



www.bcpharmacists.org



Pharmacists express concerns

Shortage of pharmacists - especially in rural areas. That continues to be the number one concern of the pharmacists who responded to Council's recent Council Commentary survey.

"As a regulatory body, we can't make employers hire more staff or pay higher wages," says President Wayne Rubner.

"What we can do is focus our efforts on making it easier for qualified pharmacists to become licensed to practise in BC."

Council and the College are:

- Supporting the National Association of Regulatory Pharmacy Authorities (NAPRA) in its efforts to encourage all provinces and territories to sign on to the Mutual Recognition Agreement which makes it easier for pharmacists to move within Canada
- Developing a new publication, "Guide to becoming a pharmacist in BC," which provides step-by-step instructions for foreign-trained pharmacists and those practising in other parts of Canada

Along with the high demand for pharmacists, members also expressed frustration with low wages and increasing demands on their time. "We're concerned whenever work pressures result in substandard practice," says Wayne.

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Shake off your lab coat



Wayne Rubner

It's time to step out from behind your pharmacy counter, shake off your lab coat and join your district representatives in raising awareness of our profession. "For years members have expressed frustration with our public image as pill-counters in white coats," says President Wayne Rubner. "You've asked us to educate the public about what pharmacists really do."

So, starting this fall, members of Council are taking pharmacy to the people. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Council has developed a public education seminar called "Health & Yourself."

"We're offering every member the opportunity to get to know your current and potential patients in an informal setting. Many people don't realize we're their best source of expertise on vitamins, supplements, herbal remedies and over-the-counter drugs, as well as all medications. This is your opportunity to change that perception."

Each one-hour seminar includes:

- overview of the BC HealthGuide Program
- what to expect from your pharmacist
- role of the College of Pharmacists of BC
- introduction to local pharmacists
- question and answer session

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COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

September 24, 2004

Health & Yourself Seminars

Councillors reviewed public education tools designed to raise the profile of the profession and the College: a portable display, "You & Your Pharmacist"; a College booklet, "Pharmacy Matters"; and a College folder.

Councillors are using these materials to promote a series of "Health & Yourself Seminars" to seniors groups, health conferences and service clubs. Additional marketing tools for "Health & Yourself Seminars" include news releases, community newspaper advertisements, event posters, and invitations to local pharmacists to attend the seminars. (See stories pages 1, 4, 5, 11.)

Emergency contraception

Councillors discussed recommendations from the National Drug Scheduling Advisory Committee (NDSAC) relating to the emergency contraception pill (ECP). Health Canada is reviewing responses to a proposal that levonorgestrel (Plan B), when used for ECP, should become a nonprescription drug. This change could take place in October or November 2004. The hormones in Ovral will continue to be prescription drugs.

Councillors decided to wait until NDSAC finalizes its recommendations before making any changes. Until then, ECP remains Schedule 4 in BC, regardless of what happens federally or in other provinces.

Survey results

Nearly 70 pharmacists responded to the July 2004 Council Commentary survey:

- What are the three major issues that concern you about pharmacy practice in our province?
- In your opinion, what could be done to enhance pharmacy practice in BC?
- What hopes or concerns do you have about the College of Pharmacists of BC?

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PDAP

one year anniversary



Pharmacists meet the standard

More than two-thirds of pharmacists who selected the Knowledge Assessment option of the Professional Development and Assessment Program (PDAP) have taken the exam. Of those, more than 95 percent met the standard.

"This excellent result is pretty much what we expected," says Doreen Leong, Assessment Programs Director. "Practising pharmacists validated and tested every element of this program to make sure it reflects the realities of BC pharmacy practice. But you never know how well something will work until you try it out."

"As part of our ongoing program monitoring we're paying a lot of attention to the feedback we receive from members who've taken the exam," says Doreen. One pharmacist commented, "The problem-solving approach reflects the skills required to assist patients in providing optimum patient care." Another said, "Writing a Knowledge Assessment exam within time limits does not allow sufficient time to check and confirm information. We're not constricted by time when complex problems are presented in real practice."

Doreen says the Knowledge Assessment Committee and Board of Examiners will review all comments and take them into consideration during the formal program review scheduled for September 2005.

For more information about the Knowledge Assessment option please contact Doreen Leong, Assessment Programs Director at the College or by email: doreen.leong@bcpharmacists.org.

Deadline approaches

The deadline for submitting a Learning & Practice Portfolio (LPP) is only five months away - February 28, 2005 - and so far less than one-quarter of pharmacists who selected the LPP option have sent completed portfolios to the College.

"We're concerned that some pharmacists may be finding the LPP process more of a challenge than they expected," says Doreen Leong, Assessment Programs Director.

