

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

## Summary of February 10, 2011 Board Meeting

The Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) board has six scheduled open board meetings a year. As a health authority with a province-wide mandate, the PHSA is committed to holding open board meetings outside the Lower Mainland twice a year. The February 10, 2011 open board meeting was held in Vancouver.

### Public Presentations and Question and Answer Period

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

The board did not receive any questions from the public at this event.

### Presentations

#### Reducing the Cesarean Birth Rate in BC

Dr. Jan Christilaw, President, BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre, provided information about the Power to Push Campaign, which was launched in 2010 in response to the increasing trend towards cesarean birth in BC. She provided statistics and explained that BC's current cesarean birth rate of approximately 30% is at an all-time high, which is higher than many experts would identify as an optimal rate. While cesarean births are very safe, research has shown that cesarean birth can expose women and their babies to health risks they do not face with normal vaginal birth.

Lee Saxell, Program Lead, Cesarean Task Force, BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre, explained that a Best Birth Clinic was established at BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre last year as part of the campaign. The new clinic provides birth information and medical consultation to mothers, encouraging them to know their options, advocate for their choices, and push for the safest and best birth possible. Utilizing social media applications such as Facebook, YouTube and the internet, the Power to Push campaign also offers up-to-date resources and research-based information for pregnant women and their families in BC.

Additional information on the campaign can be viewed online at [www.powertopush.ca](http://www.powertopush.ca)

#### High Throughput Sequencing for Cancer Genetic Diagnosis

Dr. Aly Karsan, Medical Director, Cancer Genetics Laboratory, Pathology & Laboratory Medicine Head, Clinical Diagnostic Genomics, Genome Sciences Centre – BC Cancer Agency, spoke about a project he is leading to determine if next generation DNA sequencing technologies can improve the data and reduce turnaround times and costs for patient testing.

Using new technology with the High Throughput Clinical Sequencing facility at the BC Cancer Agency's Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre, Dr. Karzan explained work that is underway to integrate genetic technology into routine clinical practice. The initial focus is on developing

the technology to test patients for inherited mutations in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes associated with and increased risk for developing breast and ovarian cancer.

## **Board Committee Reports**

The **Quality and Access Committee** reported that a new standardized scorecard for measuring quality across PHSA and its agencies is in development. The committee also announced that the Emergency Department at BC Children's Hospital received the 2010 *Excellence in Improving the Patient Experience* award for Informed, Prepared, Educated: The Waiting Room Potential Captured from the BC Patient Safety & Quality Council.

The **Governance and Human Resources Committee** provided information on the implementation of PerformanceLink, a new on-line performance review system for staff. The committee also noted that Board directors will be evaluated individually this year to identify opportunities to improve performance.

The **Finance Committee** reported the 2010/11 operating budget remains on target for a balanced year end, as well current capital projects were on time and on budget. The budgeting process for the 2011/12 fiscal year is also proceeding.

The **Audit Committee** did not have any items to report at this time.

The **Research Committee** received a presentation from Dr. Sam Abraham, Vice President of Strategic Relationships at the BC Cancer Agency and appreciated learning about the process to commercialize new discoveries and drugs in the province for cancer treatment. The committee also reported that Dr. Michael Hayden was a recipient of the Order of Canada for his contribution to increased understanding of Huntington's disease and other genetic disorders.

## **Adjournment**

The next public board meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2011 in Vancouver.

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PHSA Board Briefs are available on line at <http://www.phsa.ca/AboutPHSA/PHSAboard/BoardBriefs.htm>

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