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## From the BCATPR office

BCATPR Executive has developed the communication and marketing strategies for 2007/08. **Communication Officer** will join the BCATPR to support the strategies. The person will be responsible for publishing the BCATPR newsletter and website as well as preparation of BCATPR news releases and briefing notes.

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**For more information, visit  
[www.BCATPR.ca](http://www.BCATPR.ca)**

## Annemarie received VCH Internal Innovation Fund

Confirmation has been received that the **Vancouver Coastal Health Internal Innovation Fund** will support Annemarie Kaan's project entitled: **The virtual Heart Function Clinic – Version 2** (\$20,000). These funds will be used to update and expand the current virtual heart function website based on the results of the nearly completed pilot study, adding capacity to it with a view to creating a "shared care" model incorporating the Heart Function Clinic, the Primary Care Practitioner and the patient using the site. This new system has the potential to incorporate any chronic disease and could be ultimately linked with the electronic medical record and further could be tailored for individual patients. The updated vHFC will serve as the platform for a randomized, controlled trial of the new system is planned for 2008.

## Scott presented at the Policy Round Lecture Series

Scott was invited to present at the **Policy Round Lecture Series hosted by the Strategic Policy & Research Knowledge Branch, the Ministry of Health** on October 12. Over 40 health policy makers from the MOH, PHSA, IHA, VCHA, FHA, and Health Canada attended the lecture. His presentation highlighted the BCATPR activities, followed by an open discussion on feasibility of implementation of Internet-based platforms for CVD management, strategies to engage 'less-motivated' patients, and impact of the platforms on human resources in the province. Discussion with the Interior Health Authority for establishing research partnership is scheduled in November as a result.

## BCATPR Presentations

### **The 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Successes and Failures in Telehealth, Brisbane, Australia, August 28, 2007**

#### **“The development and feasibility of a virtual heart failure clinic”**

Annemarie Kaan, Scott Lear, & Biljana Maric

**Purpose:** To explore the feasibility of an interactive, easy-to-use web-based system that provides a link between the patient and the health professional.

**Methods:** New Heart Function clinic patients were enrolled into a six-month study. Patients were identified according to their ability to use the Internet daily and whether they would be able to complete baseline and follow-up visits.

**Results:** So far, nine patients have completed the study. Physical function over the study period improved, as did quality of life. Patients expressed high levels of satisfaction with the tool.

**Discussion:** The system has shown to be safe and feasible when used with appropriate supports. The system is simple, cheap and has potential for use in a range of chronic illnesses.

### **Canadian Cardiovascular Congress 2007**

**Quebec City, Canada, October ... , 2007**

#### **“Penetration of the Internet in cardiac patients from diverse geographical areas”**

Scott A. Lear, Yuriko Araki, Biljana Maric, Annemarie Kaan, & Martha Mackay

**Methods:** Cardiac inpatients from a tertiary hospital and a northern regional hospital in British Columbia were invited to participate by a staff nurse. Those who could not speak English or who had mental impairment were excluded. Consenting patients were interviewed regarding their home Internet use and demographics.

**Results:** A total of 517 patients were approached and 294 (57%) completed the interview (228 and 66 from the tertiary and regional hospital, respectively). The average age was 64 years and the majority of participants were men (68%), of European ancestry (77%) and had some post-secondary education (57%). All geographic regions of British Columbia were represented in the sample, with 63% coming from outside of the Vancouver area. A total of 65% of patients reported using the Internet at home and 84% of these had a high-speed connection. Fifty-five percent reported using the Internet daily and another 23% used it more than once per week. Accessing health and medical information was reported by 70% of patients and ranked third behind email and general browsing. Of those without home Internet access (n=101); having no computer at home (36%) and having no interest (20%) were the primary reasons for not using the Internet. Those without home Internet access were more likely to be female, older and less educated than those without (p<0.01 for all).

**Conclusion:** These data indicate a high penetration of Internet use among cardiac patients, and their high desire to obtain health information this way. Research attention is urgently required to develop and evaluate Internet-based cardiac services delivery programs, so that the full potential of this medium can be realised.

## Research Updates

- **BCATPR Baseline Policy Study** (funded by MSFHR)

Data collection completed; Data analysis of the surveys, key informant interviews, and policy documents nearing completion

- **Virtual Heart Function Clinic (vHFC) Study** (funded by Astra-Zeneca)

All 20 patients recruited: 6 females, 14 males (mean age =62 years);

To date, 14 patients completed 6 month trial;

Anticipated completion in January 2008

- **Qualitative investigation of Internet-based technology for the management of CVD (QCVD) study** (funded by BCMSF & MSFHR)

43 interview participants have been recruited as of October 15: 8 physicians, 15 nurses, 8 allied health professionals, and 12 patients;

Anticipated completion of interviews in December 2007; Data analysis and knowledge dissemination will be undertaken in spring 2008

- **Virtual Cardiac Rehabilitation Program (vCRP) Study** (funded by Heart & Stroke Foundation of Yukon and BC, MSFHR, Pfizer)

Ethics certificates have been obtained from the Providence Health Care/UBC & SFU; Anticipated start in January 2008

- **New Study: Aboriginal Telehealth Study** (funded by BCATPR project fund)

Josee Lavoie will receive approximately \$15,000 to fund her project entitled: "Systematic review of published and grey literature evidence to inform the development of an analytical framework and the deployment of telehealth/e-health initiatives in First Nation reserves." This process will be overseen by an advisory committee composed of Josee Lavoie (UNBC), Jean Allbeury (BC First Nations Chiefs Health Committee), Lisa DaSilva (Carrier Sekani Family Services), Jan Tatlock (Carrier Sekani Family Services), Carrier Sekani Elder (TBD), Neil Hanlon (UNBC), and Dan Horvat (Northern Health Authority). The final draft framework will be work-shopped with members of the BC Telehealth Migration Specialists from the Mandated Aboriginal Health Authorities. This project will provide a solid framework for future BCATPR directions in Aboriginal populations and be completed around June 2008.