



IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Registrar Search Update
- 3 Planning for Technician Integration
- 3 Volunteers Needed for 2012 PDAP Assessment Cycle

- 5 NewsBriefs
- 6 On Call
- 7 Pharmacy Matters

# readlinks

## Online Voting on AGM Resolutions Available to all Registrants

### AGM

Sat, Nov 19, 2011  
4pm – 5pm

Register now via eServices  
from the College website

Registrants, through a resolution brought forward at last year's AGM, asked for an alternative way to participate in the College's Annual General Meeting (AGM). Further supporting this resolution, a recent survey sent to all registrants indicated that 50% of respondents would like the option of being able to vote on resolutions electronically, without having to attend the AGM in person. The survey also indicated that although registrants would like the chance to vote if unable to physically attend the meeting, being privy to the discussion around resolutions would be beneficial. In light of this, at their last meeting, the Board passed a motion which will allow online voting, as a pilot, on resolutions for the upcoming 2011 AGM in November that will include an unedited audio file containing all discussion around each resolution to be voted on.

#### Two Ways to Vote on AGM Resolutions

##### 1) IN PERSON:

Registrants who attend the AGM in person on Saturday, November 19, 2011 will have the opportunity to not only participate in any discussion regarding the resolution(s), but will also be given the opportunity to vote, by ballot, on any resolution(s) brought forward. *Note: Given that the votes received at the AGM will only represent a portion of the overall votes; ballots will be collected and tallied along with online votes at a later date, see the timeline on page 4.*

*Continued on page 4...*

# Staying the Course



Suzanne Solven, A/Registrar

As you are likely aware, Marshall Moleschi resigned his position as Registrar of the College, effective September 1, 2011, to assume the role of Registrar for the Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP). The Board is currently engaged in an executive search (see inset box) for his permanent replacement.

In the interim, as Deputy Registrar, and under appointment by the Board, I am pleased to have accepted the position of Acting Registrar. In this capacity, with the Board's direction

clearly articulated in the College's Strategic Plan (2008 – 2013) and all key initiatives such as Pharmacy Technician Regulation and the introduction of the College's renewed Professional Development and Assessment Program (PDAP) well in hand, the focus, which would be appropriate during this transitional period, has been on 'staying the course'.

With that said, there is much that has been happening and as always it is the hope of the College that registrants are keeping themselves informed through publications such as this and Board Highlights which is distributed following College Board meetings such as the most recent meeting held on September 23rd.

In this particular issue of ReadLinks registrants might be interested to learn about the launch of the Assessment component of the College's Professional Development and Assessment Program (PDAP). The Assessment component, which requires registrants to sit a Knowledge Assessment exam once every 10 years and begins in 2012, will for the first time ever utilize a computerized, rather than paper, format to deliver the exam. As a result of this, in order to test the technology to ensure there are no glitches the 2012 cycle of the program will rely on volunteer participants which are currently being solicited. More details can be found in the article on page 3.

This publication also features an article, also found on page 3, regarding the regulation of pharmacy technicians which focuses on the average length of time, 16-months, required for a current technician to complete all of the necessary bridging steps in order to have acquired the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to become a regulated pharmacy technician. Given that this path

to regulation for current technicians is only available until the end of 2015 this realistic timeline may be a valuable tool if considering the integration of regulated technicians into practice.

Finally with respect to this current issue of ReadLinks, the cover story outlines the Board's most recent decision, as a pilot, to invite registrants to vote online, rather than having to be there in person, on any resolution(s) that may be brought before the Board at the College's Annual General Meeting (AGM). This year's AGM is scheduled for Saturday, November 19th, 2011. The Board's decision was in response to a resolution brought forward at last year's AGM and subsequent findings of a recent online survey of registrants where approximately half of respondents expressed a desire to have the option to vote on resolutions online.

The Board's next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held on Friday, November 18th and given that the current Board elections for pharmacists in District 1, 3, 5 and 7 and for the first time for pharmacy technicians in District 8 will have concluded on October 21st there will be at least one new face (the pharmacy technician) to the College Board. As is tradition the next issue of ReadLinks which will come out in early December, will feature a biography introducing each of the new Board members, similar to the one done on page 4 introducing the Board's newest public appointee, Kris Gustavson.

