

ABOUT US: EVENTS, INITIATIVES, ACHIEVEMENTS



Working Together for Better Kidney Health

The BC Renal Agency believes in innovation — in using the latest research and the collective knowledge, creativity and ingenuity of the BC renal community (caregivers and patients alike) to develop new and better solutions to the challenges of chronic kidney disease.

Through a range of events and initiatives such as the examples highlighted below, BCPRA is improving early diagnosis and intervention, providing improved treatment options, and ensuring that the system of provincial renal care is financially sustainable. The result is that patients have access to the care they need, when and where they need it. For more information visit www.bcrenalagency.ca, or join us on Facebook and Twitter (see contact info below).

BC Kidney Days

Hosted by BCPRA and BC Transplant, this annual conference offers renal and kidney transplant professionals from across the province and throughout Canada an opportunity to network with their peers and keep up to date with the latest research, trends, clinical treatment and surgical breakthroughs, with the goal of improving treatment for people with kidney disease. Annual attendance exceeds 500 delegates.

Kidney Month and World Kidney Day

March is Kidney Health Month in Canada. Sponsored by The Kidney Foundation of Canada, this annual fundraising initiative involves thousands of volunteer canvassers going door-to-door in neighbourhoods across the country to raise money for patients and their families living with kidney disease. BCPRA is involved in media relations activities during Kidney Health Month to help raise awareness of kidney disease and promote good kidney health.

In 2006, the International Society of Nephrology and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations jointly launched World Kidney Day to increase awareness and draw attention to the urgent global need for early detection and prevention of this growing epidemic. World Kidney Day is held annually on the second Thursday of March. On this day, BCPRA joins colleagues around the world in efforts to raise awareness about one of the body's most vital organs.

Through a range of innovative events and initiatives, BCPRA is improving early diagnosis and intervention.

The Kidney Smart Campaign is an annual initiative of the BC Renal Agency which coincides with Kidney Month activities, and is designed to raise awareness about the importance of healthy eating to protect both our kidneys and heart.

The campaign takes place in March and encourages people to make Kidney Smart dietary choices. This campaign utilizes social media and promotional events around the lower mainland to engage the general public about the benefits of adopting a heart smart diet.

Lab Strategy

With early diagnosis, kidney disease can often be managed through diet and lifestyle adjustments

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that can delay and sometimes prevent the need for dialysis. With this in mind, an early diagnosis strategy was developed by BCPRA, the Ministry of Health, the BC Medical Association and laboratory physicians throughout the province.

Through this initiative, BC labs automatically report estimated glomerular filtration rates (eGFR) in addition to serum creatinine in the blood test results submitted to general practitioners and other doctors. Lab tests are a critical component of kidney care, as they trigger 75% of medical decisions; therefore inaccurate test results and interpretation lead to incorrect diagnoses and incorrect or lack of treatment.

Thanks in part to the lab strategy, and the ongoing work on standardization across the province's labs, the average level of kidney function for British Columbians diagnosed with kidney disease today is 15 per cent higher than it was in 2003.

The goal is to identify people at highest risk for kidney disease at an earlier stage through the first collaborative approach of its kind in North America.

Reduction in Dialysis Growth

In the late '90s, the number of patients who required dialysis was growing by 16 per cent per year. Thanks to early identification and intervention — two areas in which the BCPRA leads the country — the growth in BC's dialysis population is now 3 - 5% per year. A chronic kidney disease clinical practice guideline, physician education and the funding of pre-dialysis clinics across the province, in addition to the lab strategy described

above, account for this dramatic reduction. The achievement is all the more significant since the number of people diagnosed with early stage kidney disease has grown 13% per year since 2001.

Standards and Guidelines

Clinical Practice Guideline for Physicians

BCPRA was a partner in the development of a clinical practice guideline (Identification, Evaluation and Management of Patients with Chronic Kidney Disease) which is based on the best current scientific evidence and which dispels the common belief that little can be done to slow or prevent the onset of end-stage renal disease. The clinical guideline also includes patient flow sheets and a guide for patients on managing their health and accessing community-based resources.

