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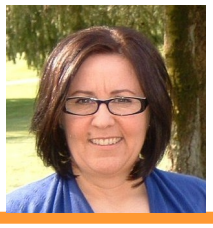
BCDHA OUTLOOK

British Columbia Dental Hygienists' Association



Chair's Message by Margit Strobl

"I can tell you that I have a huge appreciation of what BCDHA can and has done to move our profession forward in British Columbia. BCDHA is more than just member services."

Spring is here and in most areas of the province the flowers have begun to show themselves. Spring is also the time that BCDHA holds the Annual General Meeting (AGM). This year the venue was Abbotsford and understandably not all members were able to attend. In this issue I would like to share my Chair's remarks for all BCDHA members. Enjoy.

Hello everyone.

Welcome to the 48th Annual General Meeting of the British Columbia Dental Hygienists Association! We are so happy to be here in Abbotsford, BC and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for coming out to support your association. BCDHA is committed to linking with its members so 2 years ago it was decided that the AGM would travel around the province to allow members from all areas access and direct input into the business of BCDHA.

Each year at the AGM it is the Chair's role to make opening remarks. I had to spend some time thinking about what I wanted to speak to today. Then I remembered an experience that happened just this month at the Pacific Dental Conference. I am an educator and one of my former students and now a colleague came to talk to me after the CDHBC forum. As well as the usual conversation regarding how she was doing she told me that she had chosen not to become a member of CDHA (and of course by extension a member of BCDHA) because her liability insurance was less expensive at another organization.

But…. After hearing about how BCDHA is supporting its members with resources in order to prepare for the assessment tool for the Quality Assurance Program she told me she never realized how much BCDHA does for its members. Unfortunately this is not the only time I have heard this very same thing. So….that got me thinking about what I would like to speak to today and decided to start with a question.

What does it mean to be a member of BCDHA?

Well…. It means that not only are you a

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Mary Lou Walker

Recipient of the 2012 Barbara J. Heisterman Award

BCDHA is pleased to announce that Mary Lou Walker of Smithers, BC was selected as the recipient of the 2012 Barbara J Heisterman Award for Innovation and Commitment to Care.

Mary Lou worked as a Public Health Dental Hygienist for the Northern Health Authority (NHA) for many years. She became acutely aware of the extreme oral health needs of aboriginal children and the difficulty their families experience accessing preventive and restorative treatment.

After leaving NHA she worked tirelessly and with great passion to bring a Health Canada prevention program – the Children's Oral Health Initiative (COHI) – to British Columbia, and piloted it in the Smithers area in 2005. The pilot was a success and the program has been implemented in approximately 60 aboriginal communities in BC.

She has sole responsibility for all aspects of program delivery. The program initially was delivered by Dental Therapists, but to expand, Mary Lou engaged Health Authority Dental Hygienists and independent Dental Hygienists across the province.

The innovative COHI program supports oral care for a vulnerable population of First Nation's children age 0-7 in rural and remote communities with limited access to dental offices. Mary Lou's leadership role allows her to oversee and support Registered Dental Hygienists in building sustainable expertise within the community by training local people to

(Continued on page 2)

Margit Strobl (L) presenting award to Mary Lou Walker at the BCDHA Annual General Meeting March 31, 2012.

Barbara J. Heisterman Award

(Continued from page 1)

understand and promote good oral health habits, as well as to administer an organized preventive fluoride varnish program.

She is a consistent mentor and support to all of those working in the program. Her colleagues report that the program's success and expansion is due to her strong work ethic, professionalism and exceptional leadership skills. One dental hygiene co-worker stated, "She is a joy to work with. She inspires us daily with her attention to detail, problem solving abilities, forward thinking and ability to develop a collaborative, dedicated team across the province."

The impact of COHI on the oral health of aboriginal children will not be known or seen for many years but there is an increasing awareness in aboriginal communities of the effect oral health has on overall health and the role community members and programs play in helping children and families achieve better oral health. Mary Lou's vision and commitment has been instrumental in creating this awareness.

Her tireless efforts to improve the oral and overall health of the dentally underserved in First Nations communities and her ongoing encouragement for both personal and professional development are testimony to her commitment to the greater good.