One of the keys to the LPP is the idea of a Desired Practice Outcome. "Pharmacists who contact College staff for advice on their Desired Practice Outcomes generally find the process works well," says Doreen. "However, based on a quick scan of the portfolios received so far, we can see there's a need for more consultation with some pharmacists who proceeded on their own."

The LPP enables pharmacists to plan, implement and evaluate their professional development and link it directly to their practice. "The College wanted to provide an option for those who feel multiple-choice exams don't reflect their full knowledge, or the realities of daily practice," says Doreen.

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Deadline approaches

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After intense consultation, pharmacists designed a four-page LPP Form. "The goal was to provide an easy-to-follow method that enabled pharmacists to determine what they wanted to learn, and how they wanted to learn it," explains Doreen.

"If anyone is having difficulty with the LPP form, please give us a call so we can discuss your issues and help you successfully complete the process."

For more information about the LPP option please contact Doreen Leong, Assessment Programs Director at the College office or by email: doreen.leong@bcpharmacists.org.

LPP - KA switching options

One of the goals of the College's Professional Development and Assessment Program (PDAP) is to offer members a choice of assessment options. And that's where the one-year-old program has experienced teething problems.

About two-thirds of PDAP participants selected the Knowledge Assessment (KA) option, while one-third chose the Learning & Practice Portfolio (LPP). During the past year, some pharmacists who chose the LPP have contacted the College to ask if they could switch to the KA.

Initially the College required pharmacists to complete their selected option. "But when we reached the one-year mark and evaluated progress to date, we decided that was too limited," says Doreen. "Some pharmacists have changed jobs and it's pretty difficult to fulfill the requirements of the LPP if you're no longer working in direct patient care."

Pharmacists now have the option of switching from the LPP to the KA and vice versa. As part of the Board of Examiners' commitment to ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Professional Development and Assessment Program, this change adds flexibility to the program. LPP submissions will be assessed in February 2005.

For more information about switching from one PDAP option to the other, please contact Doreen Leong, Director Assessment Programs at the College or by email: doreen.leong@bcpharmacists.org.

How you can help

Developed through years of consultation with hundreds of practising pharmacists, PDAP focuses on professional development, respects professionalism and offers choice. The success of the program depends on ongoing input from pharmacists. There are two ways you can contribute to PDAP:

- Volunteer as an LPP assessor
- Take part in program evaluation and gain PDAP exemption until 2012 (see PDAP Handbook page 26 for details)

2004/05

FUTURE KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT EXAMS

Saturday, Sunday, December 4, 5

Application deadline November 4

Saturday, February 12

Application deadline January 12

- What are the most frequent concerns or issues about pharmacy practice expressed by your patients or customers?

Much of the thoughtful input from members relates to issues outside the College's role and mandate. In particular the College does not have legal authority to act as an advocate for the profession or deal with issues relating to wages, working conditions or third-party payers.

Councillors decided to summarize these important concerns and communicate them to organizations that have the authority to respond, including BC Pharmacy Association, College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC, Fair PharmaCare, and Chain Drug Store Association of BC.

Councillors will consider other aspects of the survey at future Council meetings. They will use the upcoming joint annual general meetings on November 27 as an opportunity to discuss how the College and BCPhA can work together on key initiatives.

Awards program

The College is revamping its awards and recognition program to integrate it with the Framework of Professional Practice and our mission, vision and values. The new program starts in 2005.

2005 Budget

Councillors approved a budget for 2005 including a \$200,000 grant to enable UBC CPE division to speed up delivery of on-line professional development programs.

International pharmacy services

Responding to a member's request, Councillors reviewed ByLaw 5(38)(1) relating to the requirements for an "authentic" prescription. They decided there is no need to change the current interpretation.

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COLLEGE MISSION

To ensure British Columbia pharmacists provide safe and effective pharmacy care to help people achieve better health.

New-look website goes on display

The College's upgraded website is featured in a portable display designed for public education events. "You & Your Pharmacist" makes its debut at upcoming "Health & Yourself" seminars presented by Council members as part of their community outreach program. The display will travel the province appearing at public education events. (See story on page 1 for more details.)

"We decided to feature the website on the display because it emphasizes pharmacists' desire to communicate with the public," explains Registrar Linda Lytle. "The display is part of our focus on raising the public profile of our profession and helping people understand that pharmacists are their most accessible source of information about medications, vitamins, supplements and over-the-counter drugs."

Depending on scheduling, the display is available free to any pharmacist who wishes to use it for public education. The display comes in a self-contained travelling tube and takes only moments to set up.

