

The council of the College of Pharmacists of BC (CPBC) met for their regularly scheduled council meeting at the college's office in Vancouver, BC on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008. The following council highlights summarize the key initiatives discussed. For a complete and official recording of the council meeting please refer to the [draft council meeting minutes](#) available on our website.

#### CE option to the Professional Development and Assessment Program (PDAP):

The registrar provided council with an update on the development of the CE-Plus tool which is on target for inclusion into the PDAP program for Phase 2, starting in September 2008. The working group, who is made up of peer volunteers, has developed a draft CE-Plus tool which received preliminary endorsement by the Board of Examiners (BOE) earlier this month and is currently being piloted by a select group of registrants, including councilors.

One of the unique features of the CE-Plus tool is that it has been specifically designed to recognize all types of professional learning. Not just accredited CE courses but also, non-accredited courses, research, self-study programs, reading materials and even focused discussions with colleagues and/or experts. Once revisions to the tool, following the pilot, have been incorporated, the next step will be to officially present the CE-Plus option to the BOE. The final step will then be a joint presentation, with recommendations, from the working group and the BOE to council at the June 27<sup>th</sup> council meeting.

#### Medication Management:

The registrar provided an update on the progress of the medication management initiative since the previous council meeting back in February. As follow up to the governments' throne speech which included the statement; *"pharmacists will be permitted to authorize routine prescription renewals, making it easier for patients with chronic illnesses to manage their condition"*, the government, on April 10<sup>th</sup>, introduced bill 25 – the Health Professions (Regulatory Reform) Amendment Act to the legislature.

The act formalizes the pharmacists' authority to renew routine prescriptions by amending legislation to include the phrase – "renew a prescription". Although the act falls short of granting pharmacists prescribing authority, as pharmacists in Alberta have, it is a good first step and demonstrates growing support for the role of pharmacists as medication experts.

The government is currently leading consultative sessions with us, the BC Pharmacy Association and other key stakeholders, including the College of Physicians and Surgeons and the BC Medical Association to work through the details. To this end, the college will be focusing stakeholders' attention towards policy "PPP58 – Medication Management – Adapting a Prescription". This policy, which was already approved by council in September of 2007, does a good job of supporting this legislation by providing pharmacists with a framework for adapting an existing prescription, including renewals.

The college is in the final stages of the development of the required orientation manual for PPP-58 (council provided comments to version 5) and supporting communication materials, and is proceeding with plans to roll this out to BC pharmacists, via a series of road show events, over the coming months. Watch for an announcement of dates and locations in ReadLinks and eBlasts.

## Regulated Pharmacy Technicians:

The registrar reminded council that the regulation of pharmacy technicians, which will be done on a voluntary basis, is a national initiative that has been underway for several years with participation from the majority of provinces, each at various stages of development. College staff, inline with the current college strategic plan, are actively engaged in the process and have been working in collaboration with a number of national organizations and other pharmacy regulatory authorities. Current milestones and next steps include:

- Completed development of the *Pharmacy Technician Competencies at Entry-to-Practice* document by the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA). This document establishes the minimum skill-set required for regulated pharmacy technicians.
- Using the competency document the Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs (CCAPP) completed development of the *Standards of Accreditation of Pharmacy Technician Programs*. This document outlines the minimal learning outcomes required which will enable colleges to develop pharmacy technician programs for regulation.
- As of March 2008, CCAPP had already granted accreditation to a number of colleges throughout Ontario meaning that there are currently students in Ontario enrolled in accredited pharmacy technician programs. This is not currently available in B.C. however, CCAPP is expecting to accredit pharmacy technician training programs here, beginning this fall.
- Ontario has developed a draft of their bridging program(s) which will allow current pharmacy technicians, should they choose, to become regulated. The program, which is awaiting presentation to their council, was developed by conducting a series of province-wide focus groups with practicing technicians last year. Participants helped to identify gaps in current practice by comparing to the required competencies established for regulation. The College of Pharmacists of BC will begin the development of it's bridging program(s) within the next few months by conducting similar focus groups with technicians throughout B.C.
- The Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada is developing the *Pharmacy Technician Entry-to-Practice exam* which is expected to be piloted in 2009. Successful completion of this exam, similar to the Pharmacist's Entry-to-Practice exam, will be required by anyone wishing to be granted the designation of "Regulated Pharmacy Technician". The first regulated pharmacy technician graduates in BC are expected in 2010.

The regulation of pharmacy technicians is one of the most significant initiatives facing the pharmacy profession today. As the scope of practice for pharmacists is evolving, through initiatives like medication management, there is an increased demand to free up pharmacists time to enable them to deliver these clinical services. The 'regulated pharmacy technician' will play a critical role in

addressing this very real dilemma.

#### **CPBC Annual Awards Program:**

Council was reminded that for the past five years the college has facilitated an awards program - four excellence in practice awards plus a number of volunteer honour roll awards. The awards, which were presented at the college's AGM each fall, had initially been created to bring attention to the five key roles for pharmacists as outlined in the then new, Framework of Professional Practice (FPP) document.

Subsequently, the college has established a number of ongoing programs, such as the Quality Outcome Specialists (QOS) site visit process and the overall framework for PDAP, that do a much better job of aligning with the FPP's five key roles. It was also pointed out that a number of affiliated and perhaps more appropriate organizations, such as the BC Pharmacy Association, also have award/recognition programs in place.

With this said, the college proposed, and council accepted, a recommendation to eliminate the excellence in practice awards but continue with the volunteer recognition awards. This change will take effect this year with the volunteer honour roll awards being distributed at the annual AGM.

#### **New Tobacco Legislation:**

Council requested that the college communicate to government its' disappointment at not including 'pharmacies' as - one of the restricted operations in the sale of tobacco - in their most recent legislation. The registrar confirmed that the college will continue to proactively lobby government in prohibiting pharmacies from selling tobacco products in accordance with the college's professional practice policy-1.

#### **Guest Speaker; Bob Nakagawa, Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM), Ministry of Health:**

Council had a rare opportunity to hear an informal presentation and ask questions of Bob Nakagawa, ADM Pharmaceutical Services for the Ministry of Health. Bob, a pharmacist himself, provided an overview of his area of responsibility and updated councilors on the many issues and opportunities currently facing the health care system in general and the pharmacy profession in particular.

Bob spoke favourably of the collaborative working relationship the ministry has with the college and stressed the importance of this as initiatives such as; medication management, regulated pharmacy technicians and PharmaNet2 evolve the pharmacists' role in the delivery of better health care for British Columbians.