Evaluation is used in all that we do – whether we are assessing a patient or developing new programs – evaluation helps us to conduct and improve our work. This fall, six of our sites in Interior Health were evaluated when visited by Accreditation Canada at the end of October. IH met 97 per cent of criteria assessed and all Required Organizational Practices. Kudos to the Accreditation team and all of you who participated.

In our portfolio, the Accreditation Canada surveyors were impressed by the level of engagement between physicians and our organization. They commented on the work happening through physician-administrator dyads, saying these partnerships are advancing IH in our journey as a high-functioning organization. The lead surveyor also said they were “jealous of the level of physician engagement at Interior Health” – wonderful to hear.

The surveyors were also impressed with the IH Ethics Framework – noting that it is the best ethical framework of this kind that they have ever seen. Furthermore, they gave a nod to our focus on quality improvement, recognizing the new IH Quality and Patient Safety Strategic Plan. Hats off to Dr. Sue Pollock, Dr. Glenn McRae, Dr. Devin Harris, and their teams for leading this important work. I’d also like to acknowledge James Chan, Michelle Schmidt, and the Accreditation team leads for their support in preparing us for and leading us through the site visits; and to everyone else who was directly or indirectly involved.

Another evaluation process underway is a refresh of IH’s Vision, Mission, and Values; led by my colleague Jenn Goodwin, VP of Communications and Culture. This is vital work as it gives us an opportunity to share our feedback on statements that will inspire and motivate us, and build a common understanding of what we value most. I’m grateful for the opportunity to participate in the surveys and focus groups; and seeing the engagement of our physicians was encouraging. This is wonderful work and I look forward to the outcome.

Other work over the fall included an exciting announcement from our anesthesiologists in Kamloops and Williams Lake. They are the first anesthesiologist departments in the province to sign the Alternate Payment Program (APP) contract for anesthesia.

“... cont’d on p. 2
This is already proving valuable to the recruitment of anesthesiologists and is a testament to our physician engagement. I am grateful to the leadership at the sites. Again, thank you.

The NAVIG8 Emerging Physician Leaders Program kicked off in September with two, in-person learning sessions. I was privileged to speak with each individual participant in post-session calls with Dr. Harsh Hundal and Jarnail Dail. In these conversations, participants gave direct, transparent feedback and showed their feelings and about the program. This provides huge value in terms of what’s working well and what can be improved. See some of the NAVIG8 statistics and participant comments on page 6.

We also announced the addition of Dr. Svet Gueordjev and Dr. Sean Wachtel to the Slocan Community Health Centre. They join long-time New Denver physician Dr. Chuck Burkholder in providing local primary care services and coverage for the community’s 24/7 emergency department. I’ve recently connected with Dr. Wachtel who informs me this three-physician model is working very well. I look forward to seeing our patient data and working with this group to help inform future health-care provision for the community.

On a personal note, my wife Wendy and I were thrilled to perform at Carnegie Hall in November as members of the Kelowna Community Choir. Our choir was the only Canadian choir and joined nine other American choirs to perform as a group 290 strong! I was in awe just standing on the same stage as legends like Tchaikovsky, the Rolling Stones, and Oscar Peterson – what an experience.

To each and every one of you, I wish a happy holiday and all the best on your own adventures in 2020!
In November, our CEO Susan Brown announced changes to Interior Health’s organizational structure; in particular, across our Clinical Operations teams. As always, we are committed to maintaining the medical dyad leadership model and adjustments have been made to align to the new structure.

As a result of these changes, we have happily welcomed Darold Sturgeon to the new Executive Director for Medical Affairs position. We look forward to the wealth of experience he will bring to our team.

At the same time, Gina Sloan has shifted to the role of Corporate Director, Health Information Management, in the Clinical Support Services and Chief Information Office portfolio. A big thank you to Gina for everything she’s done for our team. She will be missed by her M&Q colleagues.

Changes in the M&Q Team

New Faces in M&Q

Dr. Michelle Scheepers
Physician Quality Improvement (PQI) Advisor
Effective Oct. 22, 2019

Darold Sturgeon
Executive Director, Medical Affairs
Effective Nov. 8, 2019

Dr. Robert Baker
Regional Medical Director, End of Life (EOL) Care, Interior Health West
Effective Nov. 1, 2019

Thank You, Dr. Norm Kienitz

We also say farewell to Dr. Norm Kienitz, as his term role as Executive Medical Director for IH West Acute and Trauma has come to an end.