For more information about the website upgrade or the display, please contact Samantha Lam, Administrative Assistant - Registrar at the College office, email: samantha.lam@bcpharmacists.org. You can check out the display on the College website, www.bcpharmacists.org.

Pharmacy Matters

"Pharmacy matters to you. Pharmacy matters to us." Those are the opening words of a new College booklet available free to all pharmacists. "For some time members have been asking us for tools to help educate the public about our profession and the role of the College," says Registrar Linda Lytle.

"So we've developed a publication that explains - in simple terms - what people should expect of their pharmacist and how the College works to ensure that pharmacists provide safe and effective pharmacy care to help people achieve better health."

Here's part of what "Pharmacy Matters" says about our profession.

"According to a national poll, pharmacists are one of the most trusted professions

in Canada. More than 90 percent of respondents gave pharmacists top marks for honesty, integrity and reliability. We're proud of that reputation and we work hard every day to earn and keep your trust.

"A pharmacist is often your most accessible health care professional. We work as part of a team with your doctor and other health care providers to make sure you get the best possible care. All pharmacists are licensed health care professionals, governed by provincial legislation, who must follow a professional code of practice.

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"When you walk into a BC pharmacy with your prescription, you can rest assured your pharmacist has your medication history at his or her fingertips. Using PharmaNet, a database that links all pharmacies, your pharmacist can advise you on all prescription and non-prescription drugs, and help you find and fix drug-related problems."

"Pharmacy Matters" also provides information about careers in pharmacy, in the hopes of encouraging more people to join our profession.

"Gone are the days when pharmacists spent most of their time counting tablets and measuring liquids. As experts on all medications, today's pharmacists are an integral part of the health care team.

"Pharmacists practise in many settings - community pharmacies, hospitals, universities, industry and government. Most pharmacists work directly with patients. Others conduct research, consult and work in administration and management. BC's 3,400 pharmacist are in high demand. From 2001 to 2004 vacancy rates stayed at about 10 percent. Every BC pharmacist has a university degree in pharmaceutical science or the equivalent from another country."

Enclosed with this Bulletin is your copy of "Pharmacy Matters." If you would like more brochures please contact Samantha Lam, Administrative Assistant - Registrar at the College office, email: samantha.lam@bcpharmacists.org. You can check out the full booklet on the College website, www.bcpharmacists.org.

DRUG UPDATES AND ADVISORIES

For full details please check the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA) website, www.napra.ca. You can also find drug information on the College website, www.bcpharmacists.org.

Arava® (leflunomide)

Reports of interstitial lung disease during treatment with Arava®
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/tpd-dpt/arava_hpc_e.html

Aristolochic Acid

Health Canada advises consumers not to use products containing aristolochic acid
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/protection/warnings/2004/2004_43.html

Bell Magnum Bullet

Health Canada warns public not to use Bell Magnum Bullet
http://napra.ca/pdfs/advisories/BellMagnumBullet_public.pdf

CIDEX OPA Solution

Possibility of sensitization to CIDEX OPA Solution with repeated exposure
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/tpd-dpt/cidex_opa_hpc_e.html

Clozapine Products

Information on the dispensation of clozapine products in Canada and the monitoring of patients taking clozapine
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/tpd-dpt/clozapine_hpc_e.html

Crestor®

Possible association between Crestor® and rhabdomyolysis
<http://napra.ca/pdfs/advisories/crestor.pdf>

Desyrel® (trazodone)

Association of Desyrel® with drug interactions with medications that alter CYP 3A4 metabolism
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/tpd-dpt/desyrel_hpc_e.html

PRE-PEN® (benzylpenicilloyl polylysine injection USP)

Safety information on PRE-PEN® DIN: 00328693
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/tpd-dpt/pre-pen_hpc_e.html

Rituxan® (rituximab)

Possible association of Rituxan® with Hepatitis B reactivation
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/tpd-dpt/rituxan_2_hpc_e.html

Sesa Hair Supplement

Health Canada warns Canadians not to use Sesa hair supplement
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/protection/warnings/2004/2004_42.html

SSRIs

Stronger warning for SSRIs and other newer anti-depressants regarding the potential for behavioural and emotional changes, including risk of self harm
<http://www.napra.ca/pdfs/advisories/wellbutrinProf.pdf>

Star Anise

Health Canada advises consumers not to ingest teas or health products containing star anise unless it is identified as Chinese star anise
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/protection/warnings/2004/2004_37.html

Transducer Protectors

Safety information for hospitals about hemodialysis units and blood tubing sets incorporating a transducer protector
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/tpd-dpt/hemodialysis_nth_e.html

Vioxx® (rofecoxib)

Merck announces voluntary withdrawal of Vioxx® due to increased risk for heart attack and stroke beginning after 18 months of treatment
http://www.vioxx.com/rofecoxib/vioxx/for_hcp.jsp

Questions & Answers

Q I would like to open a pharmacy. Where can I find information about licensing requirements?