Mary Lou's goal when she went into dental hygiene at the age of 33 was to have a career in health services that would be valued in Northern BC. She graduated from Vancouver Community College with her diploma at age 35, in 1990. She went on to complete her Bachelor of Dental Science from UBC in 1999, studying part-time, predominantly by distance study, for 6 years. At that time the program was still a 2 year degree completion program, with no on-line courses offered.

Mary Lou says, "The profession of dental hygiene has been and continues to be very rewarding for me. It has allowed me to follow my own path, taking advantage of opportunities as they have presented themselves, and to go in directions I never would have dreamed possible when I first completed my education. In addition, I have met a myriad of people, dental hygienists and otherwise, who have profoundly affected and enriched my life, and I cannot imagine my life without them."

COUNSELLING SERVICES PROGRAM FOR DENTAL HYGIENISTS

BCDHA

The former Dental Hygiene Assistance Program has a new name to more accurately reflect the purpose of the Program and the services provided. This BCDHA sponsored program provides free short-term counselling services for dental hygienists, dental hygiene students and their immediate family members.

Strict confidentiality is respected and names of individuals using this service are not divulged to anyone. The mandate of this Program is to help dental hygienists in need.

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*** London Eye Centre is not affliated with the BCDHA. BCDHA encourages all members to conduct their own research before proceeding with any medical procedures.**

Chair's Message (Continued from page 1)

member of BCDHA but CDHA as well and yes, you do get your liability insurance through them which is convenient but it also means that your voice is not only heard provincially but nationally as well.

*Had you asked **me** what being a member of BCDHA meant 10 years ago or even 8 years ago I would have said the same thing as my colleague at the PDC. Today however, I can tell you that I have a huge appreciation of what BCDHA can and has done to move our profession forward in British Columbia. BCDHA is more than just member services. Yes, we provide things like information about the dental hygiene profession in BC and resources such as professional development courses or position statements on primary health care and education for example but I think that **"advocacy"** is what comes to my mind now when I think of what being a member of BCDHA means. According to Free Dictionary.com, advocacy is:*

The act of pleading or arguing in favor of something, such as a cause, idea, or policy; active support.

This is what BCDHA does. We are here to actively support you, our members and in referring to our Ends (vision) we are also here to support the public in our work as health care professionals. Indeed, all dental hygienists in BC benefit from what BCDHA is able to and has accomplished. For example, in the past we have successfully argued that dental hygienists should have their own billing numbers and that dental insurance companies recognize and directly compensate them for services rendered. We have lobbied the government and insurance providers for years to allow us to serve the public, and allow access to underserved populations. We have gone from a situation where direct payment to dental hygienists from an insurance company was the exception to the rule … to a situation where it is now the rule. There are very few insurance companies left that do NOT pay directly to RDHs. Another example is the counseling service offered through BCDHA. This service has been invaluable to a number of dental hygienists throughout the years.

We understand that the needs of each of you are different and different member services will interest you … so to that end we work hard to provide something for everyone. But, as I mentioned earlier, BCDHA does more than provide member services. Let's explore what advocacy looks like, or what BCDHA wants it to look like. Advocacy is:

- Collaborating on national competencies to ensure an educational standard across Canada.

- BCDHA representing our profession to other organizations and health professions. Dental hygienists are becoming a well-recognized profession and our presence is being requested on interdisciplinary teams and public health policy organizations. This is important progress.

- Dental hygienists are becoming recognized by the public as primary health care providers.

- Lobbying the government for changes to legislation to allow dental hygienists better access to underserved populations by practicing in alternative settings.

- BCDHA setting direction for the profession, and creating the plan of how to get there.

- Linking with stakeholders like educators, students, grass roots dental hygienists to get input that will guide BCDHA's direction.

- Supporting research that lends credibility to dental hygiene as a profession.

I could go on BUT…….

I want to leave you with this…..

What does being a member of BCDHA mean to you?

Being a member of BCDHA might mean that you have questions about starting an independent practice and don't know where to start. It may mean that you have a unique business idea and want some resources. It may mean that you are concerned about the availability of employment in BC and want some information on how to market your skills. It may mean you think that dental hygienists in BC should have no barriers to practice and be able to access underserved populations more readily. It may mean that you want to be able to have input into where your profession goes and expanded duties to help you get there.