Over the last two years, Dr. Kienitz led the herd by stabilizing and advancing patient care services across IH West. His vision and leadership in the role has left a lasting impact for patients. He embodies medical leadership, like only a true cowboy could. We are very grateful for all that he’s done as a medical leader at IH.

Dr. Kienitz continues his work as an emergency medicine physician in the Royal Inland Hospital Emergency Department.
Partnership is Key: 
IH Physician Quality Improvement

Quality improvement is a team sport. This sure rings true with the work being supported through the IH Physician Quality Improvement (PQI) team.

During last year’s inaugural PQI education initiative at IH, the first cohort of physicians spent nine months learning the skills to apply quality improvement methodologies and principles to their quality improvement (QI) project ideas.

It was quickly recognized that after each of the three learning sessions, the physicians spent a lot of time communicating and translating their new-found QI knowledge to their teams. This information led to an evolution of the program.

“We felt that operational stakeholders needed to be a part of the learning so they could contribute their knowledge of the system in developing a more comprehensive project plan and support the work ‘back home,’” says Dr. Devin Harris, Executive Medical Director, Quality & Patient Safety.

With the full endorsement of the Senior Executive Team, PQI staff endeavoured to match Cohort 2 physicians in dyad partnerships with operational partners from a variety of roles within IH, including directors, managers, point of care clinical leaders, and others.

The feedback from physicians and their administrative partners has been remarkable, with both sides acknowledging the value in being able to share in the learning and having the time to truly collaborate on the development of an improvement idea. Both partners noted the breaking down of silos through the increased understanding of points of view that has allowed the mitigation of some previously unforeseen barriers to moving the work forward.

Dr. Eiko Waida is a member of both the PQI Steering Committee and Cohort 2. She is working with her dyad partner, Yvonne Taylor, Director Primary Care, North Okanagan, on improving the care pathway for diabetic children in Vernon. During Cohort 2, Session 2 in November, the physician participants and their dyad partner had the opportunity to share their thoughts on the work so far. Some of the sentiments shared echo those of Dr. Waida.

“PQI has transformed the way I think about my role and power in health care… It has brought tremendous joy in my professional life and has extended the longevity of my career.”

Dr. Janet Evans is a graduate of the BC Patient Safety Quality Council’s Clinician Quality Academy and champion of quality improvement as a PQI physician mentor.

“I was offered the opportunity to share not only what I did in my family practice to improve office efficiency, but also my learnings as to how the principles of quality improvement can support other physicians in their quality improvement work,” says Dr. Evans. “It has completely changed my approach to my work and created a culture of improvement in my office and the other work that I do. It is inspiring to work with other like-minded physicians who want to take the time to improve health care in innovative and sustainable ways.”

Physicians and IH staff are invited to join the PQI team. PQI offers a variety of education and support from introductory QI to a full, in-person Cohort, and even a few levels in-between.

Applications for Cohort 3 are open now and one-day introductory sessions are being scheduled for Kelowna, Kamloops, Cranbrook, Trail, Nelson, Penticton, and Williams Lake. If you are interested in attending, please email pqi@interiorhealth.ca.
Physician Recognition

Dr. Ghaida Radhi gets top marks in Canada

Williams Lake physician, Dr. Ghaida Radhi, was recently awarded the Irwin Bean College of Family Physicians of Canada (CCFP) Examination Award for achieving the highest standing among practice-eligible candidates in the CFPC’s Certification Examination in Family Medicine. This means, she had the highest marks of anyone in Canada for her program!

Congratulations on this accomplishment, Dr. Radhi. Read the full story in the Williams Lake Tribune.

Dr. Nerine Kleinhans receives IH Quality Award

Interior Health’s Quality, Risk and Accreditation department recognized Dr. Nerine Kleinhans with a 2018/19 Quality Award, Individual Winner for her work to establish a medical clinic for youth at Prince Charles Secondary School in Creston.

This collaborative clinic – which runs two mornings per week – is housed at the high school and includes Public Health nurses, Child and Youth Mental Health Substance Use counsellors and a navigator, and local physicians.