A Our website, www.bcpharmacists.org, contains all the information you need. From our homepage click on "Resources" and then "Community Pharmacy Resources." You will find relevant information under "Licensure Information."

Q May I sell Varivax without a prescription? I've looked at the drug schedules and can't figure out the answer.

A Varivax (varicella virus vaccine) falls under Schedule I and therefore, requires a prescription for sale. The drug schedules list vaccines as follows:
Schedule I - vaccines (except diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, haemophilus B, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, influenza, and meningitis)
Schedule II - vaccines (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, haemophilus B, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, influenza, and meningitis)

This means that all vaccines except those listed as Schedule II above, belong in Schedule I and require a prescription for sale.

Q I just received a request for a prescription transfer from a pharmacist in Seattle, Washington. May I transfer the prescription?

A No, according to Bylaw 5(39)(3), a pharmacist may only transfer prescriptions to another pharmacy licensed in Canada, if the drug or drug product does not contain a narcotic or controlled drug and the transfer occurs between two pharmacists.

Q What schedule is the new formulation of Materna (DIN: 02248555)?

A Materna is unscheduled and may be sold by a nonpharmacist to any person. This is because each tablet of the new formulation contains, amongst other ingredients,

■ elemental iron 27mg ■ folic acid 1mg

Iron (and its salts and derivatives) in preparations with 30mg or less elemental iron per solid dosage unit or 5 mL oral liquid is unscheduled.

Folic acid, in preparations containing 1.0 mg or less of folic acid per dosage form, or where the largest recommended daily dosage shown on the label would, if consumed by a person, result in a daily intake by that person of 1.0 mg or less of folic acid, is unscheduled.

Q May a midwife prescribe Kenacomb?

A Yes, due to an amendment to the Midwives Prescribing Schedule, a midwife may prescribe or administer triamcinolone-neomycin sulfate-nystatin-gramicidin (Kenacomb).

Getting inspired by what we do



by Linda Lytle, Registrar

On graduation day for the 2004 UBC pharmacy students, I was invited to say a few words of congratulation at their celebration reception. Looking for inspiration for a fresh approach, I turned to the Framework of Professional Practice.

Although I use the Framework every day, I don't often consider the document as a whole. I'm usually looking for something specific to help a caller - a pharmacist, another health care provider or a member of the public - understand the critical roles and functions of a pharmacist.

As I scanned the Framework, I allowed myself to linger over the details and reflect on how the five roles contribute to better health outcomes for the citizens of our province. I turned to the six pages of knowledge and skill specifications, and finally to the code of ethics. The scope and depth of our professional skills and abilities really hit home for me!

I feel a sense of great pride and enormous accomplishment, not only for all the efforts made by the new graduates to meet the entry-to-practice requirements, but also for all of us who have been in the profession for years and years.

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pride
satisfaction

Getting inspired

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Seeing in print the work we do every day to help people manage their medications and achieve better health was a powerful reminder that the unique role of pharmacists is a vital part of people's lives.

I occasionally hear from a patient about how a single pharmacist's efforts to help them made a big difference in their lives. When I hear these compliments, I know the pharmacist is "living" the Framework and all that it entails. These are golden moments for those of us in the regulatory environment, and I know that thousands of other pharmacists are doing the same good work every day.

Realizing that many pharmacists struggle with administrative burdens, shortage of well-trained pharmacy technicians and increasing prescription volumes, I know discouragement can creep in. We all get mired in the daily details which, in our profession, are essential. Staying inspired can be a challenge.

Counsellors and personal development gurus tell us to step back from the "chatter" in our lives and take another look at the big picture. Perhaps making time to scan through the Framework will help you rekindle your enthusiasm and experience a few moments of pride.

With our enthusiastic new graduates now scattered around the province, this is our chance to take a cue from them and truly appreciate the satisfaction of helping people achieve their desired health outcomes. Comparing our daily work against the Framework will help us know that we're doing it well and how we can enhance it, too.

enthusiasm
accomplishment

College and BCPhA get together for AGMs

On Saturday November 27, members of the College and BC Pharmacy Association get together to celebrate our annual general meetings at the Hilton Metrotown, Burnaby. "We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with the BCPhA in the professional development, awards and AGM events," says Registrar Linda Lytle.

"We're especially looking forward to our keynote speaker, David B. Brushwood." Internationally renowned pharmacist, lawyer, professor, lecturer and researcher, David is the author of the best-selling *Pharmacy Practice and the Law*. He's an expert in patient safety, outcomes-oriented professional regulation, pain management regulatory policy, and end-of-life-care policy.