As Acting Registrar for the College I look forward to continuing to advance the Board's strategic goals during this transitional period and as always should you have any questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

## Registrar Search – Update

The search for the next Registrar for the College of Pharmacists of BC is well underway as the Board established *Registrar Search Task Group*, who has engaged the services of executive search firm Odgers Berndtson to assist them, is currently in the process of short-listing from a number of qualified candidates. The Task Group will be conducting interviews early in November and anticipates bringing their recommendation forward to the Board at the November 18, 2011 Board meeting.

## Volunteer Participants Needed for 2012 Assessment Cycle of PDAP

The Assessment component of the College's Professional Development and Assessment Program (PDAP), which requires all registrants to sit a Knowledge Assessment (KA) exam once every 10 years, with approximately 10% of registrants randomly selected each year, is scheduled to begin in 2012. The KA exam which is accessible in various communities throughout BC is an open-book, multiple-choice exam that for the first time, will be delivered in a computerized format rather than a paper format.

Given that this technology is new, the College will be using this first Assessment cycle (January – December 2012) to test the computerized delivery of the exam to make sure that everything is running smoothly before random selection begins with the 2013 cycle. As such instead of randomly selecting registrants for this first cycle the College is calling for volunteer participants.

The incentive for volunteers is that in addition to receiving, if successful on the KA exam, the standard 10-year exemption (meaning that you would not be required to participate in the Assessment cycle of PDAP again until 2022) should you not be successful on the KA exam there are no consequences. Your name would simply be put back into the pool for random selection in a subsequent year.

The College is hoping to solicit as many as 500 participants, which is equivalent to 10% of registrants, to volunteer for this initial 2012 PDAP Assessment cycle. Volunteers will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. If interested simply email your name along with your College registration number to the dedicated PDAP email address at: [pdap@bcpharmacists.org](mailto:pdap@bcpharmacists.org). The deadline to volunteer is Wednesday November 30, 2011.

# Planning for Pharmacy Technician Integration

As the process of integrating regulated pharmacy technicians into both hospital and community pharmacy practice begins to become a reality it's important that we realize, like any practice change initiative, careful planning and consideration is required.

Perhaps one of the most significant considerations is the actual time required for current pharmacy assistants, who wish to, to complete the necessary steps to become a regulated pharmacy technician. Included in these steps are the required educational Bridging Modules which will ensure that technicians have acquired the knowledge, skills and abilities to safely and effectively take on their new role as regulated healthcare professionals.

To illustrate this point the adjacent diagram lays out a realistic timetable, including estimated costs, for a current pharmacy assistant to become a regulated pharmacy technician. The example, which is based on the experience of actual technicians, assumes that the current assistant will begin the process at the beginning of 2012 and, with respect to the four required Bridging Modules, will take three of the modules either in-class or online, and will write a PLAR (challenge exam) for one of them.

As you can see the result is that for the average technician, who is typically a mature student working full-time, it is taking about one and a half years to successfully complete the process and become a regulated pharmacy technician. This reality, coupled with the fact that this bridging path to regulation will only be available until the end of 2015, highlights the importance for both individuals and pharmacy practice in general to ensure that they are properly planning.

Complete details on the regulation of pharmacy technicians can be found on the College website ([www.bcpharmacists.org](http://www.bcpharmacists.org)) under *Key Initiatives – Pharmacy Technician Regulation*.

*NOTE: Pre-Registration with the College is required before enrolment in any Bridging module or PLAR. Applicants should allow up to 20 business days for processing.*



# Introducing Kris Gustavson



Kris Gustavson,  
Government Appointed  
Board Member

The College is pleased to welcome its newest government appointed Board member, Kris Gustavson. Kris participated in her first College Board meeting on September 23, 2011 after taking her Oath of Office affirming her commitment to support the College's mandate to serve and protect the public.

Kris is the Corporate Director for Accreditation and Patient Experience for the Provincial Health Services Authority and an Adjunct Professor for the School of Nursing at the University of British Columbia. Previously, she was a Program Director at Children's and Women's Health Centre and the Head Nurse of Pediatrics at Mount Saint Joseph Hospital. Kris is an active member of the College of Registered Nurses of BC and a mentor for the UBC School of Nursing. She is the recipient of the BC 2010 Excellence in Improving the Patient Experience Award, the Ted Freedman Award for Innovation in education from Longwoods Publishing,

the Award of Excellence in Administration from the Registered Nurses Association of BC, and the Up and Comer Award from the Vancouver Province. She was also nominated by the YWCA as a Woman of Distinction in the category of Health & Wellness. Kris holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, a Master of Science in Nursing and a Certificate in Strategic Leadership from the University of British Columbia.

