



REAL TIME VIRTUAL SUPPORT: BRINGING MEDICAL EDUCATION AND CLINICAL SUPPORT TO THE POINT-OF-CARE

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Title: Real Time Virtual Support: Bringing Medical Education and Clinical Support to the Point-of-Care

Word count: 285

Purpose/problem statement:

At the onset of the pandemic, there were concerns that health care providers (HCPs) working in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities in British Columbia (BC) would become overwhelmed with cases. Translating the emerging best-practices for COVID-19 from high-resource urban settings to rural BC required rapid development of supportive, on-demand CME/CPD opportunities.

Approach

Provincial Real-Time Virtual Support (RTVS) pathways were deployed in April 2020 to provide 24/7 access to specialized clinical peer support through videoconferencing and telephone. The service provides a range of support including collaborative clinical support, case review, and referrals and/or transport support. The RTVS calls were accredited/certified for Mainpro+ and MOC Section 1 Group Learning credits in August 2020, to acknowledge the invaluable education involved in the peer support interactions.

Findings/discussion

From April to September 2020, the RTVS pathways have been consulted over 600 times. Each consultation represents bi-directional learning through reflection, feedback, coaching, and practice change. Utilization of these pathways continues to grow as awareness of the service increases and best-practices are established.

Barriers/facilitations

Facilitations: The pandemic rapidly accelerated the use and acceptance of virtual technologies and presented an urgent need for HCPs to prepare for and receive real-time support with cases. BC piloted a similar but smaller-scale project in 2019, which acted as a framework for the rapid expansion of RTVS. There was strong system-level and operational support for this initiative in BC.

Barriers: Many rural communities don't have access to high-speed internet impeding equitable access to virtual services. It will also take time for RTVS to seamlessly integrate into a complex health system.

Impact/relevance to the advancement of the field of CME/CPD

This innovative accredited program illustrates that the merging of education and on-demand clinical consultation is feasible and provides benefits to HCPs. Evaluation is underway to inform the expansion of RTVS to a multimodal Education-on-Demand CPD Strategy including, but not limited to, mentorship and virtual simulation.