

Committee Update

Dr Ahmer Karimuddin was welcomed to his first committee meeting as the new Co-chair representing Doctors of BC. The committee also welcomed Dr Jason Kur to replace Dr Kathy Lee, who was thanked for years of service on SSC. The committee thanked Teresa Whitehouse for her valuable contribution on the SSC as a patient partner, who has decided to step down for personal reasons.

COVID-19 Updates

- The ministry’s PPE supply web portal has been received by doctors across the province
- Vaccination priority groups remain to be long term care residents, their staff, and acute care staff. Delays in shipment and spacing the dosages are topics of concern.
- The deadline for SSC’s COVID-19 Safety Grant was extended to end of January, however utilization remains lower than projected. As of mid-January 1,868 specialists have accessed the grant for a spend of \$1.86M.
- SSC staff will explore options for how to best use the remaining funds for other pandemic related support for specialists, and will bring it back to the committee for a decision.

Community-Based Specialist (CBS) survey outcomes

The outcomes of the fall survey that assessed community-based specialists’ needs, in which 392 physicians responded, was presented to the committee. The committee indicated a desire to provide opportunities to better include CBS within existing SSC initiatives. The CBS working group will bring back a more detailed plan to the committee at a future meeting.

SSC Spread Initiatives

Three options were presented to the committee for the provincial governance and oversight of SSC’s Spread initiative (including: i. the full SSC table ii. creating a new Spread Working Group, or iii. transitioning the existing PQIWG).

While many committee members supported the third option, consensus was not reached. Committee directed staff to continue consultation and bring back for decision to the February meeting.

SSC Initiatives Update:

Enhancing Access Initiative (EAI):

The Enhancing Access Initiative is starting its third cohort to support interested groups of specialists implement a “Single Entry Model” which is designed to support patient access to specialist services. Seven groups of specialists have been selected to participate in this cohort with specialties ranging from general surgery, gastroenterology, anesthesiology, general cardiology, obstetrics/gynecology, internal medicine/orthopedics and Ophthalmology. The budget specified for this new cohort is about \$900,000. Additionally, EAI is also undergoing an evaluation, the outcomes of which will be presented at a future SSC meeting.

UBC Sauder Physician Leadership:

In an effort to improve the relationship between hospital surgical staff and administrators, an opportunity is being explored with the UBC Sauder School of Business to conduct workshops to address site specific challenges. In these 90-minute workshops, dyad and triad teams consisting of surgeons, anesthesiologists, and administrators will come together in teams, enhance their knowledge their roles and seek solutions for clinical challenges in their sites. Interested committee members can contact SSC Staff Geoff Schierbeck.

Surgical Patient Optimization Collaborative (SPOC):

SPOC is now supporting 14 teams across the province, as opposed to the 16 original teams. Disruption in surgical delays, followed by the urgency of elective surgeries, caused two of the teams to drop. In addition, the end date for the collaborative is extended from September 2020 to May 2021 that may be further delayed in case of more disruptions in elective surgery.



The Specialist Services Committee (SSC) is one of four Joint Collaborative Committees representing a partnership of Doctors of BC and the government of BC. SSC aims to improve patient care by engaging physicians to:

- collaborate within the health system
- lead quality improvement initiatives
- deliver high quality services with SSC