Kris' extensive background and experience in healthcare and administration will no doubt be an asset to our Board, welcome Kris.



## Bal Dhillon Recognized and Thanked

This past Board meeting marked the last official meeting for Bal Dhillon who has served as the Board appointed pharmacy technician observer for the past two years. Bal's vast experience as a technician has proved invaluable to the Board who acknowledged her contribution with a Certificate of Appreciation and extended their sincere thanks and gratitude for her years of service. Beginning with the November 2011 Board meeting the first elected pharmacy technician will replace Bal on the Board.

Board Chair Randy Konrad presents Bal Dhillon with a Certificate of Appreciation for her contributions as a member of the College Board.

## Online Voting on AGM Resolutions Available to all Registrants

...Continued from cover page

### 2) ONLINE VOTING:

Those registrants who choose not to vote at the AGM or are not in attendance at the AGM will be invited, via email from the College, to listen to an unedited recording of the presentation and discussion of the resolution(s) which were brought forward at the AGM and then be able to electronically cast their vote. The tentative timeline is outlined below.

Tentative Timeline for Online Voting	
Sat, Nov 19, 2011 (4pm – 5pm)	Live Annual General Meeting
Tues, Nov 22, 2011 (5pm)	Email invite to all registrants opening online voting
Sun, Nov 27, 2011 (11:59pm)	Close of online voting
Mon, Nov 28, 2011	Tally of 'live' and 'online' voting
Tues, Nov 29, 2011 (5pm)	Email to all registrants of resolution(s) results

# News Briefs

## PDAP's CE Component has a Staggered Start

As a reminder, the Professional Development and Assessment Program's (PDAP) annual Continuing Education (CE) component is tied to registrants' individual registration renewals and therefore has a staggered start. All registrants will have a 12 month period to complete their minimum 15 hours of learning recorded on a minimum of 6 learning records but registrants will begin the process at different times.

Having started with August renewals, registrants receive, in their official College registration renewal mailing, notification that they now have the next 12-months to complete their annual CE component prior to registration renewal the following year. The notification instructs registrants to login using their eServices ID, via the College website, to the new dedicated PDAP portal, or webpage, to learn everything they need to know about the PDAP program and to complete their CE requirement.

It is not necessary for registrants to access this information prior to receiving their registration renewal notification, however if curious, registrants are able to login to the PDAP portal at any time.

## Board Approved Revisions to Professional Practice Policies 56 & 57

The Hospital Pharmacy Advisory Committee brought forward a recommendation to the Board to revise *Professional Practice Policy 56 (PPP-56) – Standards for Pharmacy Assistant Verification of Non-Sterile Products in Hospital Pharmacy Practice* and *PPP-57 – Standards for Pharmacy Assistant Verification of Sterile Products in Hospital Pharmacy Practice*. The recommended revisions ensure the continuation of the tech-check-tech function in hospital pharmacy practice during this transition period as pharmacy assistants become regulated pharmacy technicians. The Board approved the revisions as recommended, the updated PPP's are now posted under Legislation and Standards on the College website ([www.bcpharmacists.org](http://www.bcpharmacists.org)).

## MMT Reminder: Training Must be Completed PRIOR to Providing Service

As outlined in *Professional Practice Policy 66 (PPP-66) – Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT)*, as of October 1, 2011 any pharmacist or pharmacy manager who wants to provide pharmacy services related to MMT must successfully complete the mandatory College training and have all necessary practice requirements, as outlined in the *PPP-66 Policy Guide*, in place PRIOR to providing any MMT services.

The online training, just over 1 hour in length, is a pre-recorded PowerPoint presentation with audio and is available on the College website 24/7 from any computer. No registration is required and participants can stop and start the session as necessary. Once the training has been completed and all necessary practice requirements have been implemented, sign the *Declaration of Completion and Understanding* form and retain it in your primary pharmacy of employment. The College will not be collecting completed forms.

The policy, policy guide, training session, declaration form and all other related forms and information can be found on the College website ([www.bcpharmacists.org](http://www.bcpharmacists.org)) by clicking on *Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT)* from the homepage. You may direct all questions to the dedicated MMT mailbox: [MMT@bcpharmacists.org](mailto:MMT@bcpharmacists.org).