Selected as a Mayday Scholar by the American Society of Law, Medicine and Ethics, Professor Brushwood's research addresses "collegial accountability" to improve pain management for patients, and the effectiveness of electronic prescription monitoring programs. His work led to the creation of a Florida state network of clinical pharmacist pain management consultants.

An innovative teacher, Professor Brushwood has created a series of internet-based lectures on pharmacy law and ethics. He frequently conducts courses for pharmacists and physicians showing how to make sure legitimate pain patients receive necessary medications, while denying access to drug abusers.

The day's events also include a free lunch and a joint awards ceremony featuring the Bowl of Hygieia Award and Certificates of Merit. The College and BCPhA annual general meetings take place in the afternoon.

Resource Source

■ BC Smokers' Helpline

BC Smokers' Helpline offers free support for people who have quit smoking or are considering it. Provided by the Canadian Cancer Society and partially funded by the Ministry of Health Planning, BC Smokers' Helpline offers free, confidential information from qualified specialists. Direct your patients to 1-877-455-2233.

■ Good Health Eating Guide

The Good Health Eating Guide produced by the Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA) is being revised to reflect changes to the meal planning system. For more information go to www.diabetes.ca>professional section>nutrition or contact Sharon Zeiler at CDA, 416-408-7118, email: sharon.zeiler@diabetes.ca.

■ Pharmacy Matters Booklets

Pharmacy Matters booklets are now available from the College office. These easy-to-read booklets answer common questions about what to expect from a pharmacist, careers in pharmacy and the role of the College. All pharmacists and pharmacy managers will receive a copy.

■ You & Your Pharmacist Display

The You & Your Pharmacist portable display is now available from the College for use at health conferences and health education events. Featuring the College website, the display comes in a self-contained travelling tube, measures 200 cm. x 80 cm., weighs less than 2 kg. and takes only moments to set up.

To order Pharmacy Matters booklets or schedule the You & Your Pharmacist display, please contact Samantha Lam, Administrative Assistant - Registrar, at the College office, email: samantha.lam@bcpharmacists.org.

A Day in the Life of Neetika Bains

Turning dreams into reality



If you're in Capetown or Cairo dreaming of practising as a pharmacist in BC, Neetika Bains is the first person

at the College you're likely to talk to. The same is true if you're a pharmacist in Moncton or Moose Jaw, a student hitting the books at UBC, or a BC pharmacist returning to practice.

In her position as Administrative Assistant-Registration, Neetika helps would-be pharmacists through the process of becoming licensed to practise in BC. "I handle their applications from start to finish," she says, juggling hundreds of individual applications at any one time. She sends out information, evaluates each applicant's documentation, confirms their Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (PEBC) exam results and answers their questions.

All applicants need to complete a series of requirements such as an English language proficiency interview and internships that can range from 160 hours to 1,000 hours. For foreign-trained pharmacists the process can take up to a year. Some get frustrated and not everyone finds it easy to adjust to a different culture. "Pharmacists from other countries sometimes find it

difficult to adjust to the College's focus on patient care and health outcomes," explains Neetika.

"A lot of people want to meet me in person – they're coming from a foreign country and they need to talk to a friendly face. Although I enjoy meeting everyone, it becomes difficult to deal with such a large volume of calls and process all the applications that are submitted." In order to accommodate as many people as possible, Neetika recently set aside two days a week to see applicants who come to the College. She also uses voice mail to organize the flow of queries coming from all over the world.

"I check my voice mail several times a day and try to respond to calls in order of priority," she says. "People don't always realize there may be 40 applications ahead of them in the line-up. We deal with each application in order so that the process is fair to everyone."

Neetika suggests pharmacy managers who know they need a pharmacist licensed by a certain date encourage the pharmacist to submit documentation in plenty of time. She also advises UBC pharmacy students to complete their internships as early in the year as possible. "Candidates need to take responsibility for being aware of the requirements and making it happen," she says. "All the information is available on the College website. We can generally process an application in five to ten days, if all the information is complete and all the requirements have been met."

For more information about becoming a licensed pharmacist, please contact Neetika Bains, Administrative Assistant-Registration, at the College office or by email: neetika.bains@bcpharmacists.org.

Pharmacist Concerns

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"It's up to pharmacists to take personal responsibility for providing quality care. The College supports any pharmacist with a legitimate complaint." (For tips on using the Framework of Professional Practice to make sure your work environment promotes competent, safe patient care, please refer to Bulletin March/April 2004, page 7.)

Another area of concern for many survey respondents relates to PharmaCare and third party payers. "We support the efforts of the provincial and national pharmacy associations to streamline authorization and payment procedures," says Wayne.

