President & CEO
REPORT TO THE BOARD
May 2016

A Focus on Mental Health and Substance Use

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, approximately 20% of Canadians will personally experience a mental illness in their lifetime, with 8% experiencing major depression at some time in their lives. Statistics Canada has reported that approximately 6 million Canadians met the criteria for a substance use disorder.

While we may see some of the effects of mental health and substance use in our communities, workplaces, and families, they may not be as visible as other health conditions such as congestive heart failure, and age-related frailty conditions. In the Interior Health workplace, the number one reason for absence from work is related to issues of mental health and wellbeing, passing musculoskeletal injuries, which traditionally had been the number one reason. For this and many other reasons, we need to be willing to openly challenge the stigma associated with mental health and substance use; recognize that it impacts our staff, families, friends, and clients; and take action to improve services and health outcomes.

To support the needs of individuals living with mental illness, we are increasing investments in several areas. Walk-in counselling services are being increased at health centres. Interior Health is developing an Aboriginal Mental Health Strategy with the First Nations Health Authority and Metis community representation. We are also working closely with the Divisions of Family Practice to provide greater primary care support for their patients, and strengthening linkages between primary care providers and Interior Health's mental health professionals.

In April, Interior Health released a Request for Proposals to increase our substance use treatment bed capacity from 121 beds to 194 beds – a 73 bed increase. When operational over the next year, 57 support recovery beds will provide clients a safe substance-free setting while they await residential treatment, return from residential treatment, or transition to a more stable lifestyle. The remaining 16 beds will be withdrawal management beds (detox) supporting adults and youth through the early stages of withdrawal from alcohol and/or other substances. The distribution of the beds will be across the health authority, with locations determined through the competitive procurement process. As part of this process, Interior Health is working closely with the First Nations Health Authority to designate some of the beds to support aboriginal populations with treatment in a culturally safe manner, respecting aboriginal traditions.

10 years ago Hillside Psychiatric Centre opened in Kamloops, providing acute tertiary and quaternary mental health services in our health authority. With the opening of Hillside, clients no longer had to travel to the Lower Mainland for the majority of complex mental health services. Over the past ten years, more than 1,500 individuals have turned to the talented health professionals at the Centre to support their healthcare needs. In addition to serving the needs of our own residents, clients from across British Columbia are referred to Hillside because of the high quality service provided by our staff.

Integrated Services

Capital Construction Milestones Reached

In the last few months Interior Health celebrated the awarding of a major capital construction contract, the beginning of construction for a new home for residents, and the opening of an enhanced emergency department. On April 7th the contract for the $312 million Penticton Regional Hospital Patient Care Tower was finalized with EllisDon Infrastructure. When complete in 2019, the six-storey tower will include 84 medical/surgery inpatient beds in single patient rooms, a new ambulatory care centre and medical device reprocessing department, a rooftop helipad, and space for the UBC Faculty of Medicine Program. In March, construction began on the Hamlets at Vernon residential care facility. When open in mid-2017, the facility will provide 85 beds publicly funded by the health authority. The operator, H&H Total Care Services, is building a further 15 private-pay residential care beds and 53 private-pay assisted living beds for additional community capacity. On April 14th, major renovations to the Creston Valley Hospital and Health Centre emergency department were unveiled. The redesigned department includes a new triage and registration room, renovated central nursing station, and redeveloped fast-track area for minor treatment needs of less acute patients. The construction costs were funded by the Estates of Jessie Julia Hooper, Dona and Dariel Anne Korczynski, and Blanche Oleskiw.

Bringing Care Closer to Home

Life-sustaining kidney dialysis is a time consuming treatment, frequently requiring clients to visit dialysis centres three times a week, receiving treatment for multiple hours at each visit. Dialysis replaces normal kidney function which includes the production of hormones, absorbs minerals, filters blood, and produces urine.

