



going coastal ...

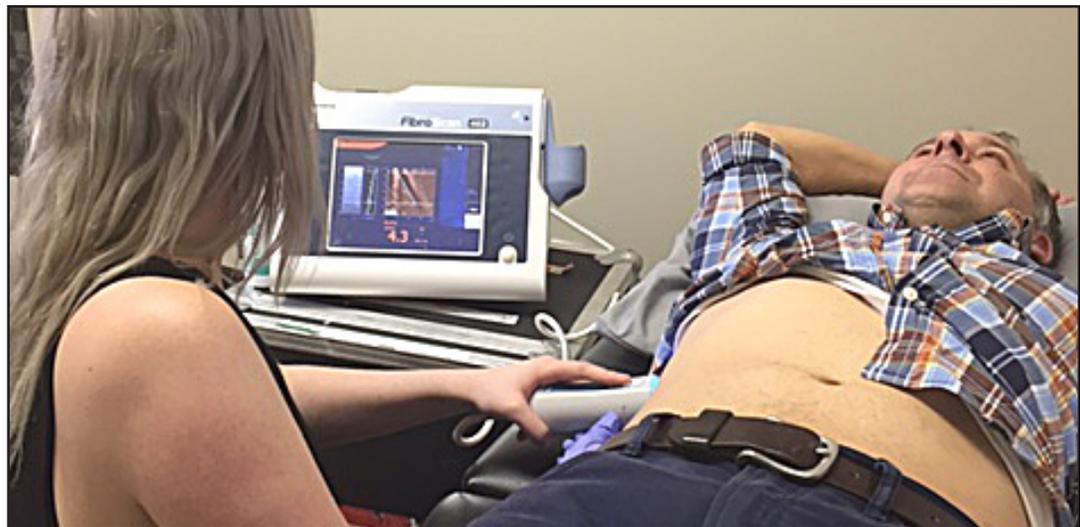
Helping Hep C Patients THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS TREATMENT

Powell River
Division of Family Practice
A GPSC Initiative

Summer 2015

Overall, 50–80% of people treated for Hepatitis C are cured. Patients with Hepatitis C who are interested in pursuing therapy require the Fibroscan test. It provides an estimate of fibrosis present within the liver. Fibroscanning is a non-invasive method for determining fibrosis by measuring the ‘stiffness’ of the liver through ultrasound elastography.

Transient elastography (Fibroscan) has been



The technician demonstrates the Fibroscan procedure on Guy Chartier, executive director of the Powell River Division.

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Dr. Sneeta Takhar

scientifically validated and Pharmacare accepts this assessment for authorizing the new HCV treatments that are available. “Cur-

rently, we are sending our patients down to Vancouver, where there are 2 centers offering this test; the wait list approximately 3 months” said Dr. Sneeta Takhar. In addition to a waiting list there is the expense for patients to travel to Vancouver for a 5 minute procedure.

Dr. Takhar approached the Division for support to identify all the patients that would benefit from this procedure. Dr. Jeff Lynskey and Dr. Bruce Hobson of the PRDoFP

board and Guy Chartier, executive director developed a plan to gather the data by mining the EMR’s (electronic medical records) in GP offices. 39 people were identified that would benefit from this procedure.

Dr. Takhar then presented a lecture on the recent changes in treatment (May 2015) to build awareness in the local medical community.

Sneeta approached Guy sometime in June, hoping to seek help in acquir-

ing approximately 30-40 patients infected with hepatitis C from various family doctor offices.

Bruce offered to help to gather the data. Together, Jeff and Bruce identified the Powell River patients that could benefit from Hep C treatment. Dr. Takhar, Dr. Hoffert and Margaret Burnett, MOA contacted these patients to advise them of the fibroscan procedure. All of the potential patients were contacted, all made an appointment —

This success story highlights the value of Powell River Division's inclusive membership

Guy Chartier
executive director

and all of them kept their appointment! The drug company Gilead Sciences provided fibroscanning service. "Fibroscans are a way to determine an individual's stage, or level of fibrosis and we felt that anyone with

Hepatitis C would require a fibroscan prior to initiating therapy", said Dr. Takhar. "By providing support to the internal medicine team, 39 Powell River patients got a procedure done very quickly and the process to assess them for treatment can begin".

The Internal Medicine Office offered their space and one of their Medical Office Assistants for the day. In addition, the MOA

managed the booking of all these patients. They scheduled bookings to start at 9 am and finish by 3 or 4 pm with 30 minutes for lunch. They managed to book 39 patients (6 per hour).

Fibroscans complete, the internist office is now in the process of getting these people registered for Hepatitis treatment.

"This success story highlights the value of Powell River Division's inclusive

membership with specialists integrated and connected with our division GPs", said Guy Chartier, executive director. It demonstrates our ability to respond to local challenges and find local solutions that benefit patients in our community".

Imagine what the alternative would have been – 39 people – each arranging transportation to Vancouver and then waiting for their 5 minute scan. ■

Meet the New Staff at the Division



Brendan Behan
Assistant Project Manager

Working in health care for almost 20 years, Brendan has a wide range of work experience including: Level 1 Trauma Emergency Department, University and Private Clinical Research facilities, Chronic Disease Management in Primary Care settings, and First Nations health. Born and raised in Powell River, Brendan is extremely happy to be back home with his wife Janelle and their two children, after travelling and working away for almost 10 years. If he's not at work he's most likely found on a bicycle or in a boat!



Christien Kaaij
Project Manager
A GP for Me and Shared Care

Christien is a facilitator, a passionate community developer, and a project manager. She has almost 20 years of experience managing small and large-scale projects for local government and non-profit organizations. Born in the Netherlands, she immigrated with her husband and two children to Powell River nine years ago. Christien has a BA in Human Kinetic Technology, PMP certificate in project management, and is currently enrolled at the University of Victoria completing a Masters in Community Development.



Cara Bratseth
Physician Support Coordinator

Cara is the Physician Support Coordinator for the *A GP for Me* and Shared Care initiatives at the Division. Her recent experience at the Vancouver Island Health Authority and the Ministry of Health included working collaboratively with physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals on health information management projects. She is looking forward to engaging with the community of physicians in Powell River and developing processes for the Division to effectively support their practices. As a new resident of Powell River, she is excited about exploring the beaches, lakes, and trails with her husband and three little ones.