HAMAC Highlights: 
Notes from the NSHA Medical Advisory Committee

JANUARY 2018

“ The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.” ~ George Bernard Shaw

SAVE THE DATE! NSHA Physician Leadership Retreat May 10th and 11th, 2018

Northern Zone Tour: February 13/14, 2018

HA-MAC Membership:
Dr. Lynne Harrigan, VP Medicine (Chair); Colin Stevenson, VP Quality, System Performance and Transformation; Janet Knox, President and CEO; Dr. Nicole Boutilier, Executive Medical Director, Northern Zone; Dr. Nina Makkar, Family Practice, Truro; Dr. Pippa Moss, Psychiatry Tatamagouche; Dr. Warren Wilkes, Executive Medical Director, Eastern Zone; Dr. Patty Menard, Family Practice, Antigonish; Dr. Mark Taylor, Executive Medical Director, Central Zone; Dr. Lynn Johnston, Internal Medicine/Infectious Disease, Central Zone; Dr. Maria Alexiadis, Family Practice, Central Zone; Dr. Alenia Kysela, Executive Medical Director, Western Zone; Dr. Bruce Palmer, Urologist, Western Zone; Dr. Ivoe Brodarec, Family Practice, Yarmouth; Dr. Darrell White, Senior Associate Dean of Medicine, Dalhousie University, Dr. Gerard Corsten, Acting VP Medicine, IWK

- There are two new members of HAMAC: Dr. Maria Alexiadis, Family Practice, Central Zone and Dr. Pippa Moss, Psychiatrist, Northern Zone. Many thanks to Dr. Rick Gibson and Dr. Dan Petrie for their work on the committee.
- There continues to be a challenge in keeping physicians up to date with accurate information. There are a number of communication tools being used (VP Medicine Videos and Twitter account, DocTalk Newsletter, HAMAC Highlights); however, key messages are not always making it out to everyone. A few suggestions came forward such as having very succinct messages sent out more frequently, and also profiling physicians willing to share their stories. Another idea was to have an NSHA doctor-specific app where information can be readily accessed. For physicians who have ideas, questions or need assistance navigating through the system, a Physician Information Line has been set up through the Medical Affairs office: 1-833-876-1724.
- Dr. Risk Kronfl, Chair of the Drugs and Therapeutics Committee along with Nancy McLaughlin, Director of Pharmacy Services for Western Zone and Glenn Cox Senior Director for provincial Pharmacy Services attended to provide an update. There was discussion of the plan to create a Pre-Printed Orders (PPOs) Sub-Committee as per Accreditation requirements, whose task it will be to review and update PPOs around the province. There is concern about the potential for out-of-date PPOs being used and the need to have one accessible master version. The purpose of a PPO versus a Standardized Order Set was also discussed. A PPO’s mandate is to facilitate the current process whereas Standardized Order Sets set the standard of care and usually require some degree of education beyond the form itself. A small sub-group of HAMAC was struck to work with the Drugs and Therapeutics Committee to make recommendations around improvements to submission and review processes and communication.
- Medical Affairs is working with government to purchase an information system for tracking physician vacancies, recruitment, retirements and privileging processes. Having one unified provincial information system for Medical Affairs has been identified as a priority.
- Planning is underway regarding implementation of a provincial physician performance assessment system which would include a 360 multi-source feedback component developed by the Medical Council of Canada. Developing a standardized provincial process for physician performance assessment has only been attempted by one other province to date (Alberta) and consists of two main components: (1) annual verification of meeting minimum requirements for medical appointment and privileging (i.e. valid practice permit, proof of liability insurance) and (2) a periodic review that requires medical staff members to meet with their Department Head to review professional performance, identify professional development goals, discuss department function relative to their position and update actions arising from previous reviews. The rate-limiting step is the cost of the program. Discussions have taken place with the IWK and Dalhousie University to determine how best to finance this quality assurance initiative.
- Western Zone Update: Anesthesia pressures at the South Shore and Yarmouth regional hospitals • The hospitalist situation at Valley Regional Hospital is slowly improving with the new payment agreement •
- Eastern Zone Update: Patient flow and anesthesia pressures continue • There have been a number of family physician site visits and some encouraging specialty physician visits • Dr. Chris Milburn will be the new Department Head of Emergency Medicine • Family Practice Network leads are going to temporarily co-lead following the departure of Dr. Patty Menard •
- Northern Zone Update: Also dealing with patient flow issues and pressures in Anesthesia • Anticipating a busy flu season • Planning for the North Nova Residency program continues with interviews for the program director happening soon •
- Central Zone Update: So far keeping ahead with Emergency services with no cancellations to date • Two new department heads are joining in April: Radiation/Oncology and Critical Care • A new Chief of Urology should be announced very soon • Kudos to the Dartmouth General Hospital Inpatient Pressure Ulcer Team on having their initiative accepted as a leading practice with Health Standards Organization (HSO), an affiliate organization to Accreditation Canada •