

News

We welcome news items of less than 300 words; we may edit them for clarity and length. News items should be emailed to journal@doctorsofbc.ca and must include your mailing address, telephone number, and email address. All writers should disclose any competing interests.

Book available: *M.D. Confidential: It's All Very Hush-Hush*



By Lawrence Matrick, MD. Bellevue Publishing, 2020. 978-1773740577. Paperback, 242 pages. \$22.28.

In this collection of short stories, Dr Lawrence Matrick explores the topic of mental illness and how

it is perceived in society. Our mental health is just as important as our physical well-being, so why is it kept so very “hush-hush”? Dr Matrick’s stories examine this phenomenon and how it affects those whose mental health is in jeopardy.

The book features a series of stories about mental illness that are designed to both illustrate and educate: the uncertainty of a family facing their father’s progression into Alzheimer disease, the terror of a young man combating

PTSD, and the redemption of a young woman given the care and resources she needs to overcome a substance use disorder.

Readers will learn the medical/psychiatric facts of each condition, the challenges faced by loved ones in each circumstance, and the resources available to them from professionals in the psychiatric industry.

COVID-19 vaccine toolkit for doctors’ offices

To support doctors since the announcement of the COVID-19 vaccine, Doctors of BC and a group of family doctors have created a COVID-19 vaccine roll-out toolkit. The toolkit includes a draft voicemail script, messaging for doctors’ websites (or patient email), and an FAQ for patients. It will be updated regularly as more information becomes available.

The toolkit is available at www.doctorsofbc.ca/sites/default/files/vaccine_toolkit_dec14_id_392322.pdf.

Comments and feedback can be sent to covid19@doctorsofbc.ca. All suggestions will be considered as the toolkit is updated.

New DocTalks episode: Putting Indigenous cultural safety into practice

A new episode of DocTalks, a Doctors of BC podcast, is now available on the Doctors of BC website and all podcast platforms. In this episode, Indigenous family physician Dr Terri Aldred and Indigenous cultural safety coordinator and consultant Mr Len Pierre discuss how we define and understand cultural safety and what the complexities are in addressing systemic racism. What steps can doctors and health care workers take to begin or continue the journey to addressing racism, both on an individual level and at the system-wide level? How can we measure our progress? www.doctorsofbc.ca/news/doctalks-podcast-putting-indigenous-cultural-safety-practice.



Dr Ramneek Dosanjh, president-elect for 2021

Doctors of BC elections

The Doctors of BC Board comprises the president and president-elect, along with seven directors-at-large. Dr Ramneek Dosanjh has been elected president-elect for 2021 (president in 2022). Dr Dosanjh joins Drs Kevin Martin and Jeff Dresselhuis, who were elected to 2-year terms as family practice members of the Board, and Dr Sophia Wong who was elected to a 2-year term as a specialist member of the Board. Dr Lawrence Welsh was elected to a 1-year term on the Board. The Board in 2021 will be made up of:

1. Dr Matthew Chow, president
2. Dr Ramneek Dosanjh, president-elect
3. Dr Jeff Dresselhuis, chair
4. Dr Adam Thompson, director-at-large, family medicine
5. Dr Kevin Martin, director-at-large, family medicine
6. Dr Barbara Blumenauer, director-at-large, specialist
7. Dr Sophia Wong, director-at-large, specialist
8. Dr Lloyd Opper, director-at-large, specialist
9. Dr Lawrence Welsh, director-at-large, family medicine

Doctors of BC scholarship winners

Doctors of BC has awarded its two annual \$1000 scholarships to Mr Danial Ressler of Burnaby and Ms Gabrielle Wong of Langley. The commendable recipients were chosen from an abundance of highly impressive applicants.



Mr Danial Ressler

Mr Ressler graduated from Burnaby Central Secondary School in 2020. During high school he led Scouting expeditions, earned a Duke of Edinburgh's Award, led a section in the award-winning Burnaby Central Chamber

A Choir, and was selected in his final year to be a member of Burnaby Central's student council. While most of his time is now spent immersed in the microbiology and biochemistry program at Simon Fraser University, in his spare time he volunteers at the Greater Vancouver Food Bank and works part-time in a frontline position at Save-On-Foods. He is an avid hiker, soccer player, and amateur musician. One day he hopes to join the Doctors of BC community as a physician, to follow in the footsteps of his mother, Dr Vicky Ressler, and to continue to give back and help those most in need.



Ms Gabrielle Wong

Ms Wong graduated with an IB Diploma from R.E. Mountain Secondary School. She is currently attending Simon Fraser University (majoring in human geography, with a minor in social data analytics). Outside of school, she spends her time debating competitively, coaching younger students in debate, playing piano, and crocheting.

Although her heart isn't set on a career yet, Gabrielle is interested in equitable community building and civic technology. This year, she was appointed as a youth representative on her township's Seniors Advisory Committee,

which she anticipates will give her more insight into change at the municipal level. Gabrielle hopes to continue to use her creative skills for social good, whether that be through performing music for seniors, crocheting octopuses for premature babies, or mentorship work with Big Brothers, Big Sisters. She is deeply appreciative of Doctors of BC for their support of her future pursuits.

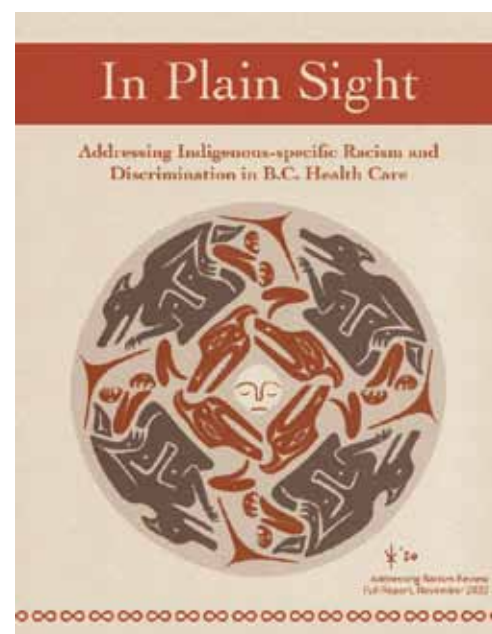
For more than 15 years, Doctors of BC has presented two \$1000 scholarship awards to children of members in good standing who are completing high school and planning to continue studies at a recognized postsecondary institution. For more information about the award, visit www.doctorsofbc.ca/about-us/awards-scholarships/doctors-bc-scholarship-awards.

Guidance for Primary Care Management of Adult Patients with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19

This document from the BCCDC and the BC Ministry of Health provides recommendations for primary care practitioners (family physicians and nurse practitioners) for the assessment and management of adult patients with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, suspected COVID-19, or confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19. Topics addressed include symptoms, testing, criteria for outpatient management, clinical management, self-isolation, indications for referral to hospital, care of discharged patients, remote and rural considerations, long-term complications, mental well-being of patients and providers, and practitioner resources. The document is available at www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/BC_COVID_primarycare_outpatient_mgmt.pdf.

COVID-19 health policy study: Seeking input

The Vaccine Evaluation Center (VEC) at BC Children's Hospital is seeking health care workers' experiences and perspectives on the impact of COVID-19 public health policies on individuals and communities. VEC is particularly



Addressing racism in the BC health care system: Investigation findings

On 30 November 2020, Professor Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond released her report, *In Plain Sight*. Turpel-Lafond was appointed by the Minister of Health to lead an investigation into alleged incidents of Indigenous-specific racism in emergency departments in BC, and in the provincial health care system. The report is the result of the investigation and is available at <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/addressingracism>. Turpel-Lafond is senior associate counsel at Woodward and Company, and a professor of law at Peter Allard Hall Law School at the University of British Columbia.

interested in hearing from health care workers in acute care and long-term care facilities as well as policy makers and implementers. Researchers at the VEC are doing this study in collaboration with researchers across Canada, China, and Bangladesh. The study will consist of a 45- to 60-minute interview to be completed by phone or Zoom. For more information or to sign up, call VEC at 604 875-2187 or email VECstudies@bcchr.ubc.ca. Provide your name, phone number, and a good time to call, and mention the COVID-19 health policy study.



Virtual health communities for Canadians

Researchers with the UBC Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Management (CCDPM) have teamed up with digital health company Curatio to provide Canadians with virtual health support during the COVID-19 pandemic. Stronger Together is a project that uses a social networking health app to connect patients with free online evidence-based health resources, in-app coaching, peer-to-peer support, and private social health communities designed for patients who are managing a health condition during COVID-19, along with caretakers and parents who may be feeling a lack of support during the pandemic.

In addition to contributing expert content, CCDPM researchers will assist with program evaluation for the platform's nine different public communities (cardiovascular health and well-being, disability and physical activity, stroke recovery, keeping mentally strong with multiple myeloma, respiratory health and well-being, prostate cancer, 4+2 diabetes reversal, plan to move your kids, and parenting during COVID-19). Patients may access the health communities to connect with others on a private secure network to reduce feelings of isolation and vulnerability during the pandemic.

Individuals may register for free at www.curatio.me/strongertogether. By joining the platform, participants will assist researchers in learning how to best offer virtual health support and contribute to Curatio's program development.

Stronger Together is supported by an investment from the Digital Technology Supercluster, which brings together private and public sector organizations to address challenges facing Canada's economic sectors including health care, natural resources, manufacturing, and transportation.

Pathways public directory of family doctors

A new one-stop online directory of family doctors (www.pathwaysmedicalcare.ca) has been created for British Columbians to find up-to-date information on how their doctor is providing virtual and in-person care, how to make an appointment, and what other services their doctor may provide. Approximately 70% of BC family doctors who provide longitudinal care to their patients are listed in the directory, with more continuing to be added. Doctors are asked to check their listings for accuracy and to use the link at the bottom of their profile page to make necessary changes, including adding requested patient forms (e.g., COVID-19 screening questionnaire). Doctors who are not yet listed may create a listing at www.surveymonkey.com/r/FPvirtualcare.

Pathways is a not-for-profit organization supported by Doctors of BC and the British Columbia Ministry of Health through the General Practice Services Committee.

Health authorities accepting expressions of interest for COVID-19 service contracts

Effective 14 December 2020, health authorities are accepting expressions of interest for the simplified COVID-19 service contract. The contract was developed to support physicians paid under fee-for-service (FFS) whose practices have experienced ongoing reductions in volume due to the pandemic. The contract supports physicians on a short-term basis by compensating them on an hourly basis when providing services, including activities necessary for clinical service redesign of their practice/clinic in order to address the impacts of COVID-19 on service delivery, clinical processes, and patient flow. Physicians are required to continue to provide in-person patient care as needed; this contract cannot be used for virtual care only.

To be eligible for the contract, physicians must be currently paid exclusively by FFS and have experienced an ongoing reduction in the volume of the usual services they deliver during the COVID-19 pandemic that has resulted in a 20% or greater reduction of FFS income.

BC guidelines published late 2019 and 2020

In 2019 and 2020, the Guidelines and Protocols Advisory Committee, a joint collaboration between Doctors of BC and the BC Ministry of Health, published and revised several BC Guidelines.

New guidelines:

- Appropriate Imaging for Common Situations in Primary and Emergency Care
- Prostate Cancer Part 1: Diagnosis and Referral in Primary Care
- Prostate Cancer Part 2: Follow-up in Primary Care
- CT Prioritization
- MRI Prioritization

Revised guidelines:

- Hypertension – Diagnosis and Management
- Workup of Microscopic Hematuria
- Urinary Tract Infections in the Primary Care Setting – Investigation

Visit www.bcguidelines.ca for further information about each guideline.

Determination of the reduction in FFS income will be based on the physician's FFS billings since 1 April 2020 compared to the same period in the previous year. The contract is not available to anesthesiologists and emergency medicine physicians, who have access to other contract options.

Physicians who are interested in potentially transitioning to the contract should contact their health authority's Medical Affairs Department to discuss next steps. The health authority will notify the Ministry of Health of the physician's interest in the service contract and the ministry will assess the physician's historical FFS billings. Physicians who have not experienced a decrease in their FFS billings of at least 20% compared to the corresponding period in the previous year will not be eligible for the contract. The ministry will consider eligibility exceptions on a case-by-case basis.