A few respondents raised concerns about the College's commitment to ensuring all community pharmacies provide a competent standard of care. "Last summer the College revamped the inspection process in response to input from pharmacists," says Wayne. "The College's Quality Outcomes Specialists (QOS) are committed to ensuring every pharmacy provides competent care."

The College's goal is to target resources towards pharmacies that require the most attention. Pharmacies with a good history of meeting standards will not necessarily receive QOS visits as often as pharmacies with past deficiencies. However, the College is always willing to provide a QOS to help the owners, managers or staff pharmacists, if requested.

Wayne says, "We really appreciate the time members dedicated to answering the Council Commentary survey. Council will review your input and use it to focus our strategy for 2005."

Discipline panel recommends remediation

On April 26, 2004 the College conducted a discipline hearing inquiry into the conduct of a pharmacist.

A woman took a prescription to a pharmacy for her frail elderly mother who had recently been diagnosed with renal failure. The prescription was for alfacalcidol 0.25mcg. The physician's handwritten directions for use were ambiguous.

The pharmacist dispensed the prescription with instructions for the patient to take one capsule three times a day. The physician intended that the medication be taken three times a week. The prescription was dispensed without first clarifying dosage instructions on the prescription directly with the prescribing physician. The pharmacist reported that the patient's caregiver agreed to clarify dosage instructions with the prescribing physician herself.

In reviewing the facts of the case, the discipline panel agreed that the pharmacist was negligent in relinquishing the responsibility to verify the alfacalcidol dose to the caregiver.

The panel recognized that there are often pressures in the daily practice of pharmacy that can compromise the performance of a pharmacist's duties. However, this does not excuse the fact that the pharmacist did not follow up with the physician or caregiver to ensure the dosage of the drug was interpreted correctly.

The panel agreed on the following remediation plan aimed at increasing the pharmacist's knowledge about the care of patients in renal failure and improving the pharmacist's professional judgment and decision-making skills. The pharmacist will:

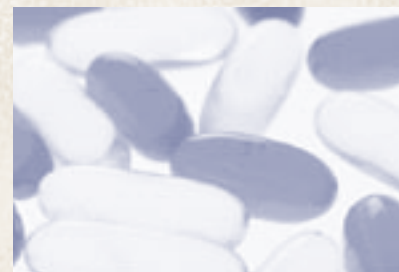
- Participate in a mentorship program for a total 24 days of contact time. The program will include readings, testing and discussion with mentors in all areas of pharmacy practice with a specific focus on:
 - Seamless Care
 - Pharmacological treatment of people with renal failure
 - Pharmaceutical Care principles
 - Ethics, professional judgment and decision-making
- Identify three desired practice outcomes, as described in the Learning and Practice Portfolio Information Guide, one of which must be specific to care of patients with renal failure. This Learning and Practice Portfolio will be assessed against the criterion used for all portfolio assessments in the Professional Development and Assessment Program

The panel noted that - prior to the discipline hearing - the pharmacist embarked on a professional development program to address the noted deficiencies. In recommending the remediation plan the panel acknowledged the pharmacist's otherwise unblemished professional record, remorse for the events that occurred and proactive professional development since the event. In addition, the panel noted the employer supported the pharmacist and the pharmacist's remediation efforts.

CHANGES TO DUPLICATE/TRIPPLICATE PRESCRIPTION PROGRAM

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC recently renamed the Duplicate / Triplicate Prescription Program. It is now called the Controlled Prescription Program.

The College of Physicians and Surgeons also removed methylphenidate from the list of drugs monitored by the Controlled Prescription Program. Pharmacists can now use professional judgment to accept prescriptions for methylphenidate written on non-Controlled Prescription Program duplicate forms. Council has approved a resolution to amend the Drug Schedules Regulation by deleting methylphenidate from Schedule IA. This will be formally approved shortly.



CPJ FEATURES ECP

BC's Emergency Contraceptive program is featured in the July/August issue of the Canadian Pharmaceutical Journal. "Provision of emergency contraceptives by pharmacists: British Columbia experience a template for other provinces" provides a clinical review of the issue and describes the impact of the expanded role of pharmacists.

You can download this article from the CPhA site at: <<http://www.pharmacists.ca/content/cpjpdfs/julaug04/July-August-SoonFinalArticle.pdf>>.

NAPRA representative elected



Erica Gregory

Past-president Erica Gregory was recently elected as the College's representative on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA).

"I believe this is a time of great change in the regulation of pharmacy and pharmacy practice across Canada," says Erica. "I see NAPRA leading us through this by organizing and participating in public policy forums across Canada."

