

St. Albert and Sturgeon PCN Chooses Wisely, Will Your PCN?

Choosing Wisely Alberta is part of a national campaign to help physicians and patients engage in conversations about unnecessary tests, treatments and procedures. Together we can make smart and effective choices to ensure high quality care.

In January 2016, St. Albert and Sturgeon Primary Care Network (SASPCN) partnered with Choosing Wisely Alberta (CWA) to trial an initiative designed to further support PCNs' and member practices' quality improvement journeys towards the Patient's Medical Home (PMH).

Beginning this fall (October 2016), 12 more PCNs across Alberta will have the opportunity to "choose wisely" as well.

Read on to learn more about SASPCN's experience, the value their physicians received from participating and how you can get involved.

The St. Albert and Sturgeon PCN Experience



L-R: Dr. Jim Bell, St. Albert and Sturgeon PCN, Dr. Anthony Train, Choosing Wisely Alberta Physician Leader, Dr. Alexandra Schepansky, Gynecologic Oncologist, AHS, Gordon Kliewer, AHS Cervical Cancer Screening Program

When initially approached to pilot the initiative, Dena Pedersen (Executive Director, SASPCN) and Dr. James Bell (Physician Lead, SASPCN) saw an opportunity to engage their physicians and

clinic teams with something relevant that could have a long-term, positive impact on clinical practices.

In collaboration with CWA partners¹, SASPCN sponsored events for physician members interested in improving the appropriateness of diagnostic tests and treatments for their patients, focusing on the following CWA priority clinical topics:

- Low Back Pain (L-Spine imaging)
- Cervical Cancer Screening (Pap tests)
- Bone Density (DEXA scans)

¹ Including: Choosing Wisely Alberta (Alberta Medical Association), the Physician Learning Program (PLP), AHS Lab Services, the Alberta College of Family Physicians (ACFP) and the Evidence Based Medicine Program, University of Alberta

About the Choosing Wisely Initiative

Choosing Wisely Alberta would like to partner with 12 more PCNs to engage in quality improvement work regarding the three CWA priority clinical topics noted above.

PCNs can choose the topic most relevant and interesting to their physicians and teams.

The goal of this initiative is to share knowledge, facilitate practice reflection and to improve the appropriateness of diagnostic tests and treatments for the 3 CWA priority clinical topics.

Similar to other quality improvement offerings like Alberta Screening and Prevention, this data driven initiative demonstrates the importance of knowing one's patient panel and leverages existing programs and supports such as [Improvement Facilitation Training](#) and [EMR supports](#) (e.g., Peer-to-Peer EMR Network Program Workshops).

Prior to the event, the Physician Learning Program (PLP) provided participating physicians with their individualized data for the three tests, as ordered over the past several years.

In Dr. Bell's mind these individualized reports in particular were a real "selling feature."

"We wanted to aim for success by making it easy to get meaningful data without doing chart audits; to provide a 'snapshot' to participating physicians of their individual, historical data for comparative purposes."

*~ Dr. James Bell, Physician Lead
St. Albert and Sturgeon PCN*

Dr. Anthony Train (Physician Lead, CWA) couldn't agree more about the value of the data.



“Comparing our own practice data with our community physician peers is one of the best-evidenced ways to foster personal behavior change - this data reflects practice ‘in real life’ and is instantly relevant to our patients.”

~ Dr. Anthony Train, Physician Lead for CWA

During the evening, Dr. Train introduced participants to the following:

- Overview of CWA topic specific data reports provided by PLP
- Expert speaker presentation on the CWA topic outlining evidence and effective strategies for engaging patients followed by time for discussion and questions
- Presentation from Alberta Health Services experts comparing PCN and overall zone ordering patterns for the topic of interest
- Opportunity for small group discussion and work to identify a CWA improvement to implement in their own practices

NOTE: physicians received M1 CME credits for attending the presentation by the expert speaker.

Physician Feedback

The majority of SASPCN physicians participated (65.5%). In particular, physicians were very excited about receiving their individual data. In fact, since attending, many physicians have leveraged the [Peer-to-Peer EMR Network Program](#) and have started pulling their own EMR data on additional Choosing Wisely topics. “An unexpected but positive outcome,” shares Dr. Bell.

100% of physicians found the attended event relevant, valuable and believed it supported their improvement journeys.

“Talk to your patients - spend time explaining why not to X-ray or that there has to be a good reason.”

“Excellent review of evidence for imaging and management of low back pain.”

~ St. Albert and Sturgeon PCN physicians

100% would recommend a similar Choosing Wisely event to their colleagues.

Since the event, Dena Pedersen is happy to report physicians and their teams are continuing the work they first engaged in nearly one year ago.

“The CWA premise really resonated with physicians. It got them interested in looking at their data and reviewing their own practices. Sixteen out of 17 clinics in the PCN are now running formal quality improvement meetings every two months.”

Dena Pedersen, Executive Director
St Albert and Sturgeon PCN

Interested to Learn More?

Choosing Wisely Alberta is recruiting the next 12 PCNs interested in achieving improvements in one of the three CWA topic areas.

To learn more about how your PCN can partner with CWA or for more information about the opportunity please contact us at: choosingwisely@albertadoctors.org. Alternatively, contact Blair MacKinnon via phone 780-905-6601 or email, blair.mackinnon@topalbertadoctors.org.

Physicians interested in engaging in this work should connect with their PCNs to learn more.

For many CWA resources go to: <https://www.albertadoctors.org/leaders-partners/choosing-wisely-alberta/choosing-wisely-resources>

Choosing
Wisely
Alberta

Choosing
Wisely
Canada