The questions may be numerous and personal to you but I can tell you that being a member of BCDHA is important because you will have the opportunity to have them answered or addressed. You will have an entire organization (be it national and/or provincial) and your profession working on your behalf. What is insurmountable to an individual becomes possible as a profession. Indeed, that is how the profession of dental hygiene in BC became so advanced; it was because of great ideas, questions, and desires posed by you, our individual members.

So, really it is not BCDHA that needs to take a bow for everything it has achieved …. Each of you who choose to be a member of your professional association should be the ones to be congratulated. I know that I may be preaching to the converted here because your presence is a sign to me that you care enough about our profession to take time out of your life to attend today.

But…. there is still more work to be done. We need your support in order to have a strong voice in government, with dentistry and the public. We need to increase our visibility and let these individuals know that dental hygienists can make an incredible difference. We cannot move forward without you. We need your support as a member of both CDHA and BCDHA AND we need you, the members to be ambassadors for the associations. We are asking you to talk to your colleagues. Ask them the question,

"What does being a member of BCDHA mean to you?"

BCDHA

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SEND US YOUR THOUGHTS

Story ideas and letters are welcome. Submissions should not exceed 500 words and be on topics of interest to your colleagues or provide food for thought. Submissions are published subject to Editorial Board approval and space.

Email your submission to: outlook@bcdha.bc.ca

Happenings at the BCDHA Annual General Meeting

Minister of Health Announces Changes to the 365 Day Rule by Margit Strobl, Chair BCDHA

The British Columbia Dental Hygienists' Association held the 48th Annual General Meeting in Abbotsford, BC on March 30th, 2012 with approximately ninety dental hygienists in attendance.

This year's AGM welcomed special guest Minister of Health, Hon. Mike de Jong who announced that changes to the 365 Day Rule would be forthcoming on July 3, 2012. These changes will allow qualified dental hygienists to practice exempt from the 365 day rule. This puts the dental hygiene profession in British Columbia in the unique situation of having the opportunity to provide dental hygiene services in a variety of alternate practice settings. Dental hygienists meeting the established criteria will be able to apply to the CDHBC for registration in this 365 exempt category.

In order to be considered for exemption, the dental hygienist must hold a Dental Hygiene Degree or demonstrate the following abilities at the degree level. These abilities will be assessed by an agency approved by the College of Dental Hygienists of BC:

- ability to safely and effectively assess, diagnose, plan, implement and evaluate dental hygiene care for clients with complex needs or disabling conditions;

- ability to work effectively as a member of an inter-professional health care team;

- ability to apply the standards of infection control and safe practice in alternative practice settings;

- ability to make appropriate and timely referrals through the identification of abnormalities, conditions and circumstances which are outside the scope of dental hygiene practice or limit the registrant's ability to provide safe dental hygiene care.

In addition to the education requirements, dental hygienists applying for exemption must have:

- 3500 clinical practice hours in the previous 5 years, and

- Current CPR certification

Dental hygienists with a current Residential Care Registration (RCR) will be grandfathered into this new category of registration. The College of Dental Hygienists of BC will be releasing additional information shortly regarding the "365 Exempt" category of registration.

In addition to the Minister's special announcement, the BCDHA Board of Directors presented the members with an update on the Quality Assurance Program (QAP) being implemented by the College of Dental Hygienists of BC, a synopsis of dental hygiene education across Canada and the impact the new 365 exemption category will have on human resources and new practice opportunities in British Columbia.

Outgoing board members Dianne Gallagher (Dental Hygiene Educator's representative), Silvio Lorusso (Fraser Valley), Arlynn Brodie (CDHA representative) and Mandy Hayre (Upper Island) were honoured for their hard work and dedication to BCDHA. We were pleased to welcome new board members Brenda Currie (Fraser Valley) and Brenda Morris (Upper Island). Mandy Hayre will now serve as the Dental Hygiene Educator's representative. The Officers for this year are Margit Strobl (Northern BC), Chair and Wendy Kelly (Interior), Vice Chair.

It was an interactive and energizing meeting! Thank you to the many dental hygienists who shared in the excitement of the day. Watch for details regarding the location of next year's AGM. We hope you will join us.

Check out more photos from the AGM on BCDHA's Facebook page!