Erica brings a decade of experience on Council and more than 25 years as a community and hospital pharmacist to her new role on the NAPRA board. "International pharmacy services regulation, workforce issues and lack of staff in rural areas are concerns that pharmacists often raise with me," she says. "NAPRA is currently involved in a Pharmacy Workforce Study and will review the Mutual Recognition Agreement with provinces that are presently not signatories. I'm looking forward to providing a BC perspective on these issues."

Pharmacists of merit

Each year Council recognizes pharmacists who provide significant service to our profession. Here are this year's Certificate of Merit recipients:

Frank Archer	Edward Lum
Leanne Bao	Bruce Millin
Caroline Chin	Glen Schoepp
Kathleen Collin	Susan Simosko
Maria Finamore	Angela Tong
Melissa Haynes	Trevor Watson
Lorna Kroll	Gordon Wrightman

President-elect



Rita Thomson

Council President-elect Rita Thomson says she's excited about becoming involved in new projects that will expand the role of pharmacists in BC.

"Working with the College to ensure that British Columbians receive the best health care is a privilege," says Rita. "It's important that pharmacists' voices be heard."

In 1999 Rita received the Bowl of Hygeia Award in recognition of her extensive community service. During her 32 years as a community pharmacist, Rita has worked with the Canadian Diabetes Association; been a guest speaker for community support groups such as Arthritis, Lupus, Osteoporosis, Alzheimer's, and Brain Injured; helped organize annual Healthy Heart Fairs; worked with seniors and new mothers' groups; and is actively involved with the Diabetes Educator Section. In her Prince George practice Rita specializes in meeting the needs of people with diabetes and patients requiring individualized compliance aids.

Besides her interest in pharmacy, Rita is involved in her church, is an honorary Life Member of the Central Interior Highland Dance Association and helped found and organize the Prince George Gathering of the Clans.

Rita takes over from current President Wayne Rubner following the College's annual general meeting on November 27, 2004.

Certified Geriatric Pharmacist



Regan Ready

Regan Ready, one of the College's Quality Outcomes Specialists, has successfully completed the Commission for Certification in Geriatric Pharmacy exam. He is now a Certified Geriatric

Pharmacist (CGP) and can use the CGP designation for five years before needing to re-certify.

Established in the U.S. in 1997, the Commission for Certification in Geriatric Pharmacy (CCGP) has developed a voluntary certification program. To become certified, candidates are expected to understand the principles of geriatric pharmacotherapy and providing pharmaceutical care to the elderly.

Regan joins two other Certified Geriatric Pharmacists in BC, Anis Mawani in Burnaby, and Brenda O'Leary in New Westminster. You can find more information about the program at www.ccgp.org.

College staff on the move

Ashifa Keshavji moves from being OnCall Pharmacist to Coordinator, Assessment Programs, assisting the Assessment Programs Director with the Professional Development and Assessment Program and other quality assurance procedures.

Sharon Kerr moves from the Professional Development and Assessment Program to become an OnCall pharmacist and Quality Outcomes Specialist.

Melva Peters is now managing the MentorLink Program as well as PharmaNet.

YOUR INPUT GUIDES WEB UPGRADE

Shake off lab coat

continued from pg 1

Council has received a warm response from dozens of organizations including Rotary clubs, seniors groups and health conferences. "Our plan is to hold events in every district," says Wayne. Prior to each event the College will send news releases to local media, provide promotional "Health & Yourself" flyers to organizations and advertise in community newspapers.

To support this Council project, the College has produced "Pharmacy Matters," a booklet that promotes our profession, explains the role of the College and encourages people to consider a career in pharmacy. The College has also created "You & Your Pharmacist," a display designed to raise awareness of the College website as a source of reliable health information.

"At each event we'll give people free copies of the BC HealthGuide, information leaflets about the BC HealthGuide Program, BC HealthGuide fridge magnets, plus information about the College of Pharmacists," says Wayne. "Our most important goal is to raise the profile of local pharmacists."

You can find more information about the BC HealthGuide program at www.bchealthguide.org. For details about the "Health & Yourself" seminar nearest you, contact Samantha Lam, Administrative Assistant - Registrar at the College office, email: samantha.lam@bcpharmacists.org.

With more than four million hits in the past year, the College website is fast becoming a key source of information about pharmacy. "The number of hits per year has doubled since we redesigned the website in May 2003," says Samantha Lam, Administrative Assistant - Registrar, who keeps the site up-to-date.

