

BCM J
BC Medical Journal

We welcome original letters of less than 300 words; they may be edited for clarity and length. Letters may be emailed to journal@doctorsofbc.ca, submitted online at bcmj.org/content/contribute, or sent through the post and must include your mailing address, telephone number, and email address.

Nonrecognized qualifications

The *BC Medical Journal* is allowing questionable self-promotion by physicians of qualifications not recognized in Canada. In the January/February issue, the *BCM J* printed news that “Three BC physicians earn board certification in lifestyle medicine,” and in the April issue, two articles, “Clinical assessment to determine a patient’s suitability for bariatric surgery,” and “Prevention and management of complications after bariatric surgery,” identified authors as being Diplomates of the American Board of Obesity Medicine. The *BCM J* does not publish the names of BC physicians who have achieved their CCFP or FRCPC/FRCSC. And these are at least based on clinical patient training over many years, with rigorous criteria and examinations for certification and accreditation, as well as being accepted, approved, and accredited Canadian standards. The board referred to is not the American Board of Medical Specialties that most physicians know, but even if it were, the requirements for specialty board certification in some instances is fewer years of training than required in Canada. These paper certificates are two of a growing number of mostly foreign ways available to physicians for advertising an impressive-sounding resume, just by attending as little as a 1- to 2-week or longer course or training and/or doing some reading, possibly even absent any live patients. Or, one can simply pay to become a fellow of some society that sounds

rather distinguished. This would be of little consequence if websites didn’t exist. There have been many instances of physicians advertising on the Internet in a manner implying that they are specialists when they are not.

The College of Physicians and Surgeons should proactively address this issue. Advertising foreign credentials should not be allowed except where they are recognized as being equivalent to accepted Canadian professional accreditation standards. The *BCM J* should end the practice of publishing such questionable credentials.

My concern is one of patient safety, public trust, and physician accountability.

—Evert Tuyp, MD, FRCPC
Coquitlam

Thank you for your points regarding credentials. The BCMJ does not have a robust policy on this topic, but your letter has identified a need to develop one. Once the policy is written, we will report on it. —ED

The Canadian community: Altruism amid tragedy

As a father whose son once played hockey, and as a lifelong follower of the game, the tragic accident involving the Humboldt Broncos junior hockey team filled me, along with most Canadians, with a deep sense of sadness. As a gastroenterologist and liver-transplant physician at VGH, the actions of Logan Boulet’s family (Logan was one of the players taken from this world much too young because of this tragedy) left me with a

great sense of appreciation and awe. In their worst possible moment, when their lives were irreversibly and tragically altered, Logan’s family chose to put the significant medical needs of others—anonymous to them—ahead of their own needs. Their decision to donate Logan’s healthy young organs has rescued kidney disease patients from the suffering of dialysis, and saved patients with end-stage liver, heart, and lung disease from an otherwise inevitable premature death. Their noble altruism has also resulted in an increased interest among BC residents in organ donation, and that will help save lives in this province. In the darkest, most incomprehensible moments, the light of kindness and humanity refuses to be extinguished. I would like to believe that the actions of Logan’s family, as well as the incredible support for the Humboldt Broncos that Canadians coast to coast have shown, somehow defines us as a nation. Humboldt Strong. Canada Strong.

—Eric M. Yoshida,
OBC, MD, FRCPC
Vancouver

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