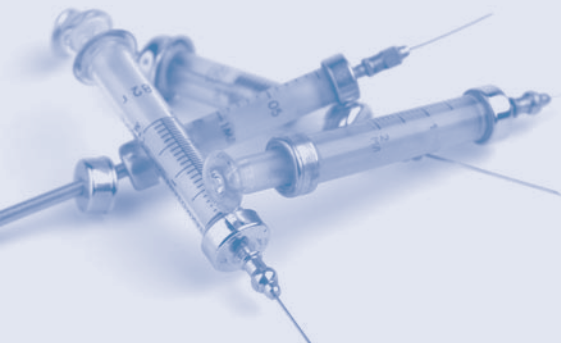
## INJECTION UPDATE

The College is encouraging pharmacists to take part in the 2011-12 influenza season by becoming authorized to administer injections. Pharmacists who have already completed their training programs, but are not yet authorized, are reminded that applications for the authority to administer injections must be received by the College within one year of completion of the required training program.

In order to apply to the College for authorization to administer injections, pharmacists must:

- Be registered on the College's full pharmacist register, and
- Have successfully completed the training from a College approved accredited training program, and
- Possess current certification in CPR and first-aid from a recognized provider such as St. John Ambulance or the Canadian Red Cross.

Visit the BC Pharmacy Association's website ([www.bcpharmacy.ca](http://www.bcpharmacy.ca)) for a list of upcoming workshops.





## On Call



**Q: Can a pharmacist do an ‘emergency fill’ for a narcotic drug including methadone?**

**A:** Yes. In accordance with *Professional Practice Policy (PPP-31) – Emergency Prescription Refills* (see full policy) a pharmacist may provide an emergency fill for any drug if, in their professional judgment, it is necessary in order to ensure continuity of care for the patient.

In utilizing professional judgment however pharmacists must ensure that first and foremost their decision is based on providing the best possible health outcome for the patient and that they have followed the Seven Fundamentals of decision making which include documenting their rationale for the decision and notifying the prescriber.

It’s important to understand that by authorizing an ‘emergency fill’ the pharmacist is in fact accepting responsibility for the prescription and must use their own ID in the PharmaNet practitioner ID field and must ensure that – *Emergency Fill* – appears in the first 17 characters of the ‘sig’ field so that it will show up on the patient’s PharmaNet record.

Although, as articulated in the policy itself “*this practice is the exception to the rule and not the normal practice*”, pharmacists can feel confident that the College will support their decision to provide an emergency fill, when their rationale, which must be clearly documented, demonstrates that the decision was made in the best interest of the patient to ensure their continuity of care.

**Professional Practice Policy (PPP – 31) – Emergency Prescription Refills; a pharmacist may exercise professional judgment in the provision of emergency prescription refill supplies of a medication to ensure continuity of patient treatment until the physician can be contacted for authorization. This practice is the exception to the rule and not the normal practice. Pharmacists must use their pharmacist identification numbers (diploma numbers) in the PharmaNet practitioner ID field to identify the responsible decision-maker when providing an emergency supply of a drug to a patient.**

**Q: Can a Student Pharmacist, doing their clinical rotation at a pharmacy, take a new verbal prescription directly from the physician?**

**A:** Yes, if it is done under the direct supervision of a full pharmacist. This can be accomplished in a number of ways. If the pharmacist has taken the call they could explain to the physician that they currently have a student pharmacist working in the pharmacy and ask if they wouldn’t mind allowing the student to take the verbal prescription. If the physician agrees, the pharmacist would simply come back onto the phone to confirm the prescription taken by the student prior to ending the call. Alternatively, if the call is taken by the student pharmacist they must identify themselves as a student and would need to ask the physician permission to take the verbal order, explaining that the pharmacist will need to come on to the call to confirm the prescription before hanging up.

## Dispensing MMT in a Hospital Setting

**Q: In a hospital setting, is it mandatory to mix the Methadone powder with a crystalline juice diluents prior to dispensing it to a Methadone for Maintenance (MMT) patient?**

**A:** When providing Methadone for Maintenance to in-patients, hospitals are exempt from providing the dose(s) in a crystallized formulation, for as long as the patient is residing in the hospital. If the patient goes on a leave of absence or upon discharge from the hospital, then the hospital pharmacy is required to prepare the solution according to the Methadone Maintenance Treatment Policy Guide (Principle 3.3.4) and have the dosage prepared in a crystalline juice formulation.