Excellent work by Dr. Kleinhans and her team. Read the complete story to learn more.

Dr. Josh Williams honoured by UBC Faculty of Medicine

Dr. Josh Williams, Clinical Assistant Professor with the UBC Department of Emergency Medicine, is the recipient of the 2019 Clinical Faculty Award for Excellence in Clinical Teaching.

Dr. Williams is highly regarded for his innovative teaching style and genuine commitment to medical education. Dr. Williams played an integral role for the Southern Medical Program as an inaugural Clinical Skills Course Director and currently serves as the Associate Program Director for the Royal College Emergency Medicine residency program at Kelowna General Hospital.

See the Southern Medical Program website for more information.
26 physicians from across Interior Health are participating in the two-year NAVIG8 Emerging Physician Leaders Program. The program utilizes a 70/20/10 combination of experiential learning, mentoring, and quarterly classroom training to accelerate the development of critical leadership and management skills for the next generation of physician leaders in IH.

The two learning sessions, Sept. 26-28 and Oct 25-26, included a panel discussion with executive leaders from organizations around B.C., in-person classroom training, mentorship training, and networking. Feedback was received through surveys and followup phone calls with each participant. Participant-action learning projects will be strategically aligned and designed to facilitate quality improvement and leadership skill acquisition.

Though the NAVIG8 program is only two sessions old, it has garnered significant interest from other health authorities and provincial organizations.

“Our first session this past weekend was by far the best educational session I have ever attended. [...] Lightbulbs kept going off in my head and I could see the same happening for others in the room.”

“It will be the discussions and conversations that we all have together that empower us.”

“Encouraging to see quality culture in Interior Health.”

“Brilliant speakers and program. Well run and great for our organization to receive this kind of training.”

**OUR RESULTS**

**THROUGH THE NAVIG8 PROGRAM, I AM...**

(%) of respondents that agreed or strongly agreed

- **Leadership Forum**
  - **Gaining specific skills and ideas that I can apply to my area of practice:** 100%
  - **Improving my ability to lead change in my organization:** 95%
  - **Improving my engagement with the health authority:** 100%
  - **Developing a deeper awareness of my own leadership strengths and development opportunities:** 100%

**BC HEALTH SYSTEM OVERVIEW**

**QUALITY CULTURE**

**NAVIGATING INTERIOR HEALTH**

**HEALTH SYSTEM PLANNING**

**DYAD LEADERSHIP**

**PERSONAL STRENGTHS**

**COMMUNICATION FUNDAMENTALS**

**MEDICAL STAFF GOVERNANCE**

**LEADERSHIP FUNDAMENTALS**
Facility Engagement in Action

Facility Engagement is one of nine Specialist Services Committee (SSC) initiatives that helps build relationships and assists in finding effective solutions for medical facilities across B.C.

Widespread engagement jumpstarts overcapacity solutions

CRANBROOK – Dr. Charles Casselman, Chief of Staff for East Kootenay Regional Hospital, leveraged the Facility Engagement opportunity to bring together the brightest minds for a pivotal planning workshop to address over-capacity and access and flow challenges.

The May forum – attended by 78 people including 27 physicians, 25 Interior Health representatives, and other stakeholders – not only generated an abundance of rich ideas and perspectives, it set out a foundation for an ongoing collaborative effort. Feedback and data was developed into recommendations by a third party consultant firm; now the group will plan out next steps to action the recommendations.

Read the full story or watch the videos to learn more.

Proactively supporting physician wellness

CRESTON – Drs. Barry Oberleitner, Crystal Campbell, and Karen Persad led a collaborative effort between physicians, Interior Health administrators, nurses, and staff to centralize maternity care in the Creston area.

A new clinic was established within the Creston Valley Hospital and Health Centre to integrate maternity services and bring multidisciplinary teams together to provide pre-, peri-, and post-delivery maternity care.

Read the full story to learn more.

Recognizing Facility Engagement excellence

Medical Staff Associations, health authority partners, and project staff were brought together to recognize efforts that have inspired, sparked change, and brought the Facility Engagement Initiative to life in the Interior Region. Four of these facilities were further recognized by Facility Engagement for Excellence in Achievement, Partnership, Innovation, and Teamwork.

