child and youth mental health services. The BCPS continues to work on this initiative. The CYMHSU Collaborative is now finished but many communities are continuing their work in with the LATs.

Drs. Wilma Arruda and Aven Poynter along with Stephanie Stevenson have raised this topic with the MoH, MCFD and MoEd on regular lobby trips to Victoria. Wilma, Aven and Stephanie were also invited to a 2 day planning meeting hosted by the MMHA to start the development of a Mental Health and Addictions strategy. Ongoing meetings of this advisory group are continuing. Wilma was invited to attend a 2 day MH conference hosted by the MoEd.

Wilma has been invited to participate in the CPS Task Force on Mental Health as a community pediatrician rep.

Please click [here](#) to see information on the burden of mental health care that falls to pediatricians.

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. The MoEd, MCFD and MoH are all

interested in this initiative. Aven, Stephanie, and Wilma have met with the Minister of Ed Rob Fleming and will meet with him twice. Minister Fleming was able to visit the John Barsby Wellness Centre in June.

The final report of the 3 year evaluation of the John Barsby Wellness Centre is now complete, and is very positive in regard to this model

Dr. Wilma Arruda is working with community partners to expand this model to an elementary school setting.

Encouraging Uptake of the HPV Vaccine

The BCPS has some HPV vaccine resources for [physicians](#) and [families](#).

Immunization Schedule and Non Publicly Funded Vaccine Factsheets

The BCPS has some excellent resources for physicians and families in regard to vaccines. For physicians, the BCPS produces an [Immunization Schedule](#) and an [Immunization Schedule for Children with High Risk Conditions](#). We also provide resources on [Non-Publicly Funded Vaccines](#).

Doctors Jane Finlay, Aven Poynter, and Wilma Arruda have met with Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, in regard to wait lists for infant immunizations and our concern that Public Health Units are not discussing non-publicly funded vaccines with parents.

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.

Advocacy Partnerships

The BCPS wants to partner with other groups who share our advocacy goals. We have been actively partnering with Children First over their call for a federal Children's Commissioner. We are also talking to the Society for Children and Youth, with whom we share a concern regarding access to mental health care.

Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth Special Project

Please [click here](#) to read the BCPS brief submitted in June 2019 to the *Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth Special Project on Children and Youth with Neuro-Diverse Special Needs*.

Part of our brief focused on our position that supports and funding should be based on need, not on outdated criteria (e.g. the At Home Program) or simply by diagnosis that does not take into account the needs of the patient and family. Additionally, services vary throughout the Province, leaving some patients and families without needed services simply because of their geographical location.