

# Addiction Medicine Network - Supporting Physician Resilience

Category: Poster Presentation (in person)

## Abstract Body

Physicians caring for patients with substance use disorders face enormous strains in light of the toxic drug poisoning crisis and much clinical uncertainty surrounding new prescribing practices and how best to reduce harm.

In 2018, Island Health set up an Addiction Medicine Network as a strategy to provide professional support to addiction medicine physicians and nurse practitioners whose practice focus on treating patients with substance use disorders. Acknowledging the unique and vast geography of Vancouver Island, there was a need to find ways to connect clinicians in order to reduce the isolation they were feeling.

Connecting with a network of other physicians who care for similar patients in similar geographic areas has many potential benefits:

- o an important opportunity to share newly emerging evidence and best practices,
- o improve patient transitions
- o increase connection to and feelings of support from colleagues
- o improve work satisfaction
- o prevent burnout

Feedback from physician members has been overwhelmingly positive. Evaluations following in-person and virtual meetings highlight feedback about the value of connecting with their colleagues. One member states, “Coming together in person makes me feel more connected to the team and decreases the feeling of being alone out there.” Another comments: “the supportive community is uplifting for me, makes me feel like I can continue to do this work.”

While the Addiction Medicine Network has been a central strategy in protecting and enhancing physician resilience, “the relation between physician resilience and systemic resilience is complex and bidirectional. While we assist individual physicians to manage proactively in a healthier manner, we need system-level interventions too. Resilient physicians require and deserve a more resilient medical system in which to work.” This presentation will describe the unique features of the Addiction Medicine Network, elaborate on its benefit to members and discuss the broader system change processes being undertaken within Island Health to better support Addiction Medicine physicians.

## Key Words

- Caring in Crisis
- Education

## Learning Objective # 1

Describe the unique features of the Addiction Medicine Network on Vancouver Island

## Learning Objective # 2

Understand the value of a formalized Addiction Medicine Network to support clinician connection and resilience.

## Reference # 1

Rotenstein, Lisa, Torre, Matthew, Ramos, Marco, et al. (2018) Prevalence of Burnout Among Physicians: A Systematic Review. JAMA. 320(11):1131-1150

## Reference # 2

Epstein, Ronald, Krasner, Michael. (2013). Physician Resilience: what it means, why it matters, and how to promote it. Mar;88(3):301-3.

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