



BRITISH COLUMBIA
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“R₃ in care of vulnerable and marginalized populations”

H₂SUM

An Integrated HIV, Viral Hepatitis, and Mental Health and Addictions Preceptorship Program

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Outline:

HIV and Viral Hepatitis are important clinical conditions seen across BC. Many clients dealing with chronic viral infections face various physical and social obstacles to care, in addition to the stigma that accompanies those infections. As such, they can become more marginalized and vulnerable. This is further exacerbated by potential co-morbid substance use disorders and complex mental health issues. An Individual's background and cultural context can also be linked to barriers in obtaining positive outcomes (for example: sexual orientation and gender identity, Indigenous status or racialized populations and, sex and gender-based issues.). Providing care for such clients is complex, as treatments for: HIV, Viral Hepatitis, Substance Use Disorders and Mental Health conditions, are in constant evolution. For these reasons, many family physicians feel ill equipped to care for marginalized populations without further training or experience.

The burdens of viral hepatitis and the opioid crisis are challenging public health issues in both the provincial and national contexts. However, over the years, there have been positive gains made when addressing the need of vulnerable populations in the HIV epidemic. These gains can be translated to these other conditions. A coordinated approach to care from health care providers experienced in the medical management of HIV, viral hepatitis, addiction, mental health, and associated comorbidities is necessary. This approach will work to engage and retain these populations in care, while also providing a compassionate and culturally appropriate environment.

We are proposing to develop an integrated R3 preceptorship program that will enhance the skills of family physicians in the areas of addiction medicine, HIV, Hepatitis C, and mental health. This will provide a much-needed comprehensive approach to the care of vulnerable and marginalized people across the province and equip family physicians with the tools they need to comfortably manage the needs of complex patients.

There is a significant amount of expertise in Province Health Care (PHC), Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and The BC Centre of Excellence in HIV/Aids (BC-CfE) with regards to management of those conditions. The John Ruedy Immunodeficiency Clinic (JRC) offers comprehensive interdisciplinary care to HIV infected patients with integrated mental health, substance use and Hepatitis C care. The Hope to Health Clinic in the Downtown Eastside (DTES) serves a similar population with a similar care model but with a higher prevalence of Hepatitis C and Substance Use Disorder. These two clinics will act as the anchors for family practice care throughout the R3 training program that we propose.

In addition, there is access to HIV specialist clinics, Infectious Diseases (ID) specialists and other HIV related co-morbidity clinics at St. Paul's Hospital (SPH). The Urban Health ward (also located at SPH) is an inpatient site for patients with complex medical issues including addictions, HIV and other infectious diseases.

Furthermore, VCH provide community-based clinics, run by family physician with programs on substance use disorders, Hepatitis C treatment and HIV and STI's prevention. This includes the DTES Connections Clinic, the Inner City CHC primary care clinics, Vancouver Detox and Insite. VCH also operates acute and community based mental health care services where the continuum of mental health care is available. Additional training options are available across PHC and VCH allowing trainees to tailor their training to their specific needs and interests.

This program will be developed as a partnership between the BC-CfE and the VCH – Vancouver Department of Family and Community Practice and supported by the UBC Enhanced Skills Program.

Admissions:

Eligibility requirements will be as per the UBC Enhanced Skills Program requirements.

Main Objectives:

- To obtain knowledge and experience in the prevention, diagnosis, management, and treatment of HIV-positive patients. This includes the management of common antiretroviral treatments toxicities and treatment failures, and the management of Pre and Post exposure prophylaxis to HIV.
- To obtain knowledge in the diagnosis and treatment of Hepatitis B and C infections. Additionally, to learn common treatment complications and potential drug interactions for viral hepatitis.

- To become familiar with substance use disorders and its management, including opioid use disorder treatment options and harm reduction strategies.
- To be able to manage common psychiatric conditions in an outpatient setting.
- To be able to develop comprehensive primary care and treatment strategies for marginalized patients with complex comorbidities in a compassionate and culturally sensitive environment.

Clinical Activities:

Successful applicants of this category 2 program will be able to participate in the following clinical activities (listed below). As this training is only available for 3 months, the selection of clinical placements will be done based on the resident objectives and clinic schedules/availability.

- JRC primary care and specialist clinics in HIV/AIDS. This will include elective placements HIV specialist clinics, outpatient pharmacy, and other specialty clinics (e.g. Infectious Diseases, Hepatitis clinics, Dermatology, Endocrinology, Nephrology, Anal Dysplasia, etc.).
 - The principle activities will involve managing patients with new HIV diagnoses, monitoring the use of antiretroviral therapy and their toxicities, and developed a primary care plan.
 - Management of Pre and post exposure prophylaxis to HIV
- Placement in a series of outpatient/inpatient services, which will include:
 - Rotation at the Urban Heath ward at SPH
 - Rotation at Oak Tree Clinic, where trainees will be exposed to the care of HIV positive women and children (located at BC Women’s Hospital & Health Centre).
 - Placement in the Gender Dysphoria Clinic at Three Bridges Clinic
 - Placement in the Hope to Health Clinic in DTES and other VCH urban clinics (e.g. Three Bridges, Native Health Clinic, etc.), where trainees will also be exposed to the management of Hepatitis C and transgender health.
 - Placements in out-patient psychiatric urban clinics
 - Placements in the DTES connections clinic, Vancouver Detox, Insite and other addictions treatment clinics.

Academic Activities: Trainees will be encouraged to present and discuss relevant articles in journal clubs and attend regular academic activities organized by the BC-CfE educational department or other related CME events.

Contact:

Please contact education@bccfe.ca for more information.