Arlynn Brodie receives Distinguished Service Award from Margit Strobl, Chair

Silvio Lorusso receives Distinguished Service Award from Margit Strobl, Chair

NATIONAL DENTAL HYGIENISTS WEEK™ ACTIVITIES

The students at the Vancouver College of Dental Hygiene Inc. (VCDH) were all accessorized in dazzling *dental hygiene* purple for National Dental Hygienists Week™ to celebrate the diversity and the perseverance of the dental hygiene profession.

Students and faculty of the VCDH recognize how dental hygienists are key players in the delivery and the sustainability of primary oral health care. In the spirit of oral health promotion and dental hygiene appreciation, students were asked to develop a slogan that would bring awareness of our profession to the public domain. The winning slogan is displayed in the VCDH clinic and will also be distributed to community placements during Oral Health Month and beyond.

Check out BCDHA's Facebook page for more photos.

Are you a CNC Dental Hygiene graduate? Are you a current or former member of CNC Dental Hygiene faculty?

Join us at CNC in Prince George during September 6 to 9, 2012 to celebrate 25 years of the Dental Hygiene Program!

Thursday September 6 - *Trade Show* in evening*

Friday September 7 - *Opportunity for classes to arrange their own reunion activities. Golf Tournament**

Saturday September 8 - *Continuing Education Program*. "Memory Lane" Wine and appies 4pm to 6pm (preregister online at www.cnc.bc.ca)*

Sunday September 9 - *Opportunity for classes to arrange their own reunion activities. Continuing Education Program**

Keep in touch for more information. Check www.cnc.bc.ca and watch for advertisements in BCDHA and CDHBC newsletters.

Anniversary sponsored by The Northern British Columbia Dental Hygienists Society and College of New Caledonia, in conjunction with PG Monster Weekend sponsored by Patterson Dental*

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Registered Organ Donation: A Social Responsibility

by Mary Ellen Breckenridge Dip. DH, RDH

Josh Groben singing "You Raise Me Up" at The 25th, David Foster Foundation, Miracle Concert.

Are you a Registered Organ Donor? Eighty five percent of Canadians polled agreed that this program is valuable, yet only a mere fourteen percent are currently registered. Three hundred and sixty three Canadians died last year while waiting for a donor organ. Can you see, how we, as dental hygienists could significantly contribute to increasing the number of donor registrants in BC, which would result in fewer deaths each year?

When updating the medical history, simply ask your patient if they are a registered donor. It is interesting to see how many patients value this social cause.

Recently I met with fourteen time, Grammy award winning, professional song writer and producer David Foster, who inspired me with his philanthropy work. Above all his music achievements, the legacy David wants to be most remembered for, is the work his foundation does to support families with children in need of major organ transplants. The 25th, David Foster Foundation, Miracle Concert, hosted in Victoria, (David's home town) raised 4.7 million dollars on the May 24th weekend this year.

At this media event, my fifteen year old son, Tyrus who lives with Cystic Fibrosis (CF), was invited to speak out about his disease. This was his first public appearance to talk about what his life is like living with a condition that threatens the health of his lungs. Even though Tyrus is committed to living a healthy lifestyle, there is no guarantee that one day he may not need a lung transplant to help him breath.

Reflecting on this event, I thought what a privilege it is to be a dental hygienist with professional status. Professional status grants us many advantages in society. For example, hygienists enjoy considerable social prestige, strong financial rewards, and a high degree of autonomy and we have the privilege of self-regulation. In return for professional status and these various privileges, we as professionals owe a high degree of loyalty to society that grants us this autonomy. Our unwritten "social contract" implies that professionalism consists of not just technical expertise, but also a set of special ethical and social obligations.

As dental hygienists we not only possess an esoteric, theoretical knowledge base and a set of technical skills that help obtain, support and maintain society's health, but also, we perform tasks that are considered socially valuable. That is, the services rendered are valuable not just to individuals, but society as a whole. It can also be stated that we have a responsibility to the public. As, for example, in our code of ethics that indicates the fact that we have a duty to the health and safety of the public.

Presenting this issue to your patients would demonstrate that you not only care about them but that you care about society as well. By working together, we as a profession have great potential to help improve the lives of Canadians. If becoming a donor matches your personal values, become a donor today! When reviewing your patient's medical history, ask if they are a registered organ donor. You may even include it on the medical history form in your office. Now you can just go online and put in you medical number to register.

