

## GPSC Information Sharing Task Group

### FACT SHEET

September 2019

#### Information Sharing within Primary Care Networks (PCNs)

Safe and secure patient information sharing within the Primary Care Networks (PCNs) is integral for providing direct care to patients and to the planning, implementation, evaluation and quality improvement of service delivery within PCNs.

While information sharing for providing direct patient care is already possible (and encouraged) under existing legislature, an Information Sharing Agreement (ISA) is required to allow for the sharing of information for planning, evaluation, and quality improvement within a PCN.

The PCN ISA is currently being developed by the General Practice Services Committee (GPSC) Information Sharing Task Group—one of several groups created by the GPSC to focus on key areas in PCN implementation. A large part of this work is engaging with communities, physicians and other practitioners, health authorities and other partners to gain feedback and create opportunities for dialogue around information sharing.

#### Background

In BC, there are multiple pieces of legislation that guide privacy and security of personal information. The two principal pieces of legislation that guide sharing of patient information in a PCN setting are [PIPA](#), which applies to private practices, and [FIPPA](#), which applies to public bodies such as the Ministry and the health authorities. A key difference between the two relates to patient consent for sharing identifiable patient information. While information can flow between the two for direct patient care, an Information Sharing Agreement is required to create the “legal authority” necessary to share information for secondary use, such as quality improvement, program planning and program evaluation.

#### Who is the Information Sharing Task Group?

The task group comprises members representing community physicians, nurse practitioners, allied health, Divisions of Family Practice, Doctors of BC, Ministry of Health, and Health Authority partners. The group reports and makes recommendations to the GPSC, a joint collaborative between the Doctors of BC and the Ministry of Health. The group is working closely with the GPSC Team Based Care Working Group to ensure that we are aligning our approaches and supporting teams to work collaboratively in the new PCNs.

It is a time-limited group, responsible for creating the agreement required to support information sharing within the PCNs. Please refer to the task group's [terms of reference](#) for a full breakdown of membership.

### What is the scope of the group?

Our scope is not technical in nature – many partners across BC are looking at gaps in interoperability and using technology solutions to enable information sharing within the PCN. Neither is our primary focus cultural change—that is the realm of the Team Based Care Working Group. While we are aligned with these groups, and may have some minor overlap, our focus is on the development of the legal agreement and complimentary resources, recommendations on documentation, and engagement of the PCN partners in the process.

### Get Involved – join one of our engagement sessions!

The task group is holding a two-part webinar series in September and early October to provide information on the work underway and to solicit feedback from PCN stakeholders. To see upcoming dates and to register for one of the information session webinars, please [click here](#).

### We are already implementing our PCN – what do we need to know right now?

The task group aims to have an ISA ready to be used in PCNs by November 2019. We are aware that some communities may already be creating or have an information sharing agreement for their PCNs. If you are in the process of creating an agreement, please reach out to one of our members or [email us](#) and we can provide advice or guidance. If you already have an agreement in place, please feel free to share it with us so we can all learn from one another.

### Where can I find more information and resources?

In addition to the ISA, the group is crafting an **Information Sharing Toolkit** to help support PCN partners as they begin implementation. This will include frequently asked questions and templates for use. All information sharing resources will be posted on the [PCN Toolkit site](#).

Please check back regularly for updates. If you have questions or comments, you can also send them directly to [gpscinfosharing@doctorsofbc.ca](mailto:gpscinfosharing@doctorsofbc.ca) or reach out to one of the members of the Task Group.

*For distribution. Please feel free to share this introductory document and resources widely within your network. This document and other resources are also available on the [PCN Toolkit site](#). Thank you.*