Renal Program Guidelines

BCPRA has developed provincial renal program guidelines, which provide a methodology and set of principles for health authorities and institutions to follow in the management and ongoing development of care programs. Marking a national first, these guidelines have been formally endorsed by the BC Ministry of Health. The guidelines support equitable distribution of high quality renal care to patients across BC, and guide prioritization for new program development. This is critical in the context of increased requests for services in communities across BC and limited resources.

Vascular Access Standards

BC is the only province in Canada with provincial standards for vascular access creation, maintenance and repair.

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Vascular access refers to the surgical insertion of a fistula or graft to provide access to the bloodstream for dialysis. Many patients have repeated problems with their vascular access, placing additional demands on the already-stretched health system.

Other Guidelines

Other standards and guidelines developed by BCPRA include protocols for anemia management, peritoneal and independent hemodialysis guidelines, water quality clinical practice standards and guidelines, and intradialytic parenteral guidelines (IDPN).

BCPRA's patient-focused funding model is unique in Canada.

PROMIS Database

BCPRA has been praised by national reviewers for operating the only province-wide integrated registry for kidney disease patients (including transplant). PROMIS supports all aspects of renal care delivery and planning, and leads the country with respect to the use of data to develop evidence-based benchmarks.

Independent Dialysis

Research has shown that patients who manage their own dialysis care experience positive health and lifestyle benefits. BC leads the country with respect to rates of peritoneal dialysis — a home-based dialysis modality. A provincial Peritoneal Dialysis Committee, with leadership from BCPRA, is dedicated to developing standards of care specific to PD patients and achieving even higher rates of PD uptake.

“I’m impressed with the way BCPRA has taken a provincial approach; it pulls together experts from across BC for planning and strategy, data collection and evaluation through PROMIS, and development of standards and best practices.”

– Hospital Director

BC is also the only province in Canada with a provincially-coordinated independent hemodialysis program with local implementation. This groundbreaking program promotes optimal patient care and system sustainability, allowing patients with end-stage kidney disease to manage their hemodialysis in their own home (and in some cases, in facility settings).

Medication Reconciliation/Medication Safety

BCPRA and the health authority renal programs are breaking new ground in Canada by providing medication reconciliation for kidney patients across the province. Although “med rec” is now a requirement for hospital accreditation, and is expected to become standard practice for acute care patients across Canada, it has not been extended to chronic care outpatients anywhere else in the country. Renal patients, with their needs for multiple medications and frequent prescription changes, are at a higher risk than most patients for medication errors.

In addition to improving patient safety, med rec supports easier hospital admission and discharge,

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providing patients with up-to-date medication lists, and better drug-use evaluation at patient, prescriber and agency levels.

The med rec program has received a number of provincial and national awards.

Funding Model

BCPRA's patient-focused funding/resource management model is unique in Canada. This model provides a more accurate assessment of costs and enables flexible, patient-focused, multidisciplinary care based on patient needs.

Patient and Health Provider Resources

The agency website (www.bcrenalagency.ca) offers a broad range of information and resources, including medication information sheets and a series of online videos. Print materials and videos are also available for order (see the For Patients page at bcrenalagency.ca). Most of these materials are available in a range of languages; they are free to BC residents and renal programs.

Renal News

The BC Renal Agency's electronic newsletter, Renal News, provides a forum for knowledge sharing and promotion of innovative projects and practices across the BC renal network. This keeps members of the renal community up to date on plans and decisions leading to new developments in kidney care. To subscribe, go to www.bcrenalagency.ca and sign up at the bottom of the page. Or, click on About/News/Renal News.

“The stakeholders are the caregivers and because of that, the patients’ needs are put in the forefront.”

– Renal Manager