

British Columbia

Ankylosing Spondylitis Association of British Columbia (ASABC)

Founded in 1984

- **Contact:** Anne Riddick, 15273 24th Ave # 3, Surrey, B.C. Canada V4A 2H9
 - **E-mail:** ariddick@shaw.ca
 - **President:** Don BINDON, (don_bindon@telus.net)
 - **Secretary:** Anne RIDDICK, Surrey
 - **Membership:** Jan 1st, 2009 -72 paying members, additional members on social assistance
 - **Local branches:** no exercise groups
 - **Newsletter:** "TalkBack"
 - **Important events in 2008:**
 - Educational meetings with guest speakers are held 4 times per year at Vancouver General Hospital.
 - Write-up of the meetings are published in "Backbone".
 - 2008: Educational seminars planned for March 10 in Prince George and for summer/fall in the Kootney Region of BC
 - **Membership fee:** FREE
 - **Comments:** ASABC is not registered as a charity. Tax deductible donations can be made payable to The Arthritis Society, B.C. & Yukon Division, 895 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1L7 and "earmarked" for the ASABC.
-

News from British Columbia

Annual General Meeting, November 18th. 2008

The Ankylosing Spondylitis Association of British Columbia, now a Chapter of the Canadian Spondylitis Association, held its Annual General Meeting, November 18th. 2008. An election of officers was held and the existing board was reelected with the exception of ASABC's Treasurer. Don Gray was unable to continue on as Treasurer due to ill health. We thanked him for his many years of volunteering in this position and welcomed our new Treasurer, Aimee Bindon. Our current executive includes: Ex-officio members Dr. Kam Shojania, Medical Director, Bruce Clark, PT, Medical Advisor, Don Bindon, president, Aimee Bindon, treasurer, Anne Riddick, secretary, Martin Gregg, member-at-large and Brian Smith, member-at-large.

Health Professional Education Project

Following the AGM our guest speaker, Stacey Creak, Project Coordinator, Division of Health Care Communication, College of Health Disciplines, UBC spoke about the University of British Columbia Community Partnership for Health Professional Education project. The project began when the Division of Health Care Communication held the seminal 1st International Conference on "Where's the Patient's Voice in Health Professional Education?" in November 2005 that brought together about 240 community members, educators, researchers, administrators and students to share experiences and ideas. Following this conference, a group of UBC participants

and organizers began to investigate a teaching model that would allow for increased community engagement in teaching, leading and planning of educational activities for health professional students.

The Vision

The feasibility of a Community Centre of Health Professional Education was studied and the Division mapped current involvement by community members in health professional education at UBC. The vision for this Centre is to have patients at the core of health professional education, facilitate community input into health professional training, promote collaboration among professional programs and community partners and help students acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes for client-centered care. With the help of students, faculty and the community the benefits and challenges of involving community members in health professional education have been identified as seen by the community, students and faculty. The present project is to develop, pilot and evaluate an interprofessional community-led educational initiative for students from a variety of health professions at UBC. This will be accomplished through a series of Interprofessional workshops developed and facilitated by community members living with chronic health conditions.

The Team

Responsible for this project is a project team of 9 UBC faculty members from various health professional programs who are currently responsible for this initiative:

- Angela Towle, Division of Health Care Communication, College of Health Disciplines; Associate Dean, MD Undergraduate Curriculum, Faculty of Medicine
- Lesley Bainbridge, College of Health Disciplines
- Grant Charles, School of Social Work & Family Studies
- Marion Clauson, School of Nursing
- Wendy Hall, School of Nursing
- Bonnie Craig, Faculty of Dentistry (Dental Hygiene)
- David Fielding, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Science
- William Godolphin, Division of Health Care Communications, College of Health Disciplines
- Alison Greig, Department of Physical Therapy, Faculty of Medicine

Along with this UBC team there are numerous community groups and students currently involved in shaping and developing this project. An Advisory Board comprised of students, community members and faculty is also responsible for overseeing the development of this project. The ultimate goal is to operate under a partnership model with the community actively involved in all aspects of governance and development.

The Workshops

Workshops will be held. A team of 4-6 community members will team up with 2 UBC faculty members and a representative from a recognized community organization to develop workshop activities and methods of sharing stories and experiences of living with a chronic health condition for a small student workshop. Community members will be asked to share information that they feel health professional students should learn about their specific health condition.

Workshops will be modestly sized with approximately 10-12 students to enable meaningful engagement of all participants.

The goals of these workshops include:

- Provide health professional students the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue with community members about their lived experiences with a chronic health condition
- Provide opportunities for people living with chronic health conditions to inform health professional students about their condition
- Create and pilot educational frameworks to bring community into health professional education in the future
- Use the lessons learned and feedback from workshop participants to create a 'community centre' that operates within health professional

Currently, UBC health professional programs and a number of community organizations/groups facilitate clinical training in diagnosis and treatment of chronic conditions and illness. Instead, this workshop will help to create a new program where the focus is on the lived experience and daily realities of self-care, completing household tasks, family and social relationships, working, communicating with health care professionals, navigating the health system, and the challenges faced in these and other activities. This project is striving to be 'patient-centered' - where students learn about the individual, as well as their condition, from the individual themselves.

Volunteers needed

It is important for us to get involved because without us, this workshop isn't possible. Health professional students undergo years of specialized training in order to serve the communities that they live and work in. It is important to ensure, that these same communities have a voice in how and what this education looks like. In order for health professional to serve a community they must first understand the challenges, successes and realities the community faces, and who better to inform them than the community members themselves.

Stacey informed us that in order to design a workshop of approximately 2 hours, 2-4 meetings (2 hours each) will be required to develop the learning activities and prepare for your role as a community educator. The workshops may be held in the evening or on a weekend. Community members will also be asked to share their experiences and feelings regarding the development and facilitation of the workshop in a brief interview or focus group.

The workshop dates and times will be determined by the community members who will facilitate them, in collaboration with the workshop planning group comprised of two UBC students and faculty members. In order to ensure diverse student participation it has been suggested that an evening or weekend day might be desirable.

For this initial pilot-project between 10 and 12 students will attend each workshop. In order to develop effective teaching methods, group sizes are small and will provide greater opportunities for students and community educators to interact and engage in meaningful dialogue. These interactions will be evaluated in order to determine which methods result in the best learning outcomes.

There will be an honorarium provided to community educators and all travel and parking expenses will be reimbursed. A UBC project assistant will provide support and resources including: liaising between project groups, student recruitment and coordination, room rentals, bookings, meeting arrangements, coordination of meeting and workshop materials and preparation of final workshop materials. The workshop team made up of students, faculty and community members, will complete the development of learning objectives and activities together, ensuring everyone's voice will be heard.

At least 3 workshops with 3 different community groups will take place over the next six months throughout this project.

The project will be evaluated by an Advisory Board, comprised of students, community members and faculty, will be developing an evaluations framework for the workshop series. Individual workshop planning groups will also help determine the methods and criteria for evaluation. Possible evaluation methods included focus groups, interviews, surveys, personal journals and facilitated discussions.

Become a Spondyloarthritis advocate now

How can you get involved? If you are interested in sharing your story with health professional students please contact Stacey Creak, the project Coordinator at 604-822-8002 or screak@interchange.ubc.ca

When considering the short amount of time health professional students spend on rheumatology during medical school, it would definitely be to our advantage, not only to learn more about the project but also to participate. We are the experts when it comes to living with spondyloarthritis. We have stories to share that will enlighten the students. Chronic conditions present many challenges. Learning to deal with the ups and downs we encounter daily cannot be effectively taught in a text book.

Report from Anne Riddick, Secretary, ASABC