In a recent online survey pharmacists provided detailed feedback on what you do and don't like about how the website works now. Here are highlights from the survey:

- The longer a pharmacist has had internet access the more likely he or she is to use the College website
- Nearly three quarters of respondents visited the site twice or more in the past three months
- Access to professional practice information and legislation are the top reasons for visiting the website. What's New, webmail and file downloads are also popular
- 84% were able to find all the information they were looking for

"Several respondents said they found font sizes in some areas too small," says Samantha. "An easy way to fix this is to check out your web browser. Most web browsers include a command that allows you to make the text on your screen larger or smaller."

"Some of the specific advice provided by pharmacists was especially useful," says Samantha.

- Break the Bulletin into sections to make it easier to access stories without having to download an entire issue
- Make it easier to navigate the site
- Improve visual attractiveness and layout
- Add a main menu link to forms
- Move the site map to the top of the page

"Based on this input we're upgrading the site to make it easier to find what you need," says Samantha. "We're also refreshing the look of the website to better reflect the profession by adding images from community and hospital pharmacies across the province. Our thanks go to all the pharmacists who generously gave their time to be photographed for this project."

For more information about the College website, www.bcpharmacists.org, please contact Samantha Lam, Administrative Assistant - Registrar, at the College office or by email: samantha.lam@bcpharmacists.org.

E-LINK USE JUMPS 70 PERCENT

An increasing number of pharmacists now use E-Link to stay current. "Since June we've seen a 70 percent jump in pharmacists logging onto our web-based email system," says Melva Peters, PharmaNet Coordinator.

Recent E-Link messages included information about:

- Emergency Contraceptive Program
- Heroin addiction treatment conference
- Melatonin
- Emergency drug supplies

The College has set up free E-Link accounts for all BC licensed pharmacists and applicants. For more information about your E-Link account, please contact Melva at the College office, email: melva.peters@bcpharmacists.org. Or you can go to the College website www.bcpharmacists.org, look under "What's New" and click on "E-Link overview."



Check www.bcpharmacists.org or www.ubcpharmacy.org/cpe for details

- Event** Health & Yourself Seminars
Contact Samantha Lam, 866-676-4220 toll-free direct
- Date** Saturday, October 16, 2004
Time 10:30am
Location HealthInfo Fair: 1137 Yates Street, Victoria
Presenters Howard Rose, District 3 Councillor; Lynn Pollock
- Date** Thursday, October 30, 2004
Time 7:30 - 8:30pm
Location Parkgate Community Centre, North Vancouver
Presenters Wayne Rubner, President; Michael MacDougall, Government Appointee
- Date** Thursday, November 4, 2004
Time Noon - 1:00pm
Location Yellowhead Rotary Club, Esther's Inn, Prince George (by registration only)
Presenters Rita Thomson, District 5 Councillor; Carol Gee, District 7 Councillor
- Date** Wednesday, November 17, 2004
Time Noon - 1:30pm
Location Smithers Chamber of Commerce (members only)
Presenters Jo Ann Groves, Government Appointee Councillor; Parveen Mangat, CPE Regional Coordinator
- Date** Saturday, November 20, 2004
Time 2:00 - 3:00pm
Location Diabetes & You Conference: Civic Centre, Prince George (by registration only)
Presenters Rita Thomson, District 5 Councillor; Carol Gee, District 7 Councillor

- Event** Council meetings
Date Fridays, November 26, 2004 and January 21, 2005
Location College office, Vancouver
Contact Samantha Lam, 800-663-1940, ext. 220
- Event** College of Pharmacists of BC annual general meeting
Date Saturday, November 27, 2004
Location Hilton Metrotown Hotel, Burnaby
Topics **Morning:** professional development session followed by a hosted lunch
Afternoon: College of Pharmacists of BC and BC Pharmacy Association annual general meetings
Contact Samantha Lam, 800-663-1940, ext. 220

Printed on Recycled Paper

The Bulletin newsletter provides important College and pharmacy practice information. All pharmacists are expected to be aware of these matters. Licensed pharmacies must have the last three years of Bulletin issues on file as per reference library requirements.

New PharmAction Guide

You'll find an updated PharmAction pamphlet "Your Guide to Better Treatment" enclosed with this issue of the Bulletin. Expanded to four pages, the Guide helps you gather more patient information in less time.

Designed to help patients work better with their pharmacists, PharmAction pamphlets are endorsed by the College and sponsored by six pharmaceutical manufacturers. Titles include:

- Recurring Stomach Problems
- Poor Leg Circulation
- Postmenopausal Health
- Cholesterol Test - Why You May Need It
- Infants with Feeding Problems
- Pneumococcal Vaccination

Pharmacists can order the full range of free PharmAction publications by calling 1-800-363-5634, ext. 10.

PHARM ACTION

BULLETIN

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Your questions and comments about this Bulletin are welcome and may be forwarded to the Registrar.