

The Provincial Health Services (PHSA) Board Brief summarizes the board meetings of the PHSA. It is sent to PHSA agencies, government, media and other stake-holders to keep them informed about the activities of the PHSA.

Summary of February 28, 2008 Board Meeting

Public Presentations and Question and Answer Period

In the spirit of its commitment to public accessibility, the board of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) provides opportunities for the public to schedule presentations and to ask questions of the board prior to the beginning of every open board meeting.

There were no public presentations at the February 28 meeting. A question about operational responsibility for a new mental health facility in Burnaby was answered.

PHSA Presentations

Juanita Maginley, manager of the STI/HIV Outreach program at the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), presented on the DVD *Bevel Up: Drugs, Users and Outreach Nursing*.

Bevel Up is an award-winning educational tool that profiles, in a raw and powerful way, actual interactions between public health nurses and the vulnerable and marginalized residents of downtown Vancouver: the substance-using population who are at-risk of sexually transmitted infections, HIV and other blood-borne pathogens. The tool was developed by the outreach program at BCCDC as an educational resource for public health nurses and to provoke discussions about how to build respectful relationships and improve access to health services.

The documentary is supplemented with learning modules on rural, aboriginal and legal perspectives that act as a catalyst for discussion. Facilitated discussion sessions have been hosted across the province and across Canada for professional development, curriculum development and community development. A recent event in Prince George resulted in discussions to improve Emergency Department access for aboriginal patients.

The BC Nurses' Union and the National Film Board partnered in the production of *Bevel Up*, which has been nominated for a PRISM award (socially-responsible media) in the U.S.

The second presentation to the board was by Nancy Poole, research consultant on women and substance use issues for BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre. Her presentation was about the **ActNow BC Healthy Choices in Pregnancy Initiative**.

The initiative's goal is to reduce alcohol use in pregnancy by:

- increasing by 50 per cent the number of women who receive counseling about the risks of alcohol during pregnancy

- support all regional health authorities to develop a strategy for preventing Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD)

Between 12 and 14 per cent of Canadian women use alcohol during pregnancy. About 4,000 children are born each year with FASD in Canada and these children's brains are structurally altered, often at the microscopic level, which causes a variety of dysfunctions, including, but not limited to, low IQs. Each case is estimated to result in a lifetime cost of care of up to \$3 million.

Problem alcohol use is often not recognized or treated. Women report that guilt, shame and fear of losing their children prevent them from getting help while physicians report feeling unprepared to discuss substance use with women.

This initiative has worked with nearly 3,000 physicians and health professionals across BC on collaborative interventions for women who use alcohol and tobacco. The initiative is a partnership to support the development of resource materials and professional education.

The initiative has resulted in a new [BC Health File](#) for the public, pamphlets and posters displayed at BC government Liquor Distribution Branch locations, a new website www.hcip-bc.org, and new provincial care guidelines and practical questions-and-answers resources for care providers. It is the only province-wide initiative in Canada to have linked perinatal alcohol programs with perinatal tobacco programs. The initiative is funded by the provincial government through ActNow BC and is lead by BC Women's Hospital, BC Centre for Excellence in Women's Health and the BC Perinatal Health Program.

Board Committee Reports

The **Quality and Access Committee** reported that the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), an agency of PHSA, was awarded full accreditation by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation with no recommendations for improvement. The accreditors noted three leading practices at BCCDC that were of national interest:

- A strength in leading research in discovery and best practices both nationally and internationally
- Outreach to at-risk populations (ie street nurses and online networking with gay men) and pilots with each region to reduce waits for referrals to specialists for Hepatitis B patients from 12 weeks to 4 weeks
- A full assessment of the HPV vaccine that is being used by provincial governments across Canada to implement immunization programs

The committee also reported that PHSA's infection prevention and control program has added 100 additional handwashing stations at BC Children's Hospital and BC Women's Hospital. A handwashing campaign will evaluate pilot projects this Spring with a goal of expanding across PHSA by Fall.

The **Governance and Human Resources Committee** reported that PHSA is compliant with provincial food guidelines for vending machines and is more stringent in non-patient areas than public schools.

The **Finance Committee** reported that, as of January 10, 2008, PHSA remained on target for a balanced budget for 2007/08 with less than one per cent favourable variance on annual expenditures of more than \$1.3 billion.

The committee also recommended a motion, which the board approved, to revise PHSA's capital budget for 2007/08 to \$57.2 million due to a recent \$7.5 million increase in capital funding from the provincial government.

The committee also reported that PHSA's investment policy is very conservative and protects PHSA's investments by restricting investment instruments to bonds of the provincial government or major chartered banks.

Adjournment

The next meeting of the board in public is scheduled for April 24 in Vancouver.

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Media contact:

PHSA Communications
Media Pager
604.871.5699