# Pharmacy Matters

## Auxiliary Labels on Blister Packed Medication

Good pharmacy practice dictates that pharmacists affix warning auxiliary labels to blister packs containing cytotoxic medications. Nurses and home care workers employed in home and community care settings rely on pharmacists to alert them when medications require special handling precautions (ex. use protective gloves) aimed at reducing the risk of exposure to potentially harmful effects. In most instances, this will occur in pharmacies that are repackaging medications previously dispensed from the BC Cancer Agency. Please see Worksafe BC for more detailed information at: [www2.worksafebc.com/Portals/HealthCare/PhysicalHazards.asp](http://www2.worksafebc.com/Portals/HealthCare/PhysicalHazards.asp).

## The Question of Liability?

As we begin to integrate regulated pharmacy technicians into community practice the question of liability, as it relates to pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, continues to arise. Although the assignment of liability will always vary to some degree depending on the specific circumstances there are a few general facts that should provide some clarity on this topic.

Perhaps the most important fact is that pharmacy technicians, having completed their required training and registered with the College of Pharmacists of BC, have become regulated healthcare professionals. As such, just like pharmacists, pharmacy technicians are accountable, responsible and liable for their own scope of practice and required by legislation to carry liability insurance.

To illustrate the significance of this let's consider an example of a dispensing error that has occurred in a community pharmacy which operates with a staff of pharmacists and non-regulated technicians, or assistants, as they are now referred to. If through the course of an investigation by the College it was determined that the assistant was responsible for the dispensing error, it would not be them who would be held liable but rather the pharmacist or pharmacy manager as the College has no authority over non-registrants.

This is in fact the situation that exists in pharmacies today where the pharmacist and/or pharmacy manager is ultimately held liable for everything that happens within the pharmacy. If, however, the dispensing error had been attributed to a regulated pharmacy technician, the College would be able to appropriately assign liability to the technician.

Although this concept is new between pharmacy practitioners, it really isn't any different than the question of liability that has existed between pharmacists and physicians for years. The bottom line is that each individual healthcare practitioner will be held liable for any error or omission relating to their own specific scope of practice.

## Support Training Now Available for Medication Review Services

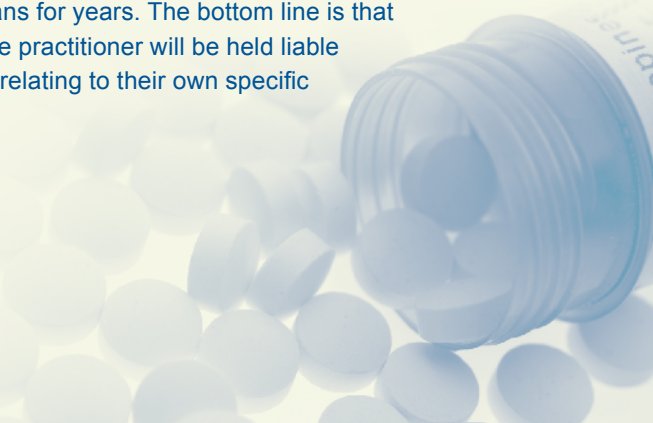
Since the introduction of Medication Review Services (MSR) on April 1, 2011, community pharmacists throughout the province have embraced the new service, having in fact exceeded expectations with over 100,000 medication reviews conducted in the initial months of the program.

Committed to the long-term sustainability of the program and with the desire to ensure that Medication Review Services remain available to patients who have the greatest need the BC Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the BC Pharmacy Association and Canadian Association of Chain Drugstores, effective August 1, 2011, made changes to the eligibility criteria. Under the revised criteria any patient taking at least seven qualifying medications in the past six-months may be eligible for the service.

To support pharmacists in the delivery of this important service UBC's Continuing Pharmacy Professional Development (UBC-CPPD) division, has developed an online training program.

The purpose of the training is to support pharmacists in identifying eligible patients, conducting medication reviews and completing the associated documentation. The online training takes approximately an hour and half to complete and consists of three modules, each using a mix of video, slides and discussion forums. Pharmacists interested in participating in this training should visit: [cpd.pharmacy.ubc.ca/MedRevTraining](http://cpd.pharmacy.ubc.ca/MedRevTraining).