With the large, rural nature of Interior Health's geography, the BC Provincial Renal Agency and Interior Health's Renal Program partnered in May 2015 to focus on providing home hemodialysis training to willing patients who reside in rural and remote communities as an alternative to receiving dialysis at a health facility. Clients are provided comprehensive training, follow-up care, and ongoing support in their home rather than in a larger community with a dialysis centre – a first for B.C. Today, more than 20 rural and remote IH clients are supported in their homes with hemodialysis.

Physician Recruitment and Retention

With an aging family physicians demographic, and newly graduating physicians seeking a greater work-life balance than their predecessors, health authorities across British Columbia will continue to see challenges with physician recruitment and retention – even though British Columbia currently has one of the highest ratio of family physicians per capita across Canada.

In the past few months Interior Health has welcomed new family physicians who also provide supports to our facilities including emergency departments and health centres. Dr. Mousa joined the Princeton General Hospital and Cascade Medical Centre in March, after completing his assessment training. Dr. Obu and Dr. Zake recently joined the Ashcroft Health Care team, and Dr. Saeed is now seeing patients at the Logan Lake Health Centre.

2016/17 Budget

IH is targeting to end the fiscal year in a balanced position.

A long-term direction for us, and for health care across the province, is to be more efficient and more sustainable. By becoming more efficient, we find savings that can be reinvested to support a greater focus on prevention and integrated community care in order to decrease the growth in demand on acute and residential care.

Key Performance Measures

Performance measures are used across IH to benchmark our performance against internally and externally set targets. It allows IH to measure how we are doing against past performance, as well as to how we are doing in comparison with like organizations. The measures are reported out to the Board of Directors through the Health Authority's Service Plan, to the Ministry of Health for accountability purposes, as well as to organizations like the Provincial Infection Control Network.

Caution should always be used in comparing data across different institutions or organizations, as localized factors not present at other locations may influence outcomes. Caution should also be used when comparing snapshot data of a specific timeframe such as one reporting period against annualized data.

Percentage of Communities with Completed Healthy Living Strategic Plans
Health outcomes are affected by a number of determinants, including healthy lifestyles, available parks and green spaces, accessible community services, and clean air and water. Local and regional governments have an important role in supporting and enhancing these determinants.

Interior Health is working closely with these levels of government to support positive health outcomes through the development of community Healthy Living Strategic Plans. As of the end of the 2015/16 fiscal year, the Ministry of Health's target for the percentage of communities with completed Healthy Living Strategic Plans was greater than 42% of all communities. Interior Health currently has completed Plans with 46.6% of all communities within the boundaries of the territory we serve.

Human Resources
Difficult to fill position vacancy rates are important indicators of the employment market and are related to overtime costs incurred. IH's vacancy rates for nursing and paramedical professionals continue to remain at less than the established 2% target - 0.24 % and 0.31 % respectively.

Engagement

In early March Board Chair Erwin Malzer and I visited Cranbrook, Creston, Elkford, Fernie, Golden, Invermere, Kimberley, Revelstoke, and Sparwood. Later that month we visited Barriere, Chase, Clearwater, Enderby, Kamloops, Salmon Arm, and Sorrento. In early April we visited Ashcroft, Lillooet, Logan Lake, Lytton and Merritt. During these visits we had the opportunity to meet with our staff and medical staff to understand both the opportunities and challenges of delivering health care in rural settings, tour the sites to better understand capital opportunities for the future, and meet with many important stakeholders including local, regional, and provincial elected officials.

Hospital and health foundations, and auxiliaries, are not only critical financial partners helping Interior Health enhance health care through new and expanded buildings and equipment, but their volunteer commitment to the facilities they serve and to their communities is immeasurable. Over the past few months I had the opportunity to meet with more than 20 foundations and auxiliaries from across Interior Health during recent visits to a number of communities. In April I also had the privilege of attending the BC Association of Healthcare Auxiliaries' AGM in Penticton.