- **CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE IN ACHIEVEMENT**
  Kootenay Boundary Physician Association (KBPA) and Regional Hospital

- **CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE IN PARTNERSHIP**
  Shuswap Lake General Hospital (pictured left)

- **INNOVATION AWARD**
  Creston Valley Hospital

- **TEAMWORK AWARD**
  Royal Inland Hospital

Congratulations all! Read the full story to learn more.
The Llama of Medical Affairs

Norm the llama continues to be passed between Medical Affairs team members who demonstrate the qualities of resiliency: adaptability, persistence, patience, balance, and curiosity.

Medical Affairs llama people are:

- Sociable and communicative
- Adventurous and have a lot of experience to share
- Kind and loving to friends and family
- Simply a call away when a friend is in need
- Practical and self-aware
- Constantly driven to improve themselves

Thank you Sandy, Nicole, and Penny for being resiliency champions!

Sandy Russell
Assistant, Credentialing and Privileging, Williams Lake

Nicole Hochleitner
Coordinator, Rural Continuing Medical Education, Kelowna

Penny Branchflower
Assistant, Credentialing and Privileging, Kelowna

It’s Influenza Season!

Medical Staff must self-report their influenza immunization decision

https://medicalstaffhealth.phsa.ca

The seasonal influenza vaccine is safe and the most effective way of preventing the spread of influenza. Thank you for doing your part to protect the people in our care.
Join Project ECHO® Series 1
FREE CME Credits Twice a Month

Project ECHO® (Extension for Community Health Outcomes) is a Canadian Red Cross and Interior Health funded education program developed to help primary care providers manage chronic and complex diseases.

At Interior Health, our focus is on Mental Health & Substance Use
- Suicide Risk Assessment and Management (Jan. 29, 3-5 p.m.)
- Managing Complexities of Alcohol Withdrawal (Feb. 12, 3-5 p.m.)
- Managing Responsive/Threatening Behaviour (Feb. 26, 3-5 p.m.)
- Practicing medically and legally safe Emergency Psychiatry; Mental Health Act challenges (Mar 11, 3-5 p.m.)

Who can participate? Physicians; Nurse Practitioners; Other Primary Care Practitioners; MHSU Staff and Allied Health as guests
Note: Preference will be given to primary care providers living in wildfire-impacted, rural and remote, and MHSU underserviced communities.

Credits: 6.0 MOC Section 1 and 6.0 Mainpro+

Register Soon! Space is limited. Click here for ONLINE REGISTRATION.

For more information: Visit ECHO https://www.interiorhealth.ca/sites/Partners/ProjectECHO or contact echo@interiorhealth.ca.

It just got easier for patients waiting for surgery

Staying in touch before your surgery: patient notification and point of contact
They are ‘Phishing’ for You

Extra attention and vigilance is needed by everyone to help Interior Health stay safe from cyber threats.

In November, the Chief Information Officer of BC raised the cybersecurity threat level from Medium to High. This action was taken in response to an increase in cybersecurity events targeting health-care and government organizations in Canada, resulting in significant service delays and interruptions to normal business operations.

How you can help protect IH and our information

- Be on high alert for anything out of the ordinary (e.g., emails from addresses you don’t recognize; emails that contain poor spelling and grammar; emails that make unrealistic threats or ask for personal information; emails without an Interior Health identifier; etc.).
- Do not open or click on links in suspicious emails.
- Report phishing emails to SPAM@interiorhealth.ca.
- If you accidentally click on a phishing email, contact the Service Desk immediately (via email or at 1-855-242-1300).

Learn more about Information Security & Security Basics

Watch the new i-Learn modules to learn more about this topic and other ways to protect yourself and IH from security threats.

- Go to ilearn.interiorhealth.ca
- Search Courses > Keywords “Information Security Basics” > select “Search all Keywords” > Search

For more information, or to report any suspicious events, please contact IHSecurity@interiorhealth.ca.

IH Executive & Senior Medical Leadership

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Dr. Andy Hamilton, Executive Medical Director, Surgical Services 250-770-0877
Dr. Devin Harris, Executive Medical Director, Quality & Patient Safety 778-214-4833
Dr. Nancy Humber, Senior Medical Director, IH West 778-209-0345
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