*Note: this learning could be used towards registrant's annual Continuing Education (CE) component of the College's Professional Development and Assessment Program (PDAP).*



## White Coat Event

On September 9, 2011 Suzanne Solven, A/Registrar, amongst other leaders in the profession of pharmacy attended the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences' annual White Coat Ceremony at UBC where they cloaked 224 incoming students with their first white coat. Students were asked to take a Pledge of Professionalism, led by Marion Pearson Director – Entry-to-Practice Program & Senior Instructor, expressing their commitment to the highest standards of ethics and exceptional patient-centered healthcare.

After receiving their first white coats, first year UBC pharmacy students recite the Pledge of Professionalism (photo by Jimi Galvao)



Dr. Robert D. Sindelar, Dean of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences (left); Parkash Ragsdale, BC Pharmacy Association Deputy CEO (centre); Suzanne Solven, A/Registrar, College of Pharmacists of BC (right)

## Hard Hat Tour

With completion scheduled for the fall of 2012, the countdown for the opening of UBC's new Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences building has begun. Contemporarily designed and environmentally friendly, the new facility promises to improve the learning experience of future pharmacy students. In mid-September, A/Registrar Suzanne Solven, along with Dean Sindelar and Parkash Ragsdale (pictured above), was invited on a 'hard hat' tour of the construction site where she was amazed at the state of the art facility, commenting, "Its focus on problem based learning will really help students gain confidence in clinical decision-making and ensure that pharmacists, from the very beginning of their careers, are integral members of the healthcare team who, as medication experts, utilize their knowledge, skills and abilities to enhance patient health outcomes."

# readlinks

Published by The College of Pharmacists of BC

ReadLinks Editor in Chief:  
Suzanne Solven  
Managing Editor: Lori DeCou

**College of Pharmacists of BC**  
200–1765 West 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V6J 5C6

Tel 604.733.2440 Toll-Free 800.663.1940  
Fax 604.733.2493 Toll-Free Fax 800.377.8129  
E-mail [info@bcpharmacists.org](mailto:info@bcpharmacists.org)  
[www.bcpharmacists.org](http://www.bcpharmacists.org)

The ReadLinks newsletter provides important College and pharmacy practice information. All registrants are expected to be aware of these matters.



COLLEGE OF PHARMACISTS  
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

*Safe and Effective Pharmacy Care*

Chair – Randy Konrad  
Vice-Chair – Allan Greene  
A/Registrar – Suzanne Solven

### COLLEGE BOARD

District 1 – Metropolitan Vancouver  
Randy Konrad E-mail: [randy.konrad08@gmail.com](mailto:randy.konrad08@gmail.com)

District 2 – Fraser Valley  
Bev Harris E-mail: [bh2@shaw.ca](mailto:bh2@shaw.ca)

District 3 – Vancouver Island/Coastal  
Allan Greene E-mail: [agr@shaw.ca](mailto:agr@shaw.ca)

District 4 – Kootenay/Okanagan  
Doug Kipp E-mail: [dougekipp@gmail.com](mailto:dougekipp@gmail.com)

District 5 – Northern BC  
Chris Hunter E-mail: [chrischunter@yahoo.com](mailto:chrischunter@yahoo.com)

District 6 – Urban Hospitals  
John Hope E-mail: [jwhope@telus.net](mailto:jwhope@telus.net)

District 7 – Community Hospitals  
Bruce Beley E-mail: [bruce.beley@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:bruce.beley@interiorhealth.ca)

Government Appointee, Prince Rupert  
Penny Denton E-mail: [snow@citytel.net](mailto:snow@citytel.net)

Government Appointee, Victoria  
Jeff Slater E-mail: [Jsl8er@shaw.ca](mailto:Jsl8er@shaw.ca)

Government Appointee, Langley  
John Scholtens E-mail: [jjscholtens@hotmail.com](mailto:jjscholtens@hotmail.com)

Government Appointee, Vancouver  
Kris Gustavson E-mail: [kgustavson@phsa.ca](mailto:kgustavson@phsa.ca)

Pharmacy Technician Observer  
Bal Dhillon E-mail: [bal.dhillon@fraserhealth.ca](mailto:bal.dhillon@fraserhealth.ca)

Contact information for all College staff and Board is available on the College website.