On March 22nd the Board Chair and I met with the North Okanagan/Columbia Shuswap Regional Hospital District. Two days later we met with the Thompson Regional Hospital District. At these meetings we shared Interior Health's strategic direction for the next three years, discussed current capital projects in the planning and construction phases, and expressed Interior Health's appreciation for their contributions to improving health care in their communities.

Building relationships with our aboriginal communities is an important objective for Interior Health in order to help reduce the significant gap in health outcomes between aboriginal and non-aboriginal populations. In Late April, I participated in a meeting of the Tripartite Committee on First Nations Health, along with my colleagues from other health authorities and the provincial government. The Senior Executive Team participated in an Indigenous Cultural Safety Workshop to further explore and understand the effect of historical government policies on our aboriginal peoples and the legacy that continues through to today. On May 12th Interior Health and leaders from the seven First Nations within our boundaries joined together at the Partnership Accord Leadership Table meeting. During mid-May, I joined our Board Chair in visiting ten communities within the Secwepemc and Tsilhqot'in Nations.

Over the past decade Interior Health has seen a significant investment in major capital projects across the health authority. Many of these major projects have been undertaken as private-public partnerships (P3s). Not only has this procurement approach helped the projects be delivered on time and on budget, site maintenance responsibility usually rests with the P3 proponent, freeing up Interior Health resources to provide direct patient care. On May 25th I had the opportunity to meet with the leadership of Partnerships BC to discuss the future landscape of major capital construction in British Columbia.

Recognition

Ashcroft Auxiliary Celebrates 100 Years of Service

For more than a century, the Ashcroft and District Health Care Auxiliary (ADHCA) has been raising funds to support patient care in its community. These days, the Thrift Store is its main means of fundraising, with the group also showcasing an array of handmade goods for sale at Ashcroft Hospital. But the ADHCA also has a storied history, as recounted in a recent article in the *Ashcroft-Cache Creek Journal*. For instance, a dance held in 1913 brought in some $150 – that's equivalent to $3,500 in today's dollars! Thank you to the ADHCA for supporting our patients in the Ashcroft region.

Physician Compensation Team Gets Recognized by ROI Institute

On May 4th, the ROI (Return on Investment) Institute, Inc. announced the recipients of its 2015 Awards of Excellence. These international awards honor individuals for their outstanding work in measurement and evaluation, and recognize exemplary practices in research, design, and implementation of the ROI Methodology. The great news is that a team from Interior Health was the recipient of the award for Most Innovative Approach to ROI. The Medical Affairs team demonstrated their innovative approach to return on investment in an ROI impact study titled "Physician Compensation Planning & Initiatives Department."

ROI Institute, Inc., founded in 1992, helps organizations evaluate the success of projects and programs, including measuring the financial return on investment. The team consists of top-minds in the fields of human resources, human capital analytics, marketing and events, coaching, health care, etc.

Prestigious Recognition for Interior Health

Interior Health has again won accolades as a top employer. This time, the recognition was national with Forbes magazine ranking Interior Health at fifth among best health-care and social sector employers in Canada. In partnership with Statista, Forbes magazine compiles its list from surveys of more than 8,000 Canadian workers. Vancouver Coastal Health was fourth in the Top 10 and Provincial Health Services Authority ranked ninth. Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario was No. 1. The rankings are based on the attitude of employees toward their company and public perception of a company by industry employees.

Governor-General Honours Dedicated Auxiliary Member

A long-time member of the Nicola Valley Health Care Auxiliary received a Governor General's award in Vancouver on March 4th for her work supporting local and accessible health care in Merritt. Betty Doberstein received a Caring Canadian Award recognizing her extensive endeavours with the Nicola Valley Health Care Auxiliary. Between running meetings, organizing auxiliary activities and events, fundraising and acting as a liaison, Betty has helped create a sense of community for those she serves. Created in 1995, the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award recognizes living Canadians and permanent residents who have made a significant, sustained, and unpaid contribution to their community, in Canada or abroad. Often working behind the scenes, these individuals volunteer their time and efforts to help their fellow citizens.

Chris Mazurkewich
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