Learn about the David Foster Foundation's "Days In Wait", visit: http://daysinwait.com/

How to become a donor visit: https://transplant.bc.ca/OnlineReg/bcts.asp

Dental Hygiene Job Market and Employment Survey – 2011

BC Results Show Wages Remain Stable

In December 2011, the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association undertook a national job market and employment survey. Over 4500 Dental Hygienists across Canada took part in the online survey. CDHA has since published the national results and this report can be viewed on the CDHA website (www.cdha.ca).

In conjunction with CDHA, BCDHA has contracted additional analysis on the data to produce a report that will give our members a more specific snapshot of the current situation in BC. Enclosed with this issue of OUTLOOK you will find a copy of the Executive Summary of the BC report.

Wages remain fairly stable around the province, particularly for experienced dental hygienists. With the increase in the number of available dental hygienists in the province there is evidence of a market correction taking place, in that those with less experience are reporting slightly lower wages than those with more experience. In previous years when dental hygienists were in extreme demand, there was less difference in the wages reported based on experience.

The enclosed report is provided for your information and to assist our members in negotiating appropriate wages and benefits in their work place. BCDHA thanks the more than 800 British Columbia Dental Hygienists who took part in the national survey.

Snapshot on the Board

Margaret Shemilt, RDH
Victoria Regional Director

I am a graduate of the U.B.C. Dental Hygiene Diploma Program of 1983.

After graduation I left Nanaimo and moved to Victoria where I have lived ever since. My career has always been in private practice and I have been with my current employer for the past 26 years.

I have been involved with B.C.D.H.A at both the local and provincial levels for most of my career and have learned an enormous amount, met many wonderful fellow dental hygienists and had a lot of fun in the process.

I am currently in my last of 8 years as the Victoria Region Director to the B.C.D.H.A. Board. I will be sad to leave the Board but I will take away many great memories, wonderful friendships, and a much greater appreciation for the hard work that is done by the Board members, the Executive Director, Cindy Fletcher, and the staff of B.C.D.H.A.

Celine from Charlie Lake Elementary received the BCDHA award for her project titled "Orthodontics Hyrax: a rapid palatal expander". The award was presented by BCDHA member Tammy Gulevich.

BCDHA Grant Funds

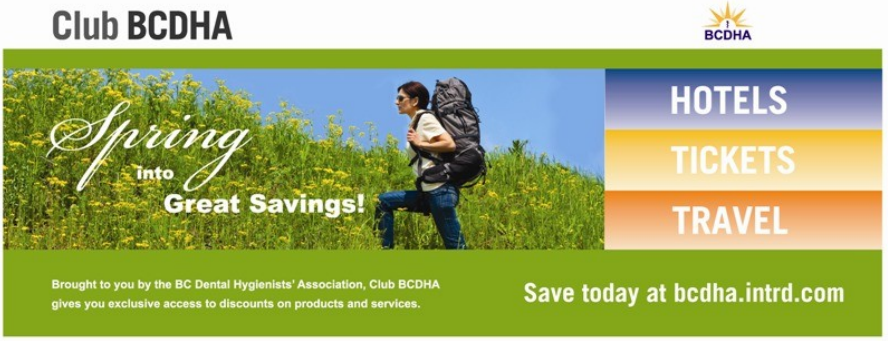
Supporting our Members and Their Communities Around the Province

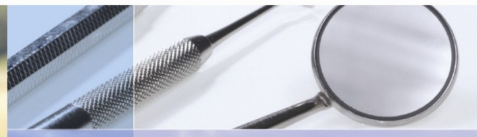
In 2008, Fort St. John resident and BCDHA member Tammy Gulevich applied to BCDHA for grant funds to establish an award for the Northern BC Regional Science Fair. This annual event attracts more than 250 students from grades 4 to 10, and Tammy saw this as an opportunity to encourage students to learn more about oral health.

For the past four years Tammy has coordinated this project and has been on hand to personally present the award and $50 prize to the student who has been judged to have the best project related to oral health.

In her application, Tammy stated, "The BC Science Fairs across BC enable young students to showcase their efforts in reaching a high level of achievement in Science. I believe this would be a great way to increase our identity in the community as well as encouraging the pursuit of the science in the youth of Northern BC."

BCDHA is pleased to have the opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of students who are exploring the area of oral health. Thank you, Tammy, for your ongoing commitment to your local community and to the dental hygiene profession.





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