

Not too cool for school: CST connects with academic institutions



By the time this year's incoming health care students graduate, the way we work across VCH, PHSA and PHC will be different. Our staff will have had the support and training to work in a new environment, but what about the new graduates, our staff members of the future? How can we make sure they are ready for the changes that are coming?

The CST Student Readiness team brought academic leaders and VCH, PHSA and PHC staff together to discuss this important question at a recent Student Readiness Forum. Over 30 academics from across the Lower Mainland took part in the event – one of the first times the health organizations have reached out to them regarding integration of health informatics in curricula.

“It's important that the students we have coming into our workforce have foundational and core informatics skills, so they are ready for ehealth environments from the get-go,” says Heather Straight, Director, Clinical Education, Learning and Development at VCH. “We want institutions to think about how they are going to prepare their students for working in a technology-supported environment.”

Grace Mickelson, Corporate Director, Academic Development, PHSA, was encouraged by the support shown for preparing students, noting that the forum has stimulated a lot of further activity.

“There was definitely consensus that it was beneficial for students to prepare for the system that will be implemented through CST before they enter the workforce,” she said. “We’ve also had a lot of people from the schools come forward since the event to ask how they can get involved.”

The Student Readiness team is continuing to work with academic leaders to help them look at ways they can incorporate the relevant changes and new materials into their curricula. This work includes the potential for faculty to participate in the CST design and build process, so they have maximum opportunities to learn more about the project and be able to build some of the new workflows into their simulation labs.

Heather and Grace presented the outcomes of the recent work of the CST Student Readiness team at the BC Health and Innovative Technology Showcase (eHITS) on May 9, 2015 in Vancouver.

Background information

The Clinical & Systems Transformation project is a joint initiative of three health organizations: Vancouver Coastal Health, Provincial Health Services Authority and Providence Health Care. The project is designed to transform health care delivery systems and processes to improve the safety, quality and consistency of the patient and caregiver experience. CST will support the health organizations in establishing common clinical and process standards, including workflows, order sets, clinical guidelines integrated plans of care and a common electronic health record. This clinical transformation will be supported by the implementation of a clinical information system that will replace aging existing systems. The project will be implemented in stages across the health organizations.

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