Implementing patient medical homes across BC

**Background**

Across British Columbia collaborative partners and physicians at the practice, community and provincial levels are working to transform primary care to more effectively meet the needs of patients and populations. Supported by the GPSC and its programs, family physicians are adopting new practice methods as they transition to patient medical homes (PMHs) as the cornerstone of primary care networks (PCNs).

Completed electronically by family physicians across the province, the PMH Assessment assists physicians in reflecting on their practice within the context of the PMH model, and enables communities to make data-informed decisions in support of locally integrated systems of care. The assessment is designed to:

- Identify practice strengths and opportunities in relation to the 12 attributes of a PMH in BC.
- Inform quality improvement activities in practices.
- Inform priorities and resource allocation at a community, regional, and provincial level.

Physicians can complete the assessment individually, with a Practice Support Program (PSP) Regional Support Team (RST) member, or in a group with clinic support staff and RSTs. Hosted by a division of family practice, group events also serve as a community platform to discuss individual and group assessment results in relation to practice level quality improvement and community service planning.

**Next Steps**

The GPSC is on a collaborative, multi-year journey to transform primary care, through the implementation of patient medial homes, which will take time and will happen at different rates in different communities.

The current results provide a point-in-time snapshot of PMH implementation around the province.

As the use of the PMH Assessment by family physicians increases, the GPSC can further gather information to inform, evaluate, and support the transition to an integrated system of care at both community and provincial levels. The results provided reflect provincial priority areas for system improvement and foundational components of the PMH model.

For more information on GPSC evaluation or the PMH Assessment, contact evaluation@doctorsofbc.ca.

**Method**

The GPSC developed its assessment by:

- Using select measures from existing, standardized physician assessments in Canada including:
  - Canadian Institute of Health Information Attributes of Primary Care Provider Survey,
  - College of Family Physicians of Canada PMH Self-Assessment Tool, and
  - 2014 National Physician Survey in Canada.
- Adapting questions from the American-based Safety Net Medical Home Initiative’s:
  - Patient-Centred Medical Home Assessment.
- Building Blocks of Primary Care Assessment.

Before launching province-wide in 2017, the assessment underwent successive rounds of testing with family physicians and stakeholders.

Consistent with GPSC’s commitment to iteratively improve its supports and services, the committee undertook a process to update the assessment after two initial years of implementation. After consulting with physicians and community stakeholders in 2019, the updated version was released in January 2020. Key updates to the PMH Assessment include more clarity and consistency in language, and new questions that expand key PMH attributes, relate to the development of primary care networks, and focus on practice quality improvement.

**Results**

Nearly 2,400 (58%) of BC family physicians have completed the assessment at least once as of December 2019.

**COMPLETION BY REGION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Health Authority</th>
<th>Family physicians who completed PMH Assessment (N)*</th>
<th>Family physicians (N)**</th>
<th>Completion rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>736</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraser</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>1,130</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver Coastal</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>1,072</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver Island</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,313</td>
<td>3,986</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRACTICE IN A TEAM-BASED CARE SETTING**

53% are sharing responsibility for managing patient care.

**UNDERSTANDING PATIENT PANELS**

52% place high importance on using their EMR to understand their patient panel.

**PHYSICIAN SATISFACTION**

26% are very satisfied with their overall experience with their profession.

**ATTACHMENT**

34% accepted most or all new patients within six months prior to completing the assessment.

**ACCESS**

46% offer services on weekends (Saturday or Sunday)

36% offer services on weekday evenings after 6pm

18% offer services at night